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MANILA STANDARD

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MINDA NEWS

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By: Chris V. Panganiban

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur (MindaNews / 09 February) — The Diocese of Tandag in Surigao del Sur has expressed alarm over reports of alleged unabated illegal logging of ironwood (locally called magkono) inside an abandoned logging concession area in the province.

PALAWAN DAILY NEWS

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Cities around the world worked hard to provide people with the infrastructure they need to thrive. Many of which such as flood control projects, roads, viaducts, expressways, etc. are financed with huge funds to ensure that these will provide convenience and comfort to the taxpayers- where public funds emanate. However, some planners failed to execute the basic tenets and principles that infrastructure project should incorporate nature. As a result, these infrastructure projects, instead of providing environmental protection, have caused environmental disaster.

PCI

[PhilSA to use spaceborne data to study environmental trends](#)

By: Ma. Cristina Arayata

MANILA – The Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) will use spaceborne data in order to see a bigger picture of the country's natural resources and help policymakers restore and manage these, its top official said Thursday.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[DENR orders probe of Sibuyan mining](#)

By: Jane Bautista

More than a week after residents of Sibuyan Island formed a barricade to stop trucks of Altai Philippines Mining Corp. (APMC) from hauling nickel ore, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ordered an investigation of the firm's operations and its alleged violations.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[CCP preps for rehabilitation](#)

By: Alice Sicat

QUEZON CITY (PIA) -- The Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) is set to undergo its three-year redevelopment in an effort to transform it into a state-of-the-art center for artistic excellence and cultural celebration.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[\[Opinion\] BARMM and the whole-of-society approach](#)

By: Pia Roces Morato

Recently, the European Union (EU) and the World Vision Development Foundation Inc. launched two projects called “Promoting Efforts Addressing Conflict through Education in Mindanao” (PEACE Mindanao) and “Integrated Solid Waste Management-Circular Economy Adaptation for Alternative Plastic Waste Solutions,” which form part of the key areas of bilateral EU-Philippines development cooperation that focuses on attaining a green and resilient economy, bringing in more jobs, promoting good governance and developing a peaceful and just society until 2027.

THE STAR

[Philippines hopes for waste-to-energy technology amid waste disposal headache](#)

MANILA (Xinhua): A Philippine lawmaker is pushing for utilising waste-to-energy technologies to improve solid waste management and provide an alternative source of energy as the South-East Asian country is projected to generate 92 million tonnes of waste from 2022 to 2025.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[Call for Proposals](#)

Local government units (LGUs) can now submit project proposals to access the People's Survival Fund (PSF) — a grant facility for LGUs to implement local climate change adaptation initiatives.

RADYO INQUIRER

[People's Survival Fund sa LGUs ikinasa](#)

By: Chona Yu

Maari nang magsumite ngayon ang local government units (LGUs) ng project proposals para ma-access ang People's Survival Fund (PSF).

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[People's Survival Fund now available for LGU climate adaptation initiatives](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

MANILA, Philippines — Local government units can now submit climate adaptation proposal to access the People's Survival Fund—a grant facility for initiatives that will help communities deal with the impacts of climate change.

NET25

[LGUs pinagsusumite ng proposed ng climate adaptation programs hanggang Marso 31](#)

By: Eearlo Bringas

Hanggang katapusan ng Marso ngayong taon ang ibinigay ng Climate Change Commission of the Philippines para makapagsumite ng proposed climate change adaptation projects and program ang mga Local Government Office at Units sa buong bansa.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

AL JAZEERA

[More Kenyans hit by climate change count on fish farming](#)

When Elijah Murithi grew bananas in the 1980s and 1990s, central Kenya's increasingly erratic weather meant the farmer could rarely make a steady income from the thirsty crop.

Prolonged dry spells killed Murithi's young plants, and long, intense rainy periods produced a glut of bananas that forced him to lower his prices to sell them.

Even when he shifted to coffee, which needs less water, the farmer still struggled to produce reliable yields.

But that changed in 2021 when he added an unusual crop to his farm: fish.

A fishpond filled with more than 1,500 tilapia now allows him to harvest rainwater during heavy rains and use some of it to irrigate his crops when dry spells hit, Murithi said.

Now he makes a decent living through drought or downpours, growing coffee and vegetables year-round while making extra income selling fish.

"This really worked to my advantage," he said of his 10-by-25-metre (33-by-82-foot) fishpond, built just uphill from the coffee plants on his 1.25-acre (0.5-hectare) farm in Kibingo, about 130km (80 miles) northeast of Nairobi.

Since he started fish farming in April, Murithi said his coffee harvests have more than doubled to 2,000kg (4,400 pounds) a year and his overall income has tripled.

As the East African country grapples with climate swings that batter crops and choke incomes, including a current drought that is the worst in four decades, some farmers are discovering that adding fish to their farms can help with water storage, make their diets more nutritious and boost earnings.

Since 2019, the Kirinyaga county government has been helping farmers build fishponds under an economic stimulus programme.

The county covers the cost of a pond liner and, for the first year, pays for baby fish, also called fingerlings, and enough feed to sustain them until they mature.

