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**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



## LMB, LRA working to link databases

Published September 3, 2020, 11:48 AM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Land Management Bureau (LMB) and the Land Registration Authority (LRA) are working on linking together their respective land information databases as they aim to provide the public a seamless and worry-free land-related transactions in the coming months.

A joint memorandum circular is now being drafted that would allow both agencies to link together their land information databases using a software intermediary called Application Programming Interface (API).

API will connect the LMB's Land Administration and Management System (LAMS) with the LRA's Philippine Land Registration and Information System (PHILARIS).

LMB is the agency responsible for providing direction and technical support to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) field offices on land management and administration, while the LRA is an attached agency of the Department of Justice that handles the registration and transfer of land titles issued through administrative and judicial proceedings.

LMB Director Emelyne Talabis said the data-sharing innovation is part of the government's intensified efforts to cut red tape and improve the quality of frontline services to the public, pursuant to Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018.

"The new system will relieve land title applicants from directly requesting and submitting land records from each agency as part of the verification and registration requirements," Talabis said. "This will significantly reduce turnaround time in the processing of land transactions," she added.

Under the planned online data-sharing system, applicants — through accredited geodetic engineers — will no longer need to personally request and submit necessary requirements, such as lot status certification from the LRA as requirement for the verification and approval of survey plans and issuance of patents by the DENR.

The geodetic engineers will also no longer need to submit the technical description hard copy of DENR-approved plans to LRA when registering subdivision surveys as a prerequisite to the issuance of land title certificates.

"With the implementation of the data linkage eliminating manual submission of documents, not only will the efficiency of land transaction processes be improved, it will also help reduce physical contacts from clients as required under the so-called 'new normal' brought about by the COVID-19 crisis," Talabis said.

She added that using the API and following the agreed specified system protocols and format, acquiring data from LAMS and PHILARIS can be done without physically accessing the database servers and compromising data security of each agency.



# LMB and LRA online data-sharing system paves way for ‘seamless’ land transactions

By **Jonathan L. Mayuga**

September 3, 2020

AN online data sharing system designed to provide the public with seamless and worry-free land-related transactions will soon be made available to the public.

The Land Management Bureau (LMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Land Registration Authority (LRA) are now drafting a joint memorandum circular that would allow them to link together their respective land information databases using a software intermediary called Application Programming Interface (API), the DENR said in a statement.

LMB is the agency responsible for providing direction and technical support to DENR field offices on land management and administration, while the LRA is an attached agency of the Department of Justice that handles the registration and transfer of land titles issued through administrative and judicial proceedings.

API will connect the LMB’s Land Administration and Management System (LAMS) with the LRA’s Philippine Land Registration and Information System (PHILARIS).

The data sharing innovation is part of the government’s intensified efforts to cut red tape and improve the quality of frontline services to the public, pursuant to Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018, LMB Director Emelyne Talabis said.

“The new system will relieve the land title applicants from directly requesting and submitting land records from each agency as part of the verification and registration requirements,” Talabis said.

“This will significantly reduce turnaround time in the processing of land transactions,” she added.

Under the planned online data sharing system, applicants—through accredited geodetic engineers (GEs)—will no longer need to personally request and submit necessary requirements, such as lot status certification from the LRA as a requirement for the verification and approval of survey plans and issuance of patents by the DENR.

GEs will also no longer need to submit the technical description hard copy of DENR-approved plans to LRA when registering subdivision surveys as a prerequisite to the issuance of land title certificates.

“With the implementation of the data linkage eliminating manual submission of documents, not only will the efficiency of land transaction processes be improved: it will also help reduce physical contacts from clients as required under the so-called new normal brought about by the Covid-19 crisis,” Talabis pointed out.

Using the API and following the agreed specified system protocols and format, acquiring data from LAMS and PHILARIS can be done without physically accessing the database servers and compromising data security of each agency, Talabis said.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/09/03/lmb-and-lra-online-data-sharing-system-paves-way-for-seamless-land-transactions/>



## DENR, LRA to combine online databases

September 3, 2020 | 7:14 pm



PHILSTAR

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it will integrate its land database with that of the Land Registration Authority (LRA) to ease the underlying processes behind land transactions.

In a statement, the DENR said its Land Management Bureau (LMB) and the LRA are in the process of linking their databases using intermediary software.

The plan is to connect the LMB's Land Administration and Management System with LRA's Philippine Land Registration and Information System.

LMB Director Emelyne V. Talabis said the data-sharing project is in compliance with the national government's directive to cut red tape and improve the quality of frontline services.

"The new system will relieve land title applicants from directly requesting and submitting land records from each agency as part of the verification and registration requirements," Ms. Talabis said.

Once launched, applicants will no longer be required to personally request and submit requirements like lot status certification from the LRA as a requirement for the approval of survey plans and patent issuances by the DENR.

Geodetic engineers will also no longer need to submit a hard copy of the technical description of DENR-approved plans to LRA when registering subdivision surveys for land title certificates.

"The system will also help reduce physical contact from clients as required under the so-called 'new normal' brought about by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) crisis," Ms. Talabis said.

The LMB provides technical support for DENR field offices in land management and administration.

The LRA is an arm of the Department of Justice, which processes the registration and transfer of land titles issued via administrative and judicial proceedings. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/denr-lra-to-combine-online-databases/>



## DENR- LMB AT LRA MAGSASAGAWA NG ONLINE DATA-SHARING SYSTEM VS RED TAPE



September 4, 2020 @ 6:24 AM 1 hour ago

PARA lalong mapabilis at mapaayos ang transaksyon ng publiko kaugnay sa land transaction, maglalabas ng online data-sharing system ang Land Management Bureau ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources at Land Registration Authority.

Sa kasalukuyan, gumagawa na ng joint memorandum circular ang dalawang ahensya na magbibigay-raan upang mapagsama ang kani-kanilang land information database gamit ang software intermediary na tinatawag na Application Programming Interface.

Maikokonekta ng API ang Land Administration and Management System (LAMS) ng LMB at ang Philippine Land Registration and Information System (PHILARIS) ng LRA.

Ayon kay LMB Director Emelyne Talabis, ang data-sharing innovation na ito ay bahagi ng pinalakas na kampanya ng gobyerno para mapigilan ang red tape at mapabuti ang kalidad ng frontline service sa publiko, base na rin sa nakasaad sa Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018.

“The new system will relieve land title applicants from directly requesting and submitting land records from each agency as part of the verification and registration requirements,” sabi pa ni Talabis.

“This will significantly reduce turnaround time in the processing of land transactions,” dagdag pa nito.

Sa planong online data-sharing system, ang mga aplikante sa pamamagitan ng mga accredited na geodetic engineer (GEs) ay hindi na kailangang personal na humingi at magsumite ng mga kinakailangang dokumento tulad ng lot status certification mula sa LRA bilang requirement para sa beripikasyon at approval ng survey plans at pag-isyu ng patent ng DENR.

Hindi na rin kakailanganin ng GEs na magsumite sa LRA ng hard copy ng technical description ng aprubadong plano mula sa DENR, sa pagrehistro ng mga subdivision survey bilang pangunahing requirement sa pag-isyu ng mga land title certificate.



“With the implementation of the data linkage eliminating manual submission of documents, not only will the efficiency of land transaction processes be improved, it will also help reduce physical contacts from clients as required under the so-called ‘new normal’ brought about by the COVID-19 crisis,” paliwanag pa ni Talabis.

Sinabi rin ni Talabis na sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng API at alinsunod na rin sa napagkasunduang system protocol at format, ang pagkuha ng data mula sa LAMS at PHILARIS ay maaaring gawin kahit na walang pisikal na access sa database servers at compromising data security ng bawat ahensya.

Ang LMB ay ang ahensyang responsable sa pagbibigay ng direksyon at suportang teknikal sa DENR field offices ng land management and administration, habang ang LRA naman ay isang attached agency ng Department of Justice na humahawak sa registration at transfer ng land titles na inisyu sa pamamagitan ng administrative at judicial proceedings.



## DENR: Not white sand but crushed 'dolomite boulders' will be used to cover 500-meter Manila baywalk

Published September 3, 2020, 9:42 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

An official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) clarified that it is not "white sand" that will be used to fill the 500-meter stretch of the baywalk as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation.



DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda

DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda said the "sand" that was brought to Manila was crushed "dolomite boulders" from Cebu.

"Kasi bawal iyung sand na ibiyahe na galing sa mga coastal natin. (Because sand is not allowed to be transported from our coastal areas)," he said in a video message sent to reporters.

Fisherfolk group Pamalakaya earlier criticized the plan of the DENR to fill a portion of the Manila Bay baywalk with "white sand."

The group further described the plan as "artificial rehabilitation focusing on aesthetic appearance rather than addressing the environmental degradation problems" of Manila Bay.

"Filling of white sand would less likely contribute to the rehabilitation and restoration of the degrading Manila Bay," Pamalakaya national chairperson Fernando Hicap said.

However, Antiporda defended the DENR rehabilitation plan and asked the public to take care of the Manila Bay.



“Kailangan kumilos na tayo at magtulong-tulong na tayo. (We need to act and help each other),” he said.

Antiporda said the DENR is slowly bringing down Manila Bay’s coliform level but it is still far from reaching the standard level.

The standard coliform level for coastal waters which is safe for swimming and other similar recreational activities is 100 most probable number per 100 milliliter (mpn/100ml).

When the Manila bay rehabilitation started in 2018, the fecal coliform level in Manila Bay was around 300 million mpn/100ml

The DENR aims to reduce the coliform level in Manila Bay to less than 270 most probable number (MPN) per 100 milliliters (ml) and in all esteros or waterways leading to the bay to 100 mpn/100ml.





# DENR hit for planning to fill Manila baywalk with white sand

Published September 3, 2020, 4:53 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

A fisherfolk group on Thursday criticized the plan of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to fill the 500-meter stretch of the baywalk with white sand as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation.