The fisheries department said it has so far supported about 20 farming groups and more than 1,350 people.

Kirinyaga's government said in October it was working to increase annual fish production from 29 tonnes, which has a value of 12.8 million Kenyan shillings (\$104,000), to 62 tonnes. It did not provide any information about the cost of the initiative.

Changing attitudes

At first, most farmers resisted the idea of raising fish in an often parched region, said Harrison Mwangi, chairperson of the Kamwaka Self Help farmers group, which has 26 members.

He said the prospect was alien to many of the members, who thought they would have better results raising chickens.

But after county officials provided training on how to raise fish and said they would help with the costs, many farmers have given it a try.

Ultimately, Mwangi said, his group decided to convert a field of napier grass at a farm owned by one of its members – a field that was producing less and less fodder, especially during the dry season – into a fishpond at the start of 2021.

Through the rest of year, the farmers then sold 17,000 shillings (\$137) of fish to people visiting the farm or at local markets, Mwangi said, describing the sales as “quite encouraging” for a first harvest.

“The group could not have found a better way to utilise the farm,” he said, explaining how farming fish was easier than managing other livestock.

The Kamwaka farmers, who each have an annual income of 100,000 to 150,000 shillings (\$807 to \$1,211), should see even higher earnings from fish farming in the future as their stocks multiply, Mwangi said.

John Wilson – the manager of Mwea Aquaculture Farm, which raises tilapia and catfish and also offers training to farmers – said fish farming is not only good business but also provides an alternative source of protein for Kenyans.

A fish surplus

Apart from the challenge of persuading drought-hit farmers in Kenya that fish is a realistic crop, the project still has a few other kinks to work out, Murithi and Mwangi said.

While the ponds can be a buffer against drought by storing rain to be used for irrigation in the dry season, farmers hit with particularly extended dry spells can struggle to find ways to top them up.

Murithi said he has at times replenished his pond using agricultural water rations provided by the county to help farmers during dry periods.

Kamwaka farmers also have to pump clean water from nearby rivers to their ponds on a weekly basis when there is no rain. They use a generator, which is costly to run, Mwangi said.

Another challenge is how to deal with a surplus of fish now filling local markets as more people take up raising them, according to industry insiders.

“Farmers need to be aggressive in looking for a market for their produce and should not wait for the county government to do the marketing for them,” said Michael Manyeki, a fingerling producer in Sagana, a small industrial town in Kirinyaga.

For Ntiba Micheni, a professor of marine and fisheries biology at Nairobi University, the solution to excess production is getting more Kenyans to think of fish as dinner in a country where eating them is not common everywhere.

“If there is no robust ‘Eat More Fish’ campaign for young children, for schools and for communities, [selling] fish will forever remain a challenge,” said Micheni, a former official at the government’s fisheries department.

BUSINESS WORLD

[DENR cancels quarrying permits in Upper Marikina watershed](#)

By: Shelden Joy Talavera

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ordered the cancellation of three mineral production sharing agreements (MPSAs) held by quarry operators in the Upper Marikina watershed towns of Baras and Tanay, Rizal province

In separate orders dated Dec. 19, and made public this week, Environment Undersecretary Juan Miguel T. Cuna signed the orders revoking the MPSAs of Rapid City Realty and Development Corp., Quarry Rock Group, Inc. and Quimson Limestone, Inc.

MPSAs give concession holders exclusive rights to mine a defined area.

The revoked MPSAs cover 1,343 hectares within the barangays of Pinugay, Baras; and Cuyambay and Tandang Kutyo, Tanay.

Rapid City was found to have failed to file for an extension of its exploration period, which had lapsed for more than 22 years. It also failed to submit the corresponding work program as required by the MPSA.

Meanwhile, both Quarry Rock and Quimson were ruled to have violated their MPSAs by conducting non-quarrying operations; failing to submit and secure approval of development work programs; and failing to establish mine rehabilitation funds.

In a statement on Thursday, Upper Marikina Watershed Coalition said it obtained the copies of the orders it requested last month.

“After three years of campaigning, we look forward to seeing these cancellations enforced and reflected on the ground,” the coalition said in a statement on Thursday.

The coalition brings together over 60 groups seeking to protect the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL).

“Once more, we call on the DENR Secretary to directly dialogue with the Masungi Georeserve Foundation to settle mutual concerns on its joint reforestation project, which is located in the UMRBPL,” the coalition said.

The Marikina Watershed is a 26,126-hectare basin, which was declared a protected area in 2018 for the ecosystem services it provides, such as protection from floods and landslides.

JERA assures Marcos of stable LNG supply

By: Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza

Japanese power generator JERA Co., Inc. on Thursday assured the Philippine government of stable supply of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to support economic growth.

Company President Satoshi Onoda told President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. at a meeting in Tokyo they have been working with the Aboitiz group, represented by Sabin Aboitiz, to support the Philippine economy, the palace said in a statement.

“In order to secure a stable supply, we are working with Aboitiz and Sabin-san’s team on many fronts,” Mr. Satoshi said.

“We are procuring more than 30 million tons of LNG per year. Therefore, we will be able to contribute to the Philippines in the supply of LNG as transition fuel,” he added.

“We will be working on co-firing ammonia technology as well. Therefore we would like to be able to provide this technology as well in a timely manner.”

Meanwhile, Mr. Marcos cited the need to prepare for future developments, especially with the issue of clean renewable energy sources.

“I do not need to illustrate or to explain the critical situation around the world when it comes to fuel, fuel supply, supply chain problems,” he said. “All of these are requiring a great deal of thought for the planning for the Philippine side so as to be able to ensure that our forecasted – and aspirations for development – are well supported by an adequate power supply,” he added.

Also on Thursday, Mr. Marcos and Japan Prime Minister Fumio Kishida agreed to boost defense relations.

In a joint statement, both resolved to “increase the defense capabilities of their own countries, and further strengthen overall security cooperation.”

The two countries will have strategic reciprocal port calls and aircraft visits, transfer of more defense equipment and technology, continuous cooperation on previously transferred defense equipment, and capacity building, the palace said in a separate statement.

Mr. Marcos is on a working visit to Japan until Feb. 12.

EURO NEWS

Climate change is triggering more earthquakes. Big Oil's interests are a factor

By: Prof Ibrahim Özdemir, UN advisor

On Monday, earthquakes in my country Turkey and neighbouring Syria left a trail of unprecedented devastation and a death toll surpassing 16,000 people at the last count.

We do not know for sure what triggered this horrific natural disaster, but we do know there is growing scientific evidence that climate change increases the risk of such tremors, together with tsunamis and volcanic eruptions.

"If a fault is primed or ready to rupture, all that is needed is the pressure of a handshake to set it off [...] Environmental changes associated with rapid and accelerating climate breakdown could easily do the job," professor of geophysics and climate hazards at University College London Bill McGuire pointed out back in 2012.

Furthermore, NASA scientists acknowledged that glaciers retreating due to global warming have been triggering earthquakes in Alaska in the last decades.

The impact is not limited to the Arctic. As melting glaciers change the distribution of weight across the Earth's crust, the resulting "glacial isostatic adjustment" drives changes in plate tectonics that could lead to more earthquakes, awaken volcanoes and even affect the movement of the Earth's axis.

This particular consequence of global warming "warns us of a seismically turbulent future," one recent study concluded.

Unfortunately, it is not just earthquakes. Climate and weather-related disasters have surged five-fold over the past five decades, killing over two million people, with 91% of the casualties in developing countries. And it is only getting worse.

Is there accountability for Big Oil's 'ever more invasive ways'?

Fossil fuel companies bear significant responsibility for the climate emergency yet enjoy near-total impunity. At the same time, they are consistently reaping record profits — while ordinary citizens across the globe struggle to pay their household bills.

A series of investigations and legal proceedings over the years have shown how fossil fuel giants call the shots: they use and abuse the rule of law to escape accountability for

environmental pollution, resource-grabbing and cronyism. Those objecting are often silenced.

Just over the last decade, fossil fuel companies in the United States have targeted over 150 environmental activists with lawsuits. Meanwhile, dozens of US states are in the process of enacting “critical infrastructure” legislation, increasing criminal penalties against activists protesting pipelines that will wreck the planet.

One European Parliament study similarly found that EU-based mining, oil, and gas extraction companies are increasing impacts on indigenous communities in “ever more invasive ways”.

Third-party litigation funding (TPLF) is another approach exploited by Western oil and gas interests, where claimants raise funds from outside investors who take the lion's share of the proceeds.

Since 2012, US investment fund Tenor backed the \$1.4 billion (€1.3bn) claim of a Canadian mining firm against the Venezuelan government, permitting a court-ordered seizure of its Houston-based oil company.

Tenor is also targeting other developing countries and their governments, with a \$4.4bn (€4.1bn) claim by Gabriel Resources Ltd against Romania and a \$764 million (€712,4m) one by Eco Oro Minerals Corp against Colombia.

The curious case of 'Sultanate of Sulu'

Another firm spearheading such cases is the London-based legal financing giant Therium. In 2021, Therium backed the UK-based Victoria Oil & Gas against the Republic of Kazakhstan on the grounds that Astana breached an agreement with the company after kicking it out of the country to take over its own oil field. Victoria Oil & Gas lost the case.

But Therium scored a victory last year by funding the descendants of the long-vanished "Sultanate of Sulu," who received a \$15bn (€13.9bn) award from a French court against the Malaysian government.

The case laid claim to profits from Malaysia's oil and gas projects in the eastern region of Sabah, based on a defunct colonial-era treaty with the British Crown.

The claimant's legal team also have links to oil and gas interests.

Paul H Cohen of 4-5 Gray's Inn Square, who openly talks of using European courts to confiscate "specific Malaysian assets" in multiple jurisdictions, has regularly represented oil and gas clients in international arbitrations.

Elisabeth Mason, another lawyer representing the Sulu heirs, works closely with executives from tech giants Google and Facebook.