(MANILA BULLETIN)

Pamalakaya described the plan as “artificial rehabilitation focusing on aesthetic appearance rather than addressing the environmental degradation problems” of Manila Bay.

“The DENR doesn’t have any concrete plan to restore the bay that it resorts to focus on external beautification which is actually a sham and artificial, instead of a genuine rehabilitation,” Pamalakaya national chairperson Fernando Hicap said in a statement.

“Filling of white sand would less likely contribute to the rehabilitation and restoration of the degrading Manila Bay,” he added.

The group instead called for the restoration of mangrove areas that were destroyed due to destructive conversion projects.

“Why invest in white sand when you can plant mangrove forests and sea grasses that would restore and balance its marine ecosystem?” Hicap asked.

“No amount of white sand and external beauty can restore Manila Bay if such destructive projects are going through. Worse, DENR has approved destructive reclamation projects where mangrove forest was cut down and local crab production is now threatened,” he said. (Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz)



# Environment groups slam DENR's plan to fill Manila Bay shore with 'white sand'

By: [Katrina Hallare](#) - Reporter / [@KHallareINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 07:25 PM September 03, 2020



Sunset view at the Manila Bay on Roxas Boulevard. INQUIRER.net file photo / Edward Lustan

MANILA, Philippines — The plan of the Department of Environment and Natural Resource (DENR) to fill Manila Bay's shore with white sand did not sit well with environmental groups, saying that the move was “completely absurd and highfalutin.”

In a statement on Wednesday, Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said that the environment department's plan to dump white sand was an “artificial rehabilitation focusing on aesthetic appearance rather than addressing the environmental degradation problems.”

“The DENR doesn't have any concrete plan to restore the bay that it resorts to focus on external beautification which is actually a sham and artificial, instead of a genuine rehabilitation,” Pamalakaya national chairman Fernando Hicap said.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, in a video message to reporters, clarified that the white sand is actually crushed dolomite boulders which came from Cebu then flown to Manila.

“So just a clarification na ini-overlay siya dun sa beach area para makita ng tao na itong white sand ay masi-signify ng kalinisan,” Antiporda said.

(So it's just a clarification that this was overlaid in the beach area for that the people to see that the white sand will signify cleanliness.)

As for those who worry that the artificial white sand would erode into Manila Bay, Antiporda said: “Meron po tayo mga engineering interventions na gagawin dyan para ho masiguro na ma-preserve ito at masustain natin yung ika nga'y napakagandang Manila Bay.”

(We have engineering interventions that will be done to make sure the bay will be preserved and to sustain the beauty of Manila Bay.)

But Hicap said that filling of the white sand along Manila Bay “would less likely contribute to [its] rehabilitation and restoration.”



Likewise, Youth Strike 4 Climate Philippines in its Facebook page said that it should “stop harvesting sand from other places just to beautify this dirty bay.”

“There are so many issues we need to FOCUS ON like the pandemic response and yet here is our government, doing this stuff,” the environmental group said.

In January, the DENR reported that Manila Bay’s [coliform levels “drastically decreased”](#) a year after it launched its rehabilitation efforts project dubbed as “Battle for Manila Bay.”

JPV

Source: [https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1330929/environment-groups-slam-denrs-plan-to-fill-manila-bay-shore-with-white-sand?utm\\_medium=Social&utm\\_source=Facebook#Echobox=1599132706](https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1330929/environment-groups-slam-denrs-plan-to-fill-manila-bay-shore-with-white-sand?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook#Echobox=1599132706)



Workers on Thursday prepare the white sand at the Manila Bay, which has been under rehabilitation since January 2019.

The STAR/KJ Rosales

## 'White-sanding' along Manila Bay will not make it cleaner, DENR reminded

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - September 3, 2020 - 5:02pm

MANILA, Philippines (**Updated 5:59 p.m.**) — Dumping white sand in Manila Bay would contribute nothing to its rehabilitation and might even affect the marine wildlife and communities around the area, organizations stressed Thursday.

Piles of white sand are being dumped along the shore of Manila Bay, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said, in a bid to transform the bay—known for its stunning sunset views and garbage-strewn, murky waters—into something similar to popular tourist destination Boracay.

"Here in Manila, we know that there are many who are poor. We will bring the white sand closer to them so it is like they are in Boracay even if they are just on Roxas Boulevard. That is what we aim to achieve here," Antiporda said in Filipino in an interview on radio DZBB.

But the move to fill the 500-meter stretch with white sand—actually crushed dolomite boulders, according to Antiporda—did not sit well with environmental groups, who said the dumping could cause more harm to Manila Bay.

'Pure aesthetics'.

Fishers group PAMALAKAYA called the project "completely absurd and highfaluting."

"[This is] artificial rehabilitation focusing on aesthetic appearance rather than addressing the environmental degradation problems [of Manila Bay]," Fernando Hicap, PAMALAKAYA national chairperson, said in a statement.

"Filling of white sand would less likely contribute to the rehabilitation and restoration of degrading Manila Bay," he added.

The Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment said such "land reclamation activity might endanger marine wildlife and affect the coastline communities situated around and nearby the area."

"Improper sand dumping at the baywalk can result into its topping over into its topping over Manila's built infrastructure because the area is prone to coastal flooding. It can also result in siltation and degradation of the adjoining marine conservation areas," Leon Dulce, Kalikasan PNE national coordinator, said.



In an email, marine conservation advocacy group Oceana noted that the material being dumped along Manila Bay does not seem to have come from the area and that putting it there "may not just be destroying the natural ecosystem in Manila Bay but also of the source of this white sand."

"To cover the coast of Manila Bay with white sand, the government needs hundreds of tons of sand and this would have dire impacts to the coastal integrity of the source of this substrate," Oceana also said. According to reports, the white sand is from Cebu.

Oceana vice president Gloria Estenzo Ramos said in the email that under national laws, agencies need to go through the Environmental Impact Study process and get an Environmental Compliance Certificate for projects that may affect the environment.

She added that the project will be a waste of taxpayers' money since "the sand will be simply washed away by the waves and will mix with the black sand which is the natural element of this part of Manila Bay" when a storm hits.

Focus on mangrove forests, sea grasses instead

Antiporda said that swimming is not yet allowed in Manila Bay because of high coliform levels in the water.

The cleaning up of the polluted Manila Bay began in January last year following the rehabilitation of Boracay.

Addressing concerns that waves or storm surges may wash away the white sand, Antiporda said there are engineering interventions to protect the "white beach."

But for PAMALAKAYA, the government should resolve the underlying cause of the bay's degradation instead of beautifying it.

"Why invest in white sand when you can plant mangrove forests and sea grasses that would restore and balance its marine ecosystem?" Hicap said.

"No amount of white sand an external beauty can restore Manila Bay if such destructive projects are going through," he added.

The DENR in June granted an environmental compliance certificate to the land reclamation project in Bacoor City, which may result in the displacement of some 700 families and may threaten the remaining mangrove forest in the coastal city.

In northern Manila Bay, some residents of Barangay Taliptip in Bulakan town have left their homes—the proposed site of the New Manila International Airport—in exchange for compensation.

The House of Representative approved on second reading Wednesday the bill granting San Miguel Corp. the franchise for the construction and operation of the airport city complex.



# PANOORIN: Pagtatambak ng 'white sand' sa Manila Bay umarangkada

(Philstar.com) - September 3, 2020 - 4:52pm



MANILA, Philippines — Nagsisimula nang trabahuhin ng pamahalaan ang pagtratransporma ng Manila Bay para magmukhang "sosyal" na beach, Huwebes.

Ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources, bahagi pa rin ito ng programa ng gobyerno na i-rehabilitate ang nasabing look — na nagdurusa sa polusyon at mataas na fecal coliform levels.

Target ngayon ng DENR na lalo pang mapalinis ang kaledad ng tubig hanggang maibaba sa 200 mpn/100 ml, at gawing mala-"Boracay" aniya ang bay area.

"Kung ma-achieve [ang] target within the year, kaya na siya pag-swimmingan," ani Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda.

In January this year, Secretary Roy Cimatu said the most recent data from the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau showed that the coliform levels have "drastically decreased." [pic.twitter.com/XS9Xo9SJ9N](https://pic.twitter.com/XS9Xo9SJ9N)

— The Philippine Star (@PhilippineStar) [September 3, 2020](#)

Enero 2020 nang sabihin ni Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu na bumaba na nang husto ang coliform levels ng Manila Bay, batay na rin daw sa datos na ipinakita ng Environmental Management Bureau.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/bansa/2020/09/03/2039868/panoorin-pagtatambak-ng-white-sand-sa-manila-bay-umarangkada/amp/>



# Manila Bay gets the ‘Boracay experience’

Published 3 hours ago on September 4, 2020 03:50 AM

By [Elmer N. Manuel @tribunephil Imer](#)



President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has allocated P42.95 billion for the Manila Bay rehabilitation project. Photograph by Bob Dungo Jr. for the Daily Tribune @tribunephil\_bob

As the rehabilitation of the Manila Bay continues, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Thursday announced that it has begun dumping powdery-white sand on the baywalk of Manila Bay.

In a television interview, Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda stressed that while they are going for the “Boracay experience” to the country’s capital, the sand is composed of synthetic material as transporting natural white sand from coastal areas is prohibited.

“We are bringing here the white sand feels in the metro,” said Antiporda. “But the sand that came to Manila is not actually sand. It came from dolomite boulders that was crushed and turned into sand from Cebu.”

But while the ongoing project has good intentions, Greenpeace Philippines opposed the idea, saying that the project was unnecessary with the clean-up far from over.

“Will this have no environmental impact? How will you contain this? What happens when there are storm surges? Is the dumping area truly clean?” said Regional Oceans Research Coordinator for Greenpeace Southeast Asia Ephraim Batungbacal.

He added that the dumping of sand does not add to the objective of cleaning the Manila Bay.

“If the objective is to save Manila Bay by cleaning it up, putting materials on top of the uncleaned environment would not help,” Batungbacal said.