Famously, both have been accused of backing organisations involved in climate denial and making millions from ads for ExxonMobil, BP, Chevron and Shell or entities like The American Petroleum Institute — all labelled by activists as attempts at "greenwashing".

What is more important: interests of few, or our planet and its people?

I am not suggesting a conspiracy. These cases solely go to show how fossil fuel interests still hold extraordinary clout across sectors and national borders, despite ever-increasing proof that they are among those ultimately responsible for climate change and the ongoing climate emergency.

The problem is systemic: there is a long-demonstrated preference for the interests of fossil fuel firms and their allies rather than the people and the planet.

No wonder UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres recently demanded that fossil fuel companies that do not set a "credible course for net zero" by 2030 "should not be in business".

Governments must take this message seriously by joining forces to end this giant profit-making scheme against the planet.

How? Instead of being sued by them, governments should consider whether and how to hold fossil fuel firms liable for the damages their operations have caused to countless victims worldwide. The potential proceeds should be then invested in accelerating net zero.

Otherwise, we will see more tragedies like what has befallen my country.

Professor İbrahim Özdemir is a UN advisor and an ecologist teaching at Üsküdar University. He has served as Director-General at the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Ministry of Education and was a leading member in drafting the Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change endorsed by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCCC.

MANILA STANDARD

Gov't opens RE sector to foreign investors, sees massive projects

By: Othel V. Campos

The Department of Trade and Industry, as steward of corporate sustainable governance, encourages companies to demonstrate their adoption of adequate environmental protection systems and sustainability strategies.

Businesses are part of the growth cycle of the economy and their footprints leave indelible marks which can either be good or bad, according to Trade Secretary Alfredo Pascual.

“Sustainability is a criterion in determining priority activities for inclusion in DTI’s Strategic Investment Priority Plan under the CREATE Act [Republic Act 11534]. Qualified projects listed in the SIPP are entitled to tax incentives. Through these incentives, DTI encourages investments in businesses involving processes and innovations that will lead to the attainment of sustainable development goals,” he said.

Pillar of industrialization

The DTI underscores the vital role of the energy sector as a driver of industrialization and economic growth.

The investment promotion agencies monitor registered enterprises’ compliance with environmental laws as a requirement for the grant of incentives. For instance, energy-related projects should utilize energy sources adopting environment-friendly technologies that comply with the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Impact System law, the Biofuels Act, where applicable, and other relevant environmental laws and regulations.

The DTI supports the transition to renewable energy, increasing renewable energy’s share to 50 percent of the total energy supply by 2040, as stated in the Philippine Energy Plan for 2020 to 2040.

Sustainable policies

Under the Renewable Energy Act, foreigners can own up to 100 percent of renewable energy projects in solar, wind and tidal energy, as recently clarified by the legal opinion of the Department of Justice.

The government lifted foreign ownership restrictions on RE generation projects in December 2022, which led to a significant increase in interest among investors.

Investors are looking at solar and wind projects as well as manufacturing of equipment such as wind turbine generator towers, foundations, blades and other wind turbine parts.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., Trade Secretary Pascual and Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla held a roundtable meeting on renewable energy in Beijing, China on Jan. 5, 2023 to drum up support for RE projects in the Philippines.

Pascual underscored the importance of the RE sector in achieving economic development. “The energy sector is a vital driver of Philippine industrialization and economic growth. For industries to flourish in our country, we need a secure, resilient and competitive supply of energy. In the face of climate change and the worldwide shift to green development, the Philippine government finds renewable energy to be a long-term solution to our sustainable development,” he said.

The DTI chief said the Philippines now has a healthy and competitive business environment that would enable RE companies to thrive.

“Investors will find that the Philippines, with its geographical advantage, is home to abundant sources of renewable energy. On the policy front, investors will find it relevant that in our existing Renewable Energy Act, foreigners can own up to 100 percent of renewable energy projects in solar, wind and tidal energy. This should help the Philippines increase renewable energy’s share to 50 percent of its total energy supply by 2040,” he said.

Chinese RE companies responded positively towards the Philippines’ policy directions and conveyed interest to invest and help the country realize its National Renewable Energy Program 2020-2040 goals.

Pascual said that as issues involving climate change become even more pressing, investments in the RE sector would help the Philippines navigate the path towards a more sustainable business ecosystem. The sector also creates employment opportunities up and down the supply chain.

He said about \$13.76 billion worth of investments in the RE sector are now in varying stages in the investment pipeline.

Danish renewable energy developer Copenhagen Energy A/S', for one, is investing P360 billion for the BuhaWind offshore wind project in Ilocos Norte.

"I am looking forward to the implementation of this project, especially since CE has already secured a service contract. They also already submitted a system impact study, which already included the electrical design and proposals on how to bring power to the grid," Pascual said.

He said the Board of Investments is in close coordination with other government agencies involved to expedite the evaluation of the study. The project is expected to be in commercial operation by 2028.

The project involves the development of offshore wind power using wind turbine generators that can produce 15 to 20-megawatt capacity each in the waters off Burgos, Bangui and Pagudpud towns in Ilocos Norte.