However, Antiporda defended the project, saying this was a clear reminder to the public to take care of Manila Bay.

“This is an awareness project telling the people to do their responsibility to take care of the environment. We have to take action and we need everyone’s help in this cleanup,” said Antiporda.

The DENR official also clarified that the water in Manila Bay is still far from the ideal cleanliness that will make it safe for the public to swim in, as the target is 200 most probable number (MPN) of fecal coliform level.

When the Manila bay rehab started two years ago, the fecal coliform level in Manila Bay reached as high as 330 million MPN and if the DENR achieves the 200 MPN, Antiporda said the public will already be allowed to swim.

Source: [https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/09/04/manila-bay-gets-the-boracay-experience/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=manila-bay-gets-the-boracay-experience](https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/09/04/manila-bay-gets-the-boracay-experience/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=manila-bay-gets-the-boracay-experience)



## Manila Bay 'white sand' masisilayan na!



September 3, 2020 @ 5:59 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Kung hanggang ngayon ay pinapangarap mo ang pagpunta sa Boracay pero dahil pandemic at salat sa budget ay hindi mo magawa, worry no more dahil dinala na ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang mala-Bora experience sa Manila Bay.

Sa ngayon kasi ay naglalagay ng "white sand" ang DENR sa dalampasigan ng Manila Bay.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda, napagpasiyahan ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu na ilapit sa taumbayan ang white sand dahil ang karamihan ay hindi nakakapunta sa mga lugar na mayroong magagandang beach tulad ng Bohol, Boracay, El Nido at iba pa.

Ayon kay Antiporda, mararanasan na ng taumbayan ang tila-Boracay na beach dahil sa white sand kahit pa nasa Roxas Boulevard lamang ito.

Ang nakikitang puting buhangin aniya sa Manila Bay ay galing sa Cebu ngunit nilinaw ni Antiporda na hindi ito totoong "white sand" kundi dolomite boulder na dinurog at ginawang buhangin saka dinala sa Maynila.

Paalala naman ni Antiporda sa publiko na magtutungo sa Manila Bay na bawal itong kunin.

Nabatid na humigit kumulang na isang hektarya ang lalagyan ng white sand.

Pinayauhan din ni Antiporda ang publiko na huwag munang maligo sa Manila Bay dahil hindi pa aniya ito "swimmable".

Unang-una aniya ang water quality ay hindi pa ganung kalinis bagamat bumaba na ang coliform level nito dahil na rin sa inilagay na sewerage treatment.

Target naman ng DENR na maibalik ang kalidad ng tubig sa Manila Bay ngayong taon upang masiguro na ligtas ang mga tao na maliligo.





Bawal namang kumain sa white sand sa Manila bay, bawal din ang mga single use plastic, hindi rin pinapayagan ang pagtatayo ng mga tambayan sa lugar kapag nagbukas na ito. Mahigpit din ang ipatutupad na pagbabantay at tanging pasyal lamang ang papayagan, ayon pa kay Antiporda.

Nanawagan naman si Antiporda sa publiko na iwasan nang magtapon ng basura upang mapanatiling malinis at ligtas ang tubig sa Manila Bay. **Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden**



# Gilid ng Manila Bay, tatambakan ng puting buhangin

ni [Lolet Abania](#) | September 3, 2020



Inihahanda na ang puting buhangin na itatambak sa baybayin ng Manila Bay malapit sa US Embassy bilang rehabilitasyon at pagpapaganda ng siyudad sa gagawing "Manila Bay Beach."

Nilalayan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na matambakan ng 500-meter ng puting buhangin ang kahabaan ng baywalk sa mga susunod na araw, kasabay ng plano ng lokal na pamahalaan na gawin ang Manila Bay Beach na makatutulong sa turismo ng lungsod.

Ayon kay Antiporda, ang puting buhangin ay nagmula pa sa Cebu beaches. Sa lugar na ito matatagpuan ang magagandang white-sand beaches at sandbars tulad ng Bantayan Island at Malapascua Island.

Gayundin, inaasahan ng awtoridad na matatapos ang pagtatambak ng puting buhangin sa Manila Bay Beach hanggang sa September 19, kasabay ng International Coastal Cleanup Day. Samantala, noong Enero 2019, may kabuuang 45.59 tonelada ng basura na umabot sa 11 trak ang nakolekta mula sa Manila Bay. Sa ngayon, patuloy na hinahakot ang mga basura at nililinis ang Manila Bay, kung saan nag-organisa ang lungsod ng clean-up drives upang maibalik ang dating kagandahan ng look ng Maynila.



## White sand sa Manila Bay waldas

By Abante News Online — Last updated Sep 3, 2020

NEWS



19 0

BUMULAGA ang white sand project ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR ) na pinamumunuan ni Secretary Roy Cimatu sa Baywalk sa Manila Bay sa gitna ng pandemya.

Ito ay matapos na bumungad ang pagtatambak ng puting buhangin ng DENR sa baywalk ng Manila Bay.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, bubuhusan ng white sand ang kahabaan ng bay walk sa Roxas Boulevard para hindi ito basta dumihan ng mga tao.

Simula September 19 ay ikakalat na sa Manila Bay ang buhangin na isasabay sa 'International coastal clean- up day' anang opisyal sa panayam ng '24 Oras.'

Nabatid na bahagi umano ito ng rehabilitation program sa Manila Bay kung saan ang white sand ay nanggaling sa Cebu.

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Gayunman ay aminado si Antiporda na sa ngayon ay malabo pang malinis nang tuluyan ang lugar dahil hindi pa rin kagandahan ang kalidad ng tubig sa Manila Bay.

"Ayaw natin palusungin ang mga tao dito na merong health risk," ayon sa DENR official.

Ang pondo sa proyekto ay huhugutin sa national government

partikular sa DENR.

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Napag-alaman ding ginawa ang proyekto para sa mga kababayang hindi makakapunta sa Boracay.

Duda naman ang ilang taga-Maynila sa proyektong ito dahil aanurin lamang umano ang mga buhangin na tiyak na pinondohan ng malaking halaga ng gobyerno.

Nilinaw naman ng tanggapan ni Manila Mayor Isko Moreno sa pamamagitan ng kanyang chief of staff na si Cesar Chavez, na walang kinalaman ang City hall sa proyekto at wala rin itong inilabas na pondo para rito. (RP/Juliet de Loza-Cudia)



## Manila Bay white sand ng DENR malulusaw lang!

By Abante News Online. — Last updated Sep 3, 2020

NEWS



17 0

Walang bilib ang isang University of the Philippines (UP) professor at disaster expert sa pagtatambak ng mga puting buhangin sa dalampasigan ng Manila Bay para magmukha itong Boracay beach.

"I believe that all the white sand will be washed out from the coastline and brought to the bottom of deeper water," tweet ni Mahar Lagmay bilang reaksiyon sa isang Twitter post kung saan ipinakita ang gabundok na mga white sand na tinatambak sa Manila Bay.

Si Lagmay ay isang disaster expert at executive director ng DOST Project NOAH (Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazard).

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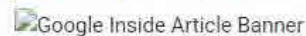


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Maging si Muntinlupa City Rep. Ruffy Biazon ay nagpahayag laban sa umano'y "cosmetic surgery" na ginagawa ng tanggapan ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu sa Manila Bay.

"I shudder at the thought that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is the leading proponent of this environmental

cosmetic surgery. Nature has its way of pushing back at man-made impositions," sabi ni Biazon.



Paliwanag ng DENR, gagawin na tulad ng Boracay ang bahagi ng Manila Bay na nasa Baywalk sa Roxas Boulevard, Maynila. Bahagi umano ito ng rehabilitation program sa Manila Bay at ang white sand ay galing pa sa Cebu.



# DENR dumps synthetic white sand on baywalk as part of Manila Bay rehab

April Raffles, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Sep 03 2020 03:54 PM | Updated as of Sep 03 2020 11:46 PM



White sand from Cebu are dumped in parts of Baywalk in Manila Bay. *April Raffles, ABS-CBN News*

**MANILA (UPDATE)** - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is bringing the Boracay experience to the country's capital, as it began dumping powdery-white sand on the baywalk of Manila Bay.

"Kung hindi man sila makapunta ng Boracay, Bohol, Palawan, or Cebu. Itong mga kababayan sa Maynila, ilalapit natin sa kanila ang white sand dito sa baywalk area," Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda told ABS-CBN News.

He clarified the sand was only synthetic because transporting natural white sand from coastal areas was prohibited.

"The sand that came to Manila is not actually sand. It came from dolomite boulders that was crushed and turned into sand from Cebu. Kasi bawal 'yung sand na ibiyahe na galing sa mga coastal natin," he said.

For environment group Greenpeace Philippines, the project is unnecessary, with the cleanup far from over.

"Ito bang pinagkuhanan nito wala din bang environmental impact? Paano mo ico-contain ito? 'Pag nagkaroon ba tayo ng storm surges ito ba ay dahan-dahan na makakain? And at the same time ito bang tinambakan eh malinis na ba?" the group's campaigner Sonny Batungbacal told ABS-CBN News.

(Will this have no environmental impact? How will you contain this? What happens when there are storm surges? Is the dumping area truly clean?)

Batungbacal added that the dumping of sand does not add to the objective of cleaning the Manila Bay.

"[If the] objective is to save Manila Bay by cleaning it up, putting materials on top of the uncleaned environment would not help," he said.

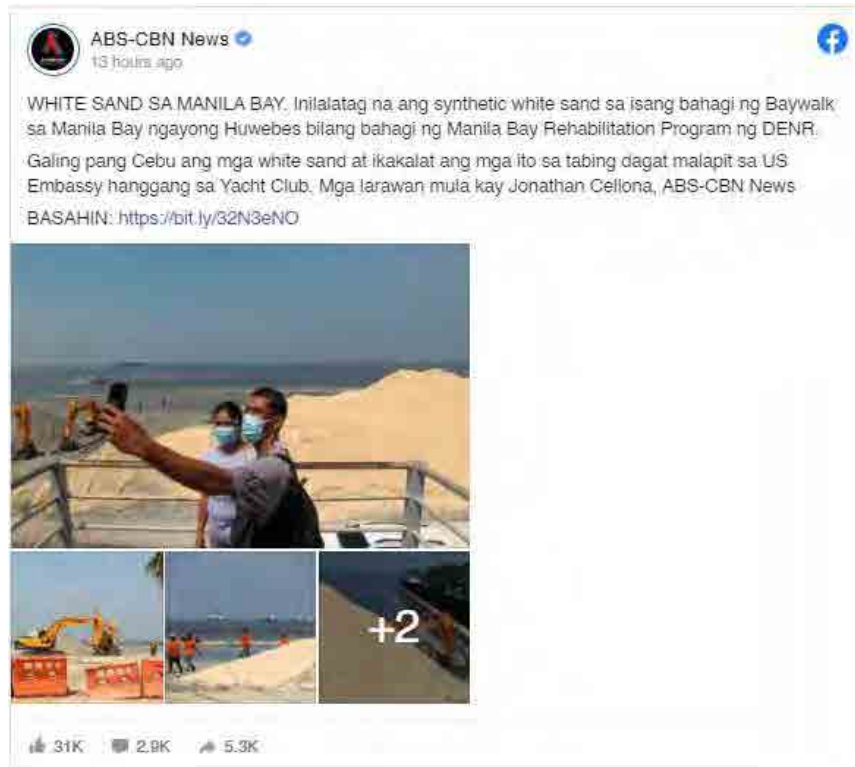
Advocacy group Oceana Philippines also expressed alarm that dumping sand in Manila Bay could negatively affect its natural ecosystem.

"This will be a total waste of people's money. Panahon na ng mga bagyo at malakas ang hampas ng alon sa Manila Bay pag may bagyo. The sand will be simply washed away by the waves and will mix with the black sand which is the natural element of this part of Manila Bay," Oceana Philippines Vice President Gloria Estenzo Ramos said in a statement.

The group urged the government to stop the reclamation and instead fulfill its mandate to rehabilitate Manila Bay.



"Many will be happier if they don't touch the coasts, let nature heal and most important, ensure full compliance of so many environmental laws which are not being respected and followed, even by government agencies. Government resources should be allocated more into helping Filipinos affected by the pandemic," Ramos added.



But Antiporda defended the project, saying this was a clear reminder to the public to take care of Manila Bay.

"This is an awareness project telling the people to do their responsibility to take care of the environment. Kailangan kumilos na tayo na magtulung-tulong na tayo," he said.

He, however, admitted that the water in Manila Bay was still far from the ideal cleanliness that would make it safe for the public to swim in.

The target is 200 most probable number (MPN) of fecal coliform level, he said.

When the Manila bay rehab started 2 years ago, the fecal coliform level in Manila Bay reached as high as 330 million MPN.

If the DENR achieves the 200 MPN, Antiporda said the public would already be allowed to swim.

Source: [https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/09/03/20/denr-dumps-synthetic-white-sand-on-baywalk-as-part-of-manila-bay-rehab?fbclid=IwAR3pBqV-AhslpulDgJZH5-P533yX8\\_c7Syg6z9-jNwY77pBwb2czJXpyo5g](https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/09/03/20/denr-dumps-synthetic-white-sand-on-baywalk-as-part-of-manila-bay-rehab?fbclid=IwAR3pBqV-AhslpulDgJZH5-P533yX8_c7Syg6z9-jNwY77pBwb2czJXpyo5g)



## **READ: Environmentalist, fisherfolk groups slam DENR's white sand 'cover-up' at Manila Bay**

Environmentalists and fisherfolk on Thursday criticized the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) plan to cover the Baywalk on Roxas Boulevard with white sand.

Greenpeace Southeast Asia campaigner Sonny Batungbacal on Thursday pointed out that pouring white sand does not resolve the pollution in the bay.

"If the intention of the 'white sand reclamation' is to cover up the existing pollution, time would tell when pollutants would leak," Batungbacal told GMA News Online.

"This is an aesthetic solution and does not solve pollution at the source," he added.

Citing information from the DENR, Batungbacal said that only 15 percent (2.4 million out of 16.3 million) of the water-served population in Metro Manila are connected to a sewerage system.

He added that only 3.84 percent (187,00 of 4,863,938) of water served population outside Metro Manila are provided with sanitation services.

"So the solution is 'white cover-up'?" Batungbacal said.

He said that environmental laws should be fully implemented to help Manila Bay recover from pollution. He noted that it would take time to recover considering its size and the 17 principal rivers draining to it. "If these rivers are clean, then Manila Bay will be," he told GMA News Online.

Batungbacal also urged water concessionaires to speed up the connection of the remaining 85 percent of water served population to the sewerage system.

"Cut pollution at the source, especially single-use plastics, and now, proper disposal of PPEs. Only then could nature takes course to recovery," he added.

### Artificial rehab

Fisherfolk groups' alliance PAMALAKAYA called the project an "artificial rehabilitation" that focused on aesthetics rather than addressing the environmental degradation problems of Manila Bay.

Pouring white sand would less likely contribute to the rehabilitation and restoration of the bay, PAMALAKAYA national chairperson Fernando Hicap said in a statement on Thursday.

"The DENR doesn't have any concrete plan to restore the bay that it resorts to focus on external beautification which is actually a sham and artificial, instead of a genuine rehabilitation," he added.

Hicap said that the DENR should stop "destructive" projects such as massive reclamation and the conversion of fishing grounds and start restoring damaged mangrove areas.

"Why invest in white sand when you can plant mangrove forests and sea grasses that would restore and balance its marine ecosystem?" he said.

"No amount of white sand and external beauty can restore Manila Bay if such destructive projects are going through," he pointed out.

Amid the efforts of DENR, Hicap noted that the department approved the reclamation projects in Bacoor City, and also Bulakan town where "mangrove forest was cut down and local crab production is now threatened."





Not natural to bay

Ocean conservation organization Oceana Philippines vice president Gloria Estenzo Ramos asked the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the DENR Resources to step in to this planned project by the agency.

Citing the Fisheries Code, Local Government Code, and Environmental Impact Assessment System Act, OCEANA said agencies should undergo Environmental Impact Study process and Environmental Compliance Certificate.

“Ironically, it is the DENR that does not seem to follow the requirements set by law,” Ramos told GMA News Online.

Oceana expressed alarm that the white sand is not the natural substance of the surface of the concerned portion of the bay.

Aside from destroying the natural ecosystem in Manila Bay, Oceana said the government may also damage the environment of the source of the white sand.

According to the group, the government needs hundreds of tons of sand and this would have dire impact on the coastal integrity of the source of the substrate.

“This will be a total waste of people’s money. Panahon na ng mga bagyo at malakas ang hampas ng alon sa Manila Bay pag may bagyo,” Ramos said.

“The sand will be simply washed away by the waves and will mix with the black sand which is the natural element of this part of Manila Bay,” she added.

Ramos pointed out that many will be happier if the DENR will “not touch the coasts and let Nature heal.” She added that the DENR should ensure full compliance with environmental laws—which are not being respected and followed, even by government agencies.

“Government resources should be allocated more into helping Filipinos affected by the pandemic,” Ramos said.

“Bakit inuuna ang purely aesthetic program sa rehabilitation ng Manila Bay? Para kanino itong programa na ito? Does the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) not know that they are destroying the coasts?” she added.

The DENR is planning to fill 500 meters of the Baywalk on Roxas Boulevard with white sand under the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program.

“Gagawin white sand itong, dito sa may bay walk area para makita ng tao na kapag puti ang kulay ng isang bagay, kailangan pangalagaan mo ito at ‘wag mo dumihan,” DENR undersecretary Benny Antiporda said.

— By JOVILAND RITA, GMA News

BM



Source:

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# DENR told to focus on pollution as it works to transform Manila Bay into a **‘white sand beach’**

By [Jeline Malasig](#) - September 3, 2020 - 5:41 PM



Pulverized dolomite rocks on Manila Bay in this screengrab of a video by Shyla Francisco of One News and TV5. (Screengrab from Shyla Francisco via Twitter)

Filipinos are asking the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to focus on alleviating water pollution in Manila Bay after it started dumping pulverized dolomite rocks on the bay walk as part of the **harbor’s rehabilitation program**.

**The government agency caught the public’s attention when pictures and videos of what looked liked “white sands” and “sand dunes” within the bay’s vicinity surfaced online.**

Reports said that the department sought to fill 500 meters of the bay walk on Roxas Boulevard with pulverized dolomite rocks from Cebu as part of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program that [started](#) in January 2017.

“Gagawin white sand itong, dito sa may bay walk area, para makita ng tao na kapag puti **ang kulay ng isang bagay, kailangan pangalagaan mo ito at ‘wag mo dumihan,’**” DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda was [quoted](#) as saying on a Wednesday report.

He later on [clarified](#) that pulverized dolomite rocks were dumped on the bay walk, contrary to reports that white sands were brought in.

A [dolomite](#) is a sedimentary rock that has color ranges of white-to-gray and white-to-light brown. It is used for construction materials and has the ability to neutralize acids.

Antiporda said that the initiative is for people who cannot go to Boracay or other tourist destinations amid the coronavirus pandemic.

**Boracay, the country’s top tourist destination**, is internationally recognized for its pristine beaches with fine white sands.

**Authorities are reportedly expecting “white sands” to be seen in the area as the International Coastal Clean Up Day approaches on September 18.**

The event encourages the public to rid beaches of garbage and make them aware of preserving oceans and waterways.

Several members of the Cabinet will oversee the program once it pushes through.



 **Shyla Francisco**  
@ShylaFrancisco

LOOK:Nagsimula nang magtambak ng puting buhangin ang bahagi na ito ng Manila Bay. Target kasi ng DENR gawing white sand beach ang lugar para sa mga kababayang hindi makapupunta sa Boracay at iba pang tourist destinations



1:00 PM · Sep 3, 2020

1.6K 348 people are Tweeting about this

 **The Philippine Star** ✓  
@PhilippineStar

Workers on Thursday prepare the white sand at the Manila Bay, which has been under rehabilitation since January 27, 2019 after the DENR recorded extremely high fecal coliform levels from major Manila Bay outfalls.