CE chief executive Jasmin Bejdic said the company was on track and progressing with community engagement, financial impact assessment and national strategy.

"With proper government support, we will be able to implement the project according to plan, noting Ilocos region as definitely one of the best resource for wind power," he said.

Bejdic said the Philippines remains a very promising business destination for floating wind towers.

The BOI is also evaluating some P446 billion worth of investments in eight RE projects and a P225-billion pump-storage and solar energy project.

"We highly regard renewable energy projects, especially off-shore wind types, as game changers especially as more and more investors particularly in global value chains are looking for locations that provide solutions on net-zero carbon commitments of companies," Pascual said.

He said the BOI is also engaged with the World Bank on the implementation of its recommendations on the Offshore Wind Study conducted in 2022. The WB ranked the Philippines as the 8th best location globally for offshore wind.

Pascual expects more investments in the renewable energy sector in 2023, as many companies begin the transition to cleaner power sources.

MINDA NEWS

Tandag diocese bares illegal logging of ironwood in Surigao Sur

By: Chris V. Panganiban

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur (MindaNews / 09 February) — The Diocese of Tandag in Surigao del Sur has expressed alarm over reports of alleged unabated illegal logging of ironwood (locally called magkono) inside an abandoned logging concession area in the province.

Fr. Raymond Ambray, representative of the Diocese, told top officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) during the 7th Multi-Sectoral Stakeholders Forum in Cagayan de Oro City last week that illegal cutting and transport of ironwood in Surigao del Sur have been going on since November last year.

He said they learned about the illegal logging of magkono, after several concerned residents reported to them that local tree cutters, guarded by armed men, have felled the trees in the abandoned logging concession areas of the defunct Lianga Bay Logging Company (LBLC).

The logs were reportedly transported by ship bound for Legazpi City.

“Vulnerable” due to decreasing population

Often used to make expensive furniture, magkono (*Xanthostemon verdugonianus*) is categorized in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red list 2018 as “vulnerable” due to its decreasing population.

The IUCN noted that at the border of Surigao del Norte and Surigao del Sur, “which is known for their ultramafic soil, ‘the species grows copiously along the road like the bushy Santan’ but large trees of the species are now “becoming more scarce.”

According to the IUCN, it is estimated that over the last three generations, magkono “has experienced a population reduction of between 30 and 49% due to felling of the species for timber and also due to clearance of the species habitat caused by mining activities.”

Cliff Abrahan, head of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Lianga, was seen at a beach resort near the old seaport of LBLC allegedly

waiting for the shipment of the magkono loaded on three 10-wheeler winged vans on December 8.

Abrahan denied the allegations saying the forest products loaded on the ship were chopped lauan and yakal lumber used as a material in building boats.

He told MindaNews he could no longer confiscate the shipment of the forest products since it was already inside the boat and was already under the jurisdiction of the Philippine Coast Guard.

But Abrahan noted that there was confiscation of illegally transported magkono in the past few months, including those in Surigao City, Cantilan in Surigao del Sur and near Bayugan City.

While he admitted magkono smuggling is still rampant in their area, Abrahan said his office “cannot stop those being slipped out and escorted by heavily armed men during nighttime.”

Evidence needed

Concerned residents disclosed that smuggling of magkono took place on November 29 last year and on January 22 and February 3.

“The Regional Executive Director (RED) of DENR-Caraga and an undersecretary were already informed and we are now gathering substantial evidence to convince the RED of the (need for) reshuffling,” Ambray said.

One of the concerned residents sent a text message to DENR-Caraga RED Nonito Tamayo asking for Abrahan’s relief, but was told that the DENR regional office still needs to conduct a thorough investigation of the matter.

“I need to have a strong basis. My action needs to be supported with strong evidence. Kawawa din naman siya kung wala akong dahilan para siya palitan (It would be a pity if I replace him without sufficient ground),” Tamayo’s text message to the concerned resident said.

The DENR-Caraga chief further explained that “anyone can just send me info like this to malign the integrity of our people.”

“But I will seriously look into your allegation very, very seriously,” he said.

Tamayo's text reply was dated February 1 but there was no update yet on the progress of their investigation.

MindaNews sent Tamayo a text message on February 8 but he has yet to reply.

Integrating nature in urban infrastructure

Cities around the world worked hard to provide people with the infrastructure they need to thrive. Many of which such as flood control projects, roads, viaducts, expressways, etc. are financed with huge funds to ensure that these will provide convenience and comfort to the taxpayers- where public funds emanate. However, some planners failed to execute the basic tenets and principles that infrastructure project should incorporate nature. As a result, these infrastructure projects, instead of providing environmental protection, have caused environmental disaster.

It is about time to make it mandatory for a government agency to include drainage canals in all road concreting projects, or else we will face the sad fate of other poorly planned urban areas, some of which are now underwater.

This is true in some towns and cities in the Philippines, who failed to consider nature in their urban planning. The once bustling town of Pantabangan in Nueva Ecija province is now underwater. Hazard maps should have been disseminated long ago to at least guide our decision makers on the potential impact of the nature's wrath and other climate change risks.