2:42 PM · Sep 3, 2020

26 See The Philippine Star's other Tweets

Antiporda admitted that while part of the bay walk would be filled with pulverized dolomite rocks, the bay’s water quality is still unswimmable.

“Pero ‘yung water quality natin, of course, hinahabol pa natin. Ayaw natin palusungin ang mga tao dito na merong health risk,” he said.

The problem is ‘pollution’



Some Filipinos, including environmental group Youth Strike for Climate Philippines, were not impressed by the move.

The group urged DENR to focus on ridding the bay of water pollution instead of artificially beautifying the area.

**“The problem is not the high fecal coliform but the pollution that Manila Bay is currently facing. STOP HARVESTING SAND FROM OTHER PLACES JUST TO BEAUTIFY THIS DIRTY BAY. There are so many issues we need to FOCUS ON like the pandemic response and yet here is our government, doing this stuff,” the group said on its [page](#).**

GMA broadcast journalist Atom Araullo **wondered if the project is “sustainable”** and shared his concerns about its potential environmental impacts.

**“Since white sand is not a natural feature of Manila Bay, one wonders if this project is sustainable. Besides, where is the white sand getting extracted? The environment impact of that kind of operation is worrying,” he [tweeted](#).**

Another Twitter user accused the initiative of being “short term” and urged officials to address the problem with Manila Bay’s waters.

**“Address how to minimize the pollution first. This looks like a short term plan? ‘San galing ang buhangin para tambakan ang Manila Bay? This looks destructive and unsustainable,”** the [online user](#) said.

**“It’s not that we lack sand in Manila, we lack the responsibility and accountability to fix the waste that goes out to the bay,”** commented another [online user](#) with an emoji of a man doing a facepalm.

Last January, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu [said](#) that DENR’s top priority until 2022 or until President Rodrigo Duterte steps down is the full-on rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

He admitted that while it is challenging to clean its heavily-polluted waters, they would make it swimmable to people and be a go-to place for recreation.

**“Our effort to restore Manila Bay is now in full swing and we hope to sustain the momentum of restoring it to its former glory in the coming years,”** Cimatu said before.

That month, fecal coliform levels in the Manila bay walk, the Baseco beach and the Estero Antonio de Abad have [dropped](#) due to the department’s rehabilitation efforts but it was still not enough.

Last **March, the harbor’s waters turned [turquoise blue](#)** which initially impressed Filipinos but it turned out to be an effect of harmful pollutants.

Source: <https://www.interaksyon.com/politics-issues/2020/09/03/176191/denr-told-to-focus-on-pollution-as-it-works-to-transform-manila-bay-into-a-white-sand-beach/>



## MANILA BAY SINIMULAN NG TAMBAKAN NG DOLOMITE ROCKS MULA CEBU

written by Judith Estrada-Larino September 3, 2020



Sinisimulan na ng DENR na patambakan nang dinurog na dolomite rocks mula sa Cebu ang bahagi ng baywalk sa Manila Bay.

Ito ayon kay DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda ay bahagi ng planong gawing mala Boracay ang Manila Bay.

Umalma naman dito si Greenpeace Philippine Campaigner Sonny Batungbacal dahil hindi malilinis ng pagtatapon ng synthetic white sand sa Manila Bay ang maduming kapaligiran nito.

Dinagsa naman ng mga negatibong komento ang nasabing hakbangin ng DENR kung saan ilang netizen ang nagsabing pagsasayang lang ng pera ang nais mangyari ng ahensya at sa halip ay dapat linising mabuti at ayusin ang mga tubo na lalabasan ng tubig patungong Manila Bay.



# Groups call white sand on Manila Bay 'a sham,' 'purely aesthetic'

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Sep 3, 2020 7:52:48 PM



(FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 3) — Two advocacy groups are questioning the decision of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to overlay white sand on the shores of Manila Bay along Roxas Boulevard.

In separate statements released on Thursday, marine conservation group Oceana Philippines and militant fishers group PAMALAKAYA said the act focused too much on aesthetic rehabilitation and did little to contribute to the rehabilitation and restoration of the area,

“The DENR doesn’t have any concrete plan to restore the bay that it resorts to focus on external beautification which is actually a sham and artificial, instead of a genuine rehabilitation,” said Fernando Hicap, national chairman of PAMALAKAYA.

Instead of white sand, Hicap said mangroves and sea grasses would be more beneficial to the bay.

“Why invest in white sand when you can plant mangrove forests and sea grasses that would restore and balance its marine ecosystem?” he said.

Meanwhile, Oceana said it seemed the DENR does not know the cost of what it was doing.

“Bakit inuuna ang purely aesthetic program sa rehabilitation ng Manila Bay? Para kanino itong programa na ito?” Oceana said a statement. “Does the Department of Environment and Natural Resources not know that they are destroying the coasts?”

[Translation: Why are they prioritizing a purely aesthetic program for Manila Bay's rehabilitation? Who is this project for? Does the Department of Environment and Natural Resources not know that they are destroying the coasts?]

Oceana Vice President Gloria Estenzo Ramos pointed out that government agencies are required to undergo Environmental Impact Study process and obtain an Environmental Compliance Certificate for this kind of project.

“Ironically, it is the DENR that does not seem to follow the requirements set by law,” she said.

Oceana also noted the sand being added to the bay does not seem to be originally from it, saying the government could be destroying not just the Manila Bay, but the source of the white sand as well.



In response, DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the material being overlaid along the baywalk was not sand, but dolomite boulders from Cebu that were crushed and transported to Manila.

"I-o-overlay siya sa beach area para makita ng tao na itong white sand e magsi-signify ng kalinisan," he said in a video message Thursday.

[Translation: This will be overlaid on the beach area so that people can see the white sand symbolizes cleanliness.]

Antiporda said it would be a reminder to people to keep the environment clean despite the pandemic.

"Dahil naniniwala po ang ating Kalihim Roy Cimatu na konektado ang pandemic na ito sa atin pong pagiging pabaya sa ating kalikasan at sa atin pong kapaligiran," he said.

[Translation: Because our Secretary Roy Cimatu believes the pandemic is connected to our being careless with nature and the environment.]

He also addressed concerns that the sand could simply erode.

"Meron po tayong mga engineering interventions na gagawin diyan para ho sigurong ma-preserve ito at masustain natin yung ating tinatawag na napakagandang Manila Bay," he said.

[Translation: We have engineering interventions that will ensure the preservation and will sustain the beauty of Manila Bay.]

The so-called beach nourishment project, he said, is phase 1 of the Manila Baywalk Project which would be inspected by secretaries of different government offices on Sept. 19.



Bilang bahagi ng Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program, tatambakan ng white sand ang 500-metrong bahagi ng Baywalk sa Roxas Boulevard.

Ayon kay DENR Spokesperson Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, ang kulay puti ay magiging paalala raw na panatilihin malinis ang lugar:

PANORIN: <https://bit.ly/2DsxVzg>

**“**

**Gagawing white sand dito sa Baywalk area para makita ng tao na kapag puti ang kulay ng isang bagay, kailangan pangalagaan mo ito at huwag dumihan.**

**DENR SPOKESPERSON USEC. BENNY ANTIPODA**  
*on the dumping of white sand in Manila Bay as part of its rehabilitation*

**@GMANEWS**

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## White sand

posted September 03, 2020 at 10:01 pm

by [Norman Cruz](#)



Workers prepare the white sand at the Manila Bay, which has been under rehabilitation since January 27, 2019 after the DENR recorded extremely high fecal coliform levels from major Manila Bay outfalls. In January this year, Secretary Roy Cimatu said the most recent data from the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau showed that the coliform levels have "drastically decreased."



Philippine Star

15h

Workers on Thursday prepare the white sand at the Manila Bay, which has been under rehabilitation since January 27, 2019 after the DENR recorded extremely high fecal coliform levels from major Manila Bay outfalls.

In January this year, Secretary Roy Cimatu said the most recent data from the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau showed that the coliform levels have "drastically decreased."



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LOOK: White sand sa Manila Bay?

Inaasahang mailalagay na ang puting buhangin sa dalampasigan ng Manila Bay sa mga susunod na araw bilang bahagi ng rehabilitation program ng DENR. | via Isa Avendaño-Umali/Super Radyo-DZBB 594kHz

Para sa ibang detalye, panoorin ang report: <https://bit.ly/2DsxVzg>



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# PEOPLE'S *Monitor*

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PONDO NG PINOY

"Ano Mang Magaling Kabir Malin  
Basta't Malinut Ay Patingong Langit"

**GOOD NEWS:**

When you give  
to the poor,  
don't let anyone  
know about it

— Matthew 6:2

## COMPLIANT SANITARY LANDFILL IN SUMILAO, BUKIDNON

A recent inspection conducted by Department of Environment and Natural Resources Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer Norito Estilano (3rd from left) found the newly opened sanitary landfill facility (SLF) in the municipality of Sumilao, Bukidnon, compliant with the requirements of Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 and in accordance with the municipality's Solid Waste Management Plan. The two-hectare Category 1 SLF, run by the municipality of Sumilao in Northern Mindanao that services 10 barangays and public markets, has an established leachate collection and treatment system (inset). (From Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service thru Precy F. Lazaro)





# Philippine wildlife reporting app promises to upgrade fight against trafficking

by [Rosy Mina](#) on 3 September 2020



- *The Philippines' environment department plans a year-end rollout of an app, currently being tested, that should make it easier for citizens and enforcement officials to report wildlife crimes.*
- *Illegal wildlife trafficking is the fourth-biggest transnational crime in the world, following the trafficking of drugs, people, and weapons; in the Philippines, the trade is estimated at \$1 billion a year, and threatens the country's unique wildlife, of which many species are found nowhere else.*
- *The WildALERT app is designed to overcome one of the main problems with reporting any kind of crime from remote areas — patchy internet reception — by using an offline mode that allows users to enter photographic and location data on-site and upload it when they get reception.*
- *The app also has a library feature, essentially a Facebook for endangered species, to allow users to quickly identify and report species they encounter; the lack of specialist knowledge is currently one of the big gaps in the existing campaign against the illegal wildlife trade.*

MANILA — In the Philippines, it's normal for neighbors to share their food, and — since areas most are still under a form of lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic — even toiletries, clothes, and other essentials. But what if a neighbor gives you wild animals?

That's exactly what happened to Christian Atienza, a resident of the town of Mabini in Batangas province, south of Manila. Imagine his surprise when his neighbor, Philip Ramos, turned over hatchlings of brahminy kites (*Haliastur indus*), locally known as *lawin*.

Ramos says he found the hatchlings in a neighborhood forest near his house and tried to release them back into the wild, but they kept returning to his home. At a loss for what to do with the young birds of prey, he handed them over to Atienza who, in turn, took care of them. Atienza reported the brahminy kites to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) after receiving offers and even threats from aggressive buyers.

Brahminy kites are found from the Indian subcontinent through Southeast Asia and down to Australia. In the Philippines, they're considered a threatened species, one of many that make up the country's 50 billion peso (\$1 billion) illegal wildlife trade.

In the case of Atienza's Brahminy kites, they were taken to the government's wildlife rescue center in Quezon City on May 10 and have been there since. But even for people like Atienza, who try to do the right thing, informing authorities about wildlife sightings can be complicated because the reports have to go through several channels, causing delays in validation and coordination.



*The Brahminy kite hatchlings. Image courtesy of Christian Atienza on Facebook*

To address the red tape and ease the reporting process, the DENR in March launched a mobile app, though it's not yet available to the public. The Wildlife Agency and Citizen Law Enforcement Reporting Tool (WildALERT) is a centralized system that aims to help DENR employees and law enforcement partners, and eventually citizens in general, identify wildlife species, report illegal activities while in the field, validate and update reports, and monitor the status of wildlife crimes.

“In law enforcement, especially apprehending wildlife violators, the key element is time,” Theresa Tenazas, a lawyer and the officer in charge at the DENR’s Wildlife Resources Division (WRD), told Mongabay. “And if we are able to bridge this gap from the discovery of the crime or illegal activity up to the time of reporting, then apprehension will be speedy. It will facilitate the actual and on-time apprehension of the violators.”

The department aims to roll out the app among DENR personnel and law enforcement partners before the year ends; plans for an earlier deployment were delayed by travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The environment department will begin training sessions via video conferencing in September or October. For concerned citizens, the app will go public by January 2021, which includes an anonymous reporting function.

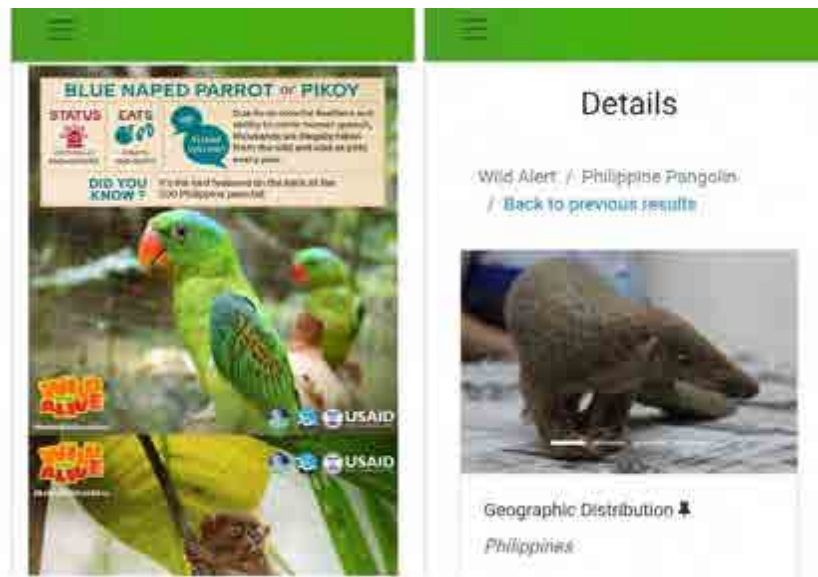
### **Expediting a response**

The DENR says it hopes that with WildALERT, it can respond more quickly to reports and more effectively enforce the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act of 2001, which regulates the hunting, possession, collection, transportation, importation, and trading of wild animals in the country.

The Philippines is among 18 countries considered mega-biodiverse, with [species endemism](#) at 49% for terrestrial wildlife. It has the fourth-highest bird endemism in the world. As a biodiversity hotspot, it's among the top areas for conservation priority in the globe.

The illegal wildlife trade is the fourth-biggest transnational crime in the world, after the trafficking of narcotics, humans and weapons. Despite being considered by some as a marginal offense, given that the most visible victims are rarely people, the illegal wildlife trade is even more profitable than illegal mining.

“There are victims here because we are depriving the ecosystem if we take these wildlife species away, and we humans will soon be victims if we don't stop the proliferation of illegal wildlife trade,” DENR undersecretary Ernesto Adobo Jr. said in a statement.



*WildAlert App mobile interface*

For now, the main method of reporting wild animals to the government is through the DENR's Action Center hotline. Other ways to report are through social media, text message, e-mail, or by mentioning it to DENR personnel. Once reported, the information on wildlife species is forwarded to the DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB). The WRD, which is part of the BMB, will then record any information submitted via phone call, online messaging, or verbal complaint.

The subsequent job of coordination regarding validation of reports and rescue operations falls to members of the Task Force Philippine Operations Group on Ivory and Illegal Wildlife Trade (POGI), a group that includes representatives from law enforcement, customs, and the coast guard, as well as national and local environment offices.

### **Science-based crime, tech-based action**

As wildlife enforcement officers and the public wait for the WildALERT app's full rollout, they can already access the wildlife species library on the website WildALERT.ph.

The library, which lists 480 species, provides a photo and scientific name for each animal, as well as its common names in English, Filipino, and local dialects. It also lists the geographic distribution, description, and conservation status of each species.

The site's species library aims to help enforcers and citizens identify species. "In filing cases, you have to identify the product of the offense," says Tenazas, who adds that wildlife prosecution is a science-based case. "It's also one way of looking for more public participation in the fight against illegal wildlife trade so people will also be knowledgeable once they sight species."

Identifying a species correctly will shorten the verification process because of improved accuracy plus the elimination of manual recording of field data.

Another important element of the WildALERT app that speeds up the reporting process is the georeference feature, which Tenazas says allows the app to be used online or offline.

When a user takes a photo of a wild animal using the app's recording feature, the time and location are instantly recorded. The report is already documented even if the user is offline.



*Attendees of the pilot testing of the WildALERT app's beta version. Image courtesy of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)*

This is helpful for enforcement officers and citizens in areas with weak or no internet signal. They can enter the information offline and later sent it to the report management platform when they get an internet connection. A data manager will assess the report and then forward it to the nearest DENR office or law enforcement site. This should allow for a quicker response, theoretically in a matter of a few hours.

The georeference feature is also crucial in creating a heat map within the app. The map will show red dots to denote areas where illegal wildlife activities are prevalent based on the locations of reports. This will aid the DENR in providing greater operational support for specific areas and deploying more enforcement officers to locations where there is a greater population of species as evidenced by the high number of wildlife crimes.

### **Overcoming glitches, challenges**

The WildALERT app is being developed by the DENR's BMB in partnership with USAID Philippines' Protect Wildlife Project, and was pilot tested in February.

Representatives from the DENR's Knowledge and Information Systems Services, as well as its offices from eight regions and other law enforcement agencies, identified several glitches during that testing, including in the transmission of reports, notifications, and app crashes.



*The Brahminy kite hatchlings rescue team. Image courtesy of Christian Atienza on Facebook*

There were fewer recorded glitches during the soft launch and demonstration on March 3. Wildlife enforcement officers are now more concerned about internet reception in areas of the country where usage of the app is likely to be higher, and the capacity of officers' personal mobile phones, some of which are older models.

The internet problem can be addressed for now by the app's offline feature, but the DENR says there's still a need for stable and fast internet connection because delays in uploading reports will hamper rescue operations.





“This is an appeal,” Tenazas says. “If the USAID may be able to read this interview, if it is possible that we extend once more the help to providing people with appropriate mobile phones and portable Wi-Fi.”

She says another USAID project provides BMB personnel with smartphones for the WildALERT app, but not all involved in wildlife enforcement are eligible for new mobile phones.

### Pandemic seizures

The importance of cracking down on wildlife crimes has come under the global spotlight during the COVID-19 pandemic, given the strong indications that the disease sprang from a wildlife source.

“Better conservation of large intact natural areas, including natural world heritage sites and urgent measures to address illegal wildlife trade are really considered important to limit the emergence of new diseases in the future,” Mechtild Rössler, director of UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre, said in a recent [panel discussion](#).

In March, the Philippines’ DENR halted the transportation of licensed wildlife and forest items in line with the country’s lockdown measures to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. But it says there still needs to be stricter monitoring of illegal wildlife activities during the pandemic.



*A soaring Brahminy kite. Image courtesy of WildALERT.ph*

The WRD says it did not receive any reports of illegal wildlife activity from enforcers or citizens in the first quarter of the year, but saw a spike in reports from April to June, when lockdowns were in place. The WildALERT app could have been useful to the DENR during this time, when most business transactions moved online, including the selling of wildlife species, but it had to be set back due to technical issues.

Despite this, authorities launched four enforcement operations in the second quarter in response to wildlife crime reports, leading to the apprehension of six alleged violators and filing of three cases. They also seized eight animals and nearly 20 kilograms (43 pounds) of agarwood products, widely harvested for the fragrant resin. The estimated street value of the contraband is 3.85 million pesos (\$79,600). Other alleged offenders have been apprehended by partner offices and law enforcement agencies, and more are being tracked online.