Urban development—if executed unsustainably and without thorough planning—is the main drivers of biodiversity loss. Population growth in cities makes infrastructure needs in urban areas particularly high and places enormous pressure on the environment. Climate change further exacerbates this impact.

Cities and urban areas in our country should push for the nature-based infrastructure that delivers cost-effective, climate-resilient infrastructure services and generates a wealth of co-benefits for the people, such as reduced air pollution and improved well-being. It also creates an enabling environment for other sustainable infrastructure. To maximize the benefits of nature-based infrastructure, the value of nature must be at the heart of urban infrastructure planning. These are sustainable urban infrastructure: urban green spaces, green roofs, stormwater infrastructure, wetlands, lakes and other nature-based infrastructures.

Nature-based infrastructure can provide several benefits such as flood, erosion, and runoff management, wave buffering, better water quality, recreation uses, wildlife habitat, opportunity for groundwater recharge, and aesthetic attractiveness, among

others. The extent to which nature-based infrastructure features provide these benefits is partially dependent on the types of features used and the location.

Building with nature also supports investments in other sustainable infrastructure, such as mobility, water, and energy, by increasing their resilience and effectiveness. The academic and scientific community should come up with research and related studies so that the public will understand its value and quantify the benefits that these nature-based infrastructure provides and fully leverage nature's contribution to sustainable cities in order to influence our leaders in decision making.

To maximize the benefits of these nature-based infrastructures, the worth and importance of nature must be at the heart of strategic, consultative, urban planning. Political leaders especially at the local level, planners, policy-makers, and budget holders need to use a systemic perspective to deepen the understanding on how to maximize the benefits of these nature-based infrastructures for sustainable cities. Sustainable cities require strategic urban infrastructure planning with nature at its core.

PCI

[PhilSA to use spaceborne data to study environmental trends](#)

By: Ma. Cristina Arayata

MANILA – The Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) will use spaceborne data in order to see a bigger picture of the country's natural resources and help policymakers restore and manage these, its top official said Thursday.

By accessing satellites and ground facilities, PhilSA will obtain data and process them into maps. These will then be used to build and understand a bigger picture of the country's natural resources, environmental trends and characteristics to enable data-based and science-based policymaking and implementation, PhilSA Director General Joel Marciano Jr. told the Philippine News Agency.

He cited mangroves as an example of an environmental resource of interest. Mangroves are important in protecting coastal habitats from flooding, sea level rise and erosion.

PhilSA recently inked an agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and among their activities is to develop and analyze mangrove extent maps on a regular basis.

"Using remote sensing technologies and ground validation techniques, trends such as air quality patterns and environmental characteristics such as climate change vulnerabilities will be properly accounted for, better described, analyzed in order to inform decisions on climate change mitigation and adaptation programs and in disaster risk response and management efforts," said Marciano.

He added that the public will benefit from these since climate change adaptation and environmental protection ensure food security and save lives.

Agricultural produce and fisheries products are impacted by the quality of the natural environment and resources. Understanding environmental trends therefore, would help the policymakers come up with programs and projects to better manage environmental resources, Marciano continued.

Meanwhile, PhilSA's partnership with the DENR started last February 6, and they will initially collaborate for one year.

Their project, “Use of Satellite Imagery in the Creation of the National ENR Geospatial Database and other related Programs of the DENR” seeks to assess the effectiveness of current efforts, such as the National Greening Program, to help them determine the best practices and areas of improvement in restoring the environmental resources.

“The partnership between PhilSA and DENR brings to fore the socioeconomic benefits and value of the emergent space capabilities of the country by leveraging space data for the conservation, protection, management, and restoration of environment and natural resources, Marciano said.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[DENR orders probe of Sibuyan mining](#)

By: Jane Bautista

More than a week after residents of Sibuyan Island formed a barricade to stop trucks of Altai Philippines Mining Corp. (APMC) from hauling nickel ore, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ordered an investigation of the firm's operations and its alleged violations.

In a statement late Wednesday, the DENR said it ordered the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) in Romblon to file complaints against APMC, "if warranted," on the reported cutting of trees without permit.

In a joint order on Feb. 6, Penro Romblon was also told to probe the alleged damage to seagrass and other marine resources following the construction of APMC's causeway project.

"The DENR firmly assures the public, especially the residents of Sibuyan Island, that the department continues to strictly implement environmental laws in order to ensure the safety of the community and promote inclusive development in ... Romblon," the agency said.

APMC was also ordered to stop constructing the causeway at Sitio Bato in San Fernando town on Sibuyan Island and transporting ore from the contract site to the causeway.

The DENR denied the mining firm's application for a miscellaneous lease agreement for its violation of Commonwealth Act No. 141, as amended, or the Public Land Act, and its related issuances.

In a statement sent to the Inquirer, APMC said that even before receiving the notices of violations from the DENR regional office in Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) and the joint order from the regional offices of DENR, Environmental Management Bureau and Mines and Geosciences Bureau, the company had already "voluntarily suspended" its exploration activities on Sibuyan Island.