With the species library website the only functional feature of the WildALERT app for now, the DENR says it’s counting down the months until its personnel and partner law enforcers can finally download and use the full-featured package.

Source: <https://news.mongabay.com/2020/09/philippine-wildlife-reporting-app-promises-to-upgrade-fight-against-trafficking/>



# INJURED SEA TURTLE RESCUED BUT DIDN'T MAKE IT

By **Panay News** -Thursday, September 3, 2020



*CENRO Bago City staff assists and checks the wound on the hind part of the turned over Olive ridley sea turtle.*

A FISHERMAN turned over to Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Bago City an injured Olive ridley sea turtle he found in the waters of Barangay Central Tabao, Valladolid, Negros Occidental, recently.

The sea turtle sustained wound on its tail, right hind leg was amputated, has penile prolapse, and broken carapace at hind part. It underwent veterinary check-up and consultation wherein its feeding behavior and response were monitored and its wounds were treated with antiseptic wound spray, but two days after the turnover, it died.

The said sea turtle weighed approximately 20 kilograms, has a curved carapace length of 48 centimeters and curved carapace width of 56 centimeters.

Olive ridley sea turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), considered vulnerable by the International Union of Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List, are protected under the Republic Act 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

"Sea turtles help maintain a healthy marine ecosystem. It is important to protect and conserve them. Although we had recorded another one loss, initiatives on its protection and conservation are evidently seen as more fishermen and concerned coastal residents turnovers of sea turtles are reported. Let's continue to save these wildlife species," said Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional executive director Francisco E. Milla, Jr.

Enhanced Biodiversity Conservation is among the top 10 priority programs and projects of Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu. (*DENR-6*)

Source: <https://www.panaynews.net/injured-sea-turtle-rescued-but-didnt-make-it/>



## 'Protect PH forest turtle,' advocates urge

Published September 3, 2020, 4:19 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The illegal pet trade remains a key threat to the survival of endangered Philippine forest turtles (*Siebenrockiella leytensis*) as it had been in the past 15 years, according to a report by the international wildlife conservation group Traffic.

The report titled "Endangered by trade: seizure analysis of the critically endangered Philippine Forest Turtle *Siebenrockiella leytensis* from 2004–2018" showed 23 seizure incidents resulting in the confiscation of 4,723 turtles.

Dr. Sabine Schoppe, co-author of the study and head of a programme for the conservation of the species at Katala Foundation Inc., said they have unearthed recent evidence that illegal collection and trade continue, and that the demand for the Philippine forest turtle has not diminished.

In 2015 alone, a single bust in Palawan accounted for 83 percent of all the animals seized involving close to 4,000 turtles, Traffic noted in its report released on Thursday.

At least 12 of 23 recorded incidents resulted in the arrest of 21 suspected traffickers but only two suspects were known to be convicted, fined, and served jail sentences. This includes a man who was arrested twice the same year at the Hong Kong International Airport, having come from the Philippines carrying with him a total of 157 turtles, it pointed out.

The report also found that eight out of 15 seizure cases in Palawan occurred in the municipality of Taytay, which suggests its significance as an exit point of the Philippine forest turtle.

Traffic said that the endemic turtle has long been a fascination among hobbyists with collection pressure increasing after new populations were found in the early 2000s.

It is uncertain, however, if illegally-collected turtles were also destined for the food market.

Citing a study published in the *Philippine Journal of Systematic Biology*, Traffic said the turtle has also been illegally offered for trade online in the past 15 years, in the domestic and international pet trade.

The study recorded 22 of the turtles for sale online through monitoring of social media groups in the Philippines between 2017 and 2018.

More recent unpublished trade monitoring found no individuals for sale in 2019, but four individuals were advertised online in April 2020.

The study separately observed over 1,000 Philippine forest turtles for sale online on a turtle trading site in China between February and September 2015.



The Traffic's report also highlighted the issues of captive breeding and laundering of wild-caught species as captive bred.

It noted that the Philippines reported exporting 74 apparently captive bred individuals between 2011 and 2018. However, the Philippine forest turtle—banned from any wild collection and trade since 2001—is widely recognized as notoriously difficult to breed in captivity.

The first known successful instance of captive breeding was documented only after a 10-year effort in June 2018.

The researchers said there was a lack of credible evidence to authenticate captive breeding successes in the Philippines or elsewhere prior to 2018, and the Philippine government recently rejected an application by a facility attempting to export specimens declared as captive bred.

“The findings point towards the likelihood of wild-caught specimens being laundered as captive bred,” Traffic lead author Emerson Sy said in a statement.

“Declaring an immediate moratorium on trade in the Philippine Forest Turtle would close this loophole, help the government prevent illegal trade and help ensure the continued survival of this endemic species,” he added.

The group also urged wildlife authorities to boost site-based protection, as well as enforcement and prosecution against smugglers.

It also called for an inventory of all previously-registered captive Philippine forest turtles in private and public facilities in the country and ensure that these are not permitted for any trade.



Source:

[https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=10159212507061977&id=116724526976&fs=0&focus\\_composer=0](https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10159212507061977&id=116724526976&fs=0&focus_composer=0)



GMA News

23h

LOOK: Isang backhoe, dumaan sa dagat sa El Nido, Palawan.

Mula sa kuha ng Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), makikita ang pagdaan ng backhoe sa dalampasigan ng Brgy. Corong-Corong.

Ayon sa Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO), ang backhoe ay papunta dapat sa ginagawang sewage treatment plant. Hindi raw nakipag-ugnayan ang operator ng backhoe sa mga engineer na alam ang tamang daan.

PCG Auxiliary Captain Leonides Echague

Balikán ang 24 Oras livestream: <https://bit.ly/31TDZtU>



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## Infectious COVID test kits litter Manila

Someone is responsible for this situation, and we are now looking where the improper disposal of hazardous materials happened.

Published 1 day ago on September 3, 2020 02:01 AM

By [Pat C. Santos](#)



Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso warned those responsible for the improper disposal of used rapid test kits that were found scattered on a busy Manila street that they will face sanctions from the city.

The mayor issued the warning after a video went viral yesterday showing COVID-19 rapid test kits littering M. De la Fuente Street in front of Trabajo Market in Sampaloc.

Closed circuit television footage Domagoso provided showed the kits fell out of a hole in a garbage bag on a pedicab on Tuesday night, 1 September.

He said the Manila City government and the Manila Police District (MPD) have begun investigating those responsible for the improper disposal of the used test kits.

He warned all clinics, laboratories, businesses and corporations in the city that failure to properly dispose hazardous waste would mean a closure order, with charges for improper waste management to be filed against them.

"Someone is responsible for this situation, and we are now looking where the improper disposal of hazardous materials happened," Domagoso told reporters in an ambush interview at the Quirino Grandstand.

"We can locate maybe the clinic, maybe a private office, maybe a hospital, or maybe a laboratory. The MPD said they are already looking at the matter," he said.

After the incident was reported to City Hall, the mayor immediately ordered the Manila Department of Public Services through its director, Kenneth Amurao, to properly dispose of the scattered test kits.

"We sent our DPS to immediately clear the area of the used rapid testing kit. The good news is that we now know it wasn't intentional," he explained.

Manila stopped using rapid test kits since 15 July after the local government was able to purchase COVID-19 serology testing machines from American health care firm Abbott.

"The City Government of Manila, which includes the Manila Health Department and its six district hospitals, has halted the use of rapid test kits since 15 July 2020, which is when the city had already started its free drive-thru serology testing," he said in a statement.



Manila strictly complies with Republic Act (RA) 6969 (Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1999) and RA 9003 (Philippine Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000) in disposing of used rapid test kits.

“We are compliant with the mandate of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on the proper disposal of hazardous and infectious waste, which is a strict requirement to be granted a license to operate from the Department of Health annually,” Domagoso said.

“Hazardous waste disposal is done through DENR-accredited hazardous waste service contractors, which are in charge of the treatment, storage and disposal of all hazardous and infectious waste generated in all health centers and district hospitals in the City of Manila,” he said.

Hazardous and infectious wastes include syringes, sharps, test kits, test tubes, gloves, cotton balls, pipette tips and used personal protective equipment.





## Isko closes firm behind scattered rapid test kits

Thursday, September 3, 2020 Itchie G. Cabayan



Mayor Isko Moreno and Secretary to the Mayor Bernie Ang discuss the violations of the CP Diagnostic Center. Photo by JERRY S. TAN

THE establishment responsible for the improper disposal of used rapid test kits which resulted in them falling off from a garbage bag and landing right on a street in Sampaloc, Manila Tuesday night, had been identified and ordered closed in the meantime.

Mayor Isko Moreno announced this as he also directed Secretary to the Mayor Bernie Ang to issue a 'show cause order' against the establishment identified as the CP Diagnostic Center, located at Suite 404, Equitable Bank Building, C. Palanca Street Quiapo, 039 Brgy. 386, Manila.

In the said letter, Ang gave the center's operators, Zernan C. Canonigo and Dr. Noval Santos, three days to explain why no charges should be filed against them for infractions of the law.

Ang cited violation of Republic Act No. 9003, or "An Act Providing For An Ecological Solid Waste Management Program," for disposing several pieces of used rapid test kits without the required proper disposal and transport of such test kits that may pose potential harm to the health of the community in general.

"This is not compliant with the mandate of the DENR on the waste management of hazardous waste," the letter stated.

Ang said the establishment has to explain its violation of Republic Act No. 6969, or the "Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990".

Ang stressed that a uses rapid medical test kit is "considered as biohazard and infectious waste because it contains infectious materials (blood extracted). Mishandling and littering of such imposes threat and danger to the wellbeing of the public. These used test kits must be placed in puncture-proof container with 10 percent Chlorox prior to its disposal."