Good faith

“We did this in good faith, owing to the fact that tensions had been building up around the site; and more importantly, to allow productive dialogue to happen with regulators and other stakeholders while we electively paused our operations,” it said.

However, APMC said the voluntary pause was “not an admission of fault” and maintained that its operations in the area were “fully legal, compliant and above board.”

“Once again, we categorically deny all allegations questioning the legitimacy of our operations,” it said.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[CCP preps for rehabilitation](#)

By: Alice Sicat

QUEZON CITY (PIA) -- The Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) is set to undergo its three-year redevelopment in an effort to transform it into a state-of-the-art center for artistic excellence and cultural celebration.

According to CCP, its over 50-year-old building needs retrofitting and refurbishment so it may still be able to continue to perform its roles as the premier national institution promoting Philippine arts and culture.

The planned redevelopment will retain the iconic architecture and focus on structural improvements including upgrading its fire, drainage, electrical and environmental protection systems as well other building codes.

The project is a climate change adaptation measure that will integrate sustainable features to improve energy and water efficiency, to name a few.

“The building has gone through leaks, corrosions, and flooding and other issues from various typhoons and earthquakes over the years. We are also looking at technological and aesthetic upgrades responsive to CCP’s future programs and activities, particularly the comfort, safety and overall experience of performers, audiences, employees and other stakeholders,” CCP president Margie Moran-Floirendo said.

CCP will also add facilities that will make the building gender-responsive and inclusive for persons with disabilities, senior citizens and more, fulfilling its vision of being a globally competitive, self-sustaining and future-ready destination.

The initial budget of P900 million was allocated for the rehabilitation of the CCP Main Building, initially coming from the proposed budget for an Artist Center.

The Pasay City Government is set to give the go signal to begin the first phase of the project, concentrating on the improvement of the center's main performance venues - Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino and Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo, as well as the relocation of offices and theaters. This will take up about 40% of the budget, while the rest will be appropriated for the second phase, which will cover the repair of facilities such as the hydraulic lift, Freight elevator, LED lights, Rigging system, acoustics. But given the scale and ambitions for the project, more funds may be needed.

Throughout the project, CCP reaffirmed that it will continue its operations and will take it as an opportunity to work with artistic communities and bring its programs closer to the people in different parts of the country. On top of continued live performances and training, CCP will also strengthen its online presence.

“We hope that through our increased geographical presence and more outreach activities, the public will know that we are relentless in offering arts and cultural experiences for people from all walks of life. While we are temporarily closing our home, our commitment to fulfill our duties will even be intensified,” Margie Moran-Floirendo said.

The redevelopment of CCP supports the national priority to accelerate the reopening of travel and the economy and the creation of jobs. It also aligns with the CCP’s mission as the premier arts and culture institution of the Philippines to strengthen the Philippine brand.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[\[Opinion\] BARMM and the whole-of-society approach](#)

By: Pia Roces Morato

Recently, the European Union (EU) and the World Vision Development Foundation Inc. launched two projects called “Promoting Efforts Addressing Conflict through Education in Mindanao” (PEACE Mindanao) and “Integrated Solid Waste Management-Circular Economy Adaptation for Alternative Plastic Waste Solutions,” which form part of the key areas of bilateral EU-Philippines development cooperation that focuses on attaining a green and resilient economy, bringing in more jobs, promoting good governance and developing a peaceful and just society until 2027.

This is really great news and it brings me back to memory lane on some projects I have been able to take part in with the Teach Peace, Build Peace Movement a few years ago in our public schools in Quezon City.

The European Union has for many years advocated as well as funded efforts in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) for the benefit of children and vulnerable sectors and is looking forward to doing more projects by adopting a whole-of-society approach.

A culture of peace has been, for many years, something that my colleagues in education and I hold close to our hearts as, being a group of educators with diverse backgrounds, it more than suffices to say that whether we are from Luzon, the Visayas or Mindanao, we are Filipino brothers and sisters through and through and that mutual respect as well as an appreciation of both our similarities and differences have provided us the avenue to become peace champions in our own special way.

The PEACE Mindanao project strives to address conflict eradication in Mindanao by advocating a culture of peace, tolerance and increasing social cohesion, specifically in the cities of Marawi and Cotabato.

The Teach Peace, Build Peace Movement for one has as its mission to make every Filipino child and youth a peace hero through peace education. For those who wonder what peace education is, it is the process of acquiring values, knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself, others and the natural environment they belong to. More importantly, peace education prevents conflict by promoting conflict resolution, hence making it transformative.

On the other end, the environmental project to be implemented by World Vision Germany will fulfill one of the priorities of the EU, which is on the matter of circular economy and plastic waste management wherein our local economies, civil society organizations and micro, small and medium enterprises play key roles in driving the circular economy transitions and establishing cutting edge and localized solutions to the plastic waste problem.

In conclusion, it has been a while since I last visited Marawi and I look forward to such lasting programs where all of us, regardless of the region we belong to, should, and once and for all, embrace a culture of security through a whole-of-society approach by taking part in the strengthening of our communities across the regions.

Without peace, no nation and no single individual can move forward and when it comes to the circular economy, zero waste helps us improve access to vital resources such as food while providing the much needed support for our local economies.

THE STAR

[Philippines hopes for waste-to-energy technology amid waste disposal headache](#)

MANILA (Xinhua): A Philippine lawmaker is pushing for utilising waste-to-energy technologies to improve solid waste management and provide an alternative source of energy as the South-East Asian country is projected to generate 92 million tonnes of waste from 2022 to 2025.

Philippine Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri said on Wednesday (Feb 8) that he has filed a Bill encouraging the innovations in the recovery, conservation, processing, treatment, and disposal of solid waste by using waste-to-energy technologies.

"Unfortunately, our solid waste disposal system is yet to keep up with the continuously increasing amount of household and domestic wastes that we produce," Zubiri said, adding that waste-to-energy shall be classified as another renewable energy resource.

"This way, not only would we be able to prevent our landfills from being filled up, but we can harness usable energy from non-recyclable waste," he said.

The Environmental Management Bureau projects that from 2022 to 2025, the country's generated waste will hit 92 million tonnes.

"The protection of our environment is an important consideration, so safeguards are provided in the proposed measure to make sure that this innovation will not be at the cost of health or environment safety," the senator added.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[Call for Proposals](#)

Local government units (LGUs) can now submit project proposals to access the People's Survival Fund (PSF) — a grant facility for LGUs to implement local climate change adaptation initiatives.

Aligned with the objective of advancing local resilience, the Department of Finance (DOF), chairing the PSF Board, issued the Call for Proposals enabling access by LGUs to PSF.

More information about the PSF, including templates, may be downloaded through the CCC website at www.climate.gov.ph.

RADYO INQUIRER

People's Survival Fund sa LGUs ikinasa

By: Chona Yu

Maari nang magsumite ngayon ang local government units (LGUs) ng project proposals para ma-access ang People's Survival Fund (PSF).

Ito ang grant facility ng pamahalaan sa LGUs par maipatupad ang local climate change adaptation initiatives.

Ayon sa pahayag ng Climate Change Commission, naglabas na ng panukala ang Department of Finance na tumatayong chairman ng PSF Board, para maiangkla at makamit ang target na advancing local resilience.

Para makakuha ng pondo sa PSF, pinapayuhan ang LGUs na magsumite ng documentary requirements gaya ng Letter of Intent; Accomplished Project Proposal Template; Adaptation references such as Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments, CCA-DRR-Enhanced Comprehensive Land Use/ Development Plans, and Local Climate Change Action Plan; at Annual Investment Plan.

Maaring isumite ang aplikasyon sa PSF Board Secretariat sa DOF.

Matatapos ang Call for Proposals sa Marso 31, 2023.

Inilunsad ang PSF noong 2015 na naglalayong magkaroon ng long-stream finance para sa adaptation projects ng LGUs.

Sa ilalim ng Republic Act 10174 of 2012, pangangasiwaan ang PSF ng Board kung saan ang kalihim ng DOF ang magsisilbing board habang magsisilbing miyembro ang Climate Change Commission PH, Department of Budget and Management, National Economic and Development Authority, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Philippine Commission on Women, at sectoral representatives.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[People's Survival Fund now available for LGU climate adaptation initiatives](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

MANILA, Philippines — Local government units can now submit climate adaptation proposal to access the People's Survival Fund—a grant facility for initiatives that will help communities deal with the impacts of climate change.

The Climate Change Commission announced that local governments have until March 31 to submit their proposals.

The PSF is an annual allocation for LGUs and accredited organizations to carry out climate adaptation projects that include water resources management, land management, agriculture and fisheries and health, and other activities that serve as guarantee for the risk insurance needs of farmers, agricultural workers and other stakeholders.

The fund will be also used for establishing regional centers and information networks, setting up forecasting and early warning systems, and supporting an LGU's planning, preparedness and management of climate change impacts.

The PSF is managed and administered by the People's Survival Fund Board, which is chaired by the Department of Finance.

The CCC said that LGUs should submit to the DOF's PSF Board Secretariat a letter of intent, accomplished project proposal template, climate risk and vulnerability assessments, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction-enhanced comprehensive land use or development plans and local climate change action plan, and annual investment plan.

Local government units with high poverty incidence, are exposed to climate risks, and have a key biodiversity area will be prioritized.

The PSF was created under Republic Act 10174, which amended the Climate Change Act of 2009. The P1-billion replenishable annual allocation intends to provide support on top of the year appropriations to LGUs for climate change-related programs and projects.

NET25

LGUs pinagsusumite ng proposed ng climate adaptation programs hanggang Marso 31

By: Eearlo Bringas

Hanggang katapusan ng Marso ngayong taon ang ibinigay ng Climate Change Commission of the Philippines para makapagsumite ng proposed climate change adaptation projects and program ang mga Local Government Office at Units sa buong bansa.

Ito ay para masimulan na ang pagkakaroon ng access sa People's Survival Fund na isang grand facility sa mga lgu para iimplementa ang local climate change adaptation initiative.

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