Bureau of Permits chief Levi Facundo said that failure on the part of the said establishment to answer in writing the said 'show cause order' within the required period from receipt of the order will be considered as a waiver on their part to be heard. When this happens, Facundo said the case shall be decided on the basis of the records of his office.

Moreno meanwhile posted on Facebook the protocols for the proper disposal of hazardous wastes for the guidance of those who may be operating businesses relative to such wastes.



The mayor stressed that hazardous waste disposal is done through DENR-accredited contractors who will take charge of the treatment, storage and disposal of such wastes, ensuring that they are properly handled and treated before final disposal.

Moreno said that the proper disposal of hazardous or infectious wastes is a requirement that needs to be strictly followed for any concerned establishment to be granted by the Department of Health a license to operate.



# Mayor Isko Warns Clinics, Labs Vs. Disposal Of Used Rapid Test Kits



By [Featuresdesk \(MD\)](#) September 3, 2020

Manila Mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso on Wednesday warned private clinics, laboratories, and hospitals located in the city of Manila against disposing of hazardous wastes such as used rapid test kits as he called on them to follow proper waste disposal protocols.

Domagoso issued the warning after netizens reported that used rapid test kits were scattered along M. Dela Fuente St. in Sampaloc, Manila on Tuesday night, causing fear among the residents.

CCTV footage of the incident showed that the used test kits fell from a punctured garbage bag attached to a pedicab carrying the said wastes.

Domagoso said the city government and the Manila Police District (MPD) are now investigating the incident.

“Mayroong responsable sa sitwasyon na ito and we are now looking kung saan nanggaling yung improper disposal of hazardous materials (There is somebody responsible for this incident and we are now looking at the source of this improper disposal of hazardous waste materials),” Domagoso said in an ambush interview.

He said there is a protocol regarding the proper disposal of hazardous wastes like those materials coming from hospitals, clinics and laboratories.

Proper disposal of hazardous waste, he said, is very important especially that the country is in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Domagoso added that clinics, laboratories, businesses and corporations in the city that fail to properly dispose of their hazardous waste would face closure and charges for improper waste management will be filed against them.

“We can locate maybe the clinic, maybe a private office, maybe a hospital, or maybe a laboratory. [The MPD said] they are looking already at sinisiyasat na ‘yung nangyari (and it is now being investigated),” he said.

After the incident was reported, Domagoso ordered the Manila Department of Public Services (DPS) to immediately collect and properly dispose of the scattered used rapid test kits and sanitize the area.

“We immediately sent the DPS to clean the area and collect the scattered used rapid test kits. The good news is that we know that it was not done intentionally,” Domagoso said in a mix of English and Filipino.



Meanwhile, Domagoso clarified that Manila's health department and its six district hospitals have been strictly complying with protocols on proper handling and disposal of hazardous waste.

He said the city government has already stopped using rapid test kits since July 15 after they purchased and started using Covid-19 serology testing machines.

"The City Government of Manila, which includes the Manila Health Department (MHD) and its six district hospitals, has halted the use of rapid test kits since July 15, 2020, which is when the city has already started its free drive-thru serology testing," Domagoso said in a statement.

Domagoso assured the public that the local government strictly complies with Republic Act 6969 or the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1999 and Republic Act 9003 otherwise known as Philippine Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 in disposing of hazardous waste materials.

"We are compliant with the mandate of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on the proper disposal of hazardous and infectious waste, which is a strict requirement to be granted a license to operate from the Department of Health annually," he said.

Domagoso added that the disposal of hazardous and infectious wastes generated in all health centers and district hospitals in the city of Manila is done through the DENR-accredited hazardous waste service contractors in charge of the treatment, storage, and disposal of all hazardous and infectious waste.

"Biohazard wastes and other infectious waste materials such as syringes, sharps and test kits are placed in puncture-proof plastic containers with 10-percent Clorox while test tubes, gloves, cotton balls, pipette tips and used PPE (personal protective equipment) sets are placed in a yellow plastic bag", he added.  
(PNA)

*Photo Credit: [www.manila.gov.ph](http://www.manila.gov.ph)*



# 163 tons of garbage hauled from Baseco Beach since January

Published September 3, 2020, 5:59 PM

by [Minka Tiangco](#)

Around 163 metric tons of garbage have been hauled from the stretch of Baseco Beach in Barangay 649, Tondo in Manila as of Wednesday, the city government said.

Nine members of the Department of Public Services (DPS) Baseco Beach Warriors have been hauling trash off the area every day since January.

They recently received new PVC boats from the city government to help them in doing their jobs. DPS Director Kenneth Amurao called on residents of the barangay to help them in maintaining the cleanliness of Baseco Beach.

“Kailangan po natin ang kooperasyon ng bawat isa. Lilinisin at lilinisin po namin ito sapagkat ito ang aming trabaho ngunit bilang mamamayan, dapat sa atin mismo magsimula ang disiplina (We need the cooperation of each one of you. We will continue to clean this because it is our job, but as citizens, the discipline should start from ourselves),” he said in a statement.

“Para rin ito sa inyo at sa inyong mga anak nang matamasa nila ang maayos at malinis na Baseco (This is for also for your children so they can experience an orderly and clean Baseco),” he added.

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## ORIGINAL TEXT

3MINKA3

163 tons of garbage hauled from Baseco Beach since January  
By MINKA KLAUDIA S. TIANGCO

Around 163 metric tons of garbage have been hauled from the stretch of Baseco Beach in Barangay 649 as of Wednesday, the city government said.

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“Para rin ito sa inyo at sa inyong mga anak nang matamasa nila ang maayos at malinis na Baseco (This is for also for your children so they can experience an orderly and clean Baseco),” he added.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/09/03/163-tons-of-garbage-hauled-from-baseco-beach-since-january/>



# Manila City gov't pinapasagot na ang clinic na nagtapon ng 'used rapid test'

By **Bombo Jovino Galang** - September 3, 2020 | 5:09 AM



Pinapasagot na ni Manila City government ang diagnostic center dahil sa hindi tamang pagtatapon ng nasa 200 na gamit na rapid test kits sa Sampaloc.

Ayon kay Bureau of permits officer-in-charge Levi Facundo, nagtungo na ito sa CP Diagnostic Center sa Quiapo para pagpaliwanag sa hindi tamang pagtatapon ng test kits.

Binalaan din ni Manila Mayor Isko Moreno ang mga klinika at laboratories na kaniyang ipapasara ang mga ito kapag hindi tama ang pagtatapon nila ng mga basura.

Magugunitang ikinagalit ni alkalde ang kumalat na video sa social media kung saan nagkalat ang mga gamit ng rapid test kit na nakalagay sa mga sako at hinahakot ng mga basurero sa kahabaan ng Sampaloc.

Maging ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources ay magsasagawa rin ng imbestigasyon sa nasabing insidente.

Source: <https://www.bomboradyo.com/manila-city-government-pinapasagot-na-ang-clinic-na-nagtapon-ng-used-rapid-test/>



## EDITORIAL - Endangering public health

(The Philippine Star) - September 4, 2020 - 12:00am

While people are taking pains to comply with COVID health protocols, wearing face masks and shields and keeping distance from each other, there are persons who are spreading the killer coronavirus.

On Tuesday night, closed-circuit television footage showed a pedicab passing through M. Dela Fuente Street in Sampaloc, Manila transporting garbage bags. One of the bags ripped open and the contents spilled out. Residents were aghast to find out that the contents were used COVID rapid antibody test kits.

The CCTV footage allowed city government and police personnel to track down the source of the hazardous pathological waste: CP Diagnostic Center along Carlos Palanca Street in Quiapo, Manila. Operators of the laboratory have promised to cooperate with probers and correct their deficiencies. The contract of the center for the proper collection of hospital waste has reportedly lapsed. City government officials said the laboratory also lacked a sanitary permit.

City officials said such wastes, which likely include kits used on COVID-infected individuals, should be collected by a person or office designated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Health facilities that fail to do so may face charges for violation of Republic Act 9003 or the Philippine Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 as well as RA 6969 or the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1999.

In this pandemic, when the number of facilities providing COVID testing is growing, how many of the operators are aware of the protocols for the disposal of hazardous pathological wastes? The case of CP Diagnostic Center is similar to the indiscriminate dumping of nearly 60 dead pigs infected with African swine fever in the Marikina River at the start of ASF infestation in the country in September last year.

There are stringent protocols in the handling of those who have succumbed to COVID to prevent coronavirus transmission, with bereaved relatives barred from even taking one last peek at their departed loved ones before cremation. There appears to be weaker public awareness of protocols for the safe disposal of COVID testing kits.

The case in Manila highlights the urgent need to address this weakness in the pandemic response, and to tighten enforcement of laws on the proper disposal of hazardous waste. This reckless endangerment of public health amid a raging pandemic must be quickly stopped.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2020/09/04/2040060/editorial-endangering-public-health>



# SMC to revive Pasig River as part of P95 billion PAREX project

By: [Katrina Hallare](#) - Reporter / [@KHallareINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 05:19 PM September 03, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — As part of its P95.4 billion Pasig River Expressway (PAREX) project, conglomerate San Miguel Corporation (SMC) on Thursday announced its plan to revive the long-polluted Pasig River.

In a statement, SMC president and chief operating officer Ramon Ang said that the attempt to revive the Pasig River “may be the most challenging, yet the most fulfilling.”

“Not only will we be building a much-needed direct link between eastern and western Metro Manila, but we will also be leading a historic effort to bring the Pasig River back to health,” Ang said.

“For so many decades, even when I was young, the Pasig River had been synonymous to pollution. Many Filipinos have long wanted to clean it and revive it, bring it back to its old glory. There were even high-profile fund-raising projects and similar initiatives to clean it. But unfortunately, not much has changed,” he added.

The 27-kilometer Pasig River, which links Laguna de Bay to Manila Bay, runs through the cities of Manila, Makati, Mandaluyong, Pasig, Taguig, and the municipality of Pateros in Metro Manila and Taytay in Rizal province.

SMC is set to build PAREX, which stretches 19.4 kilometers and will start from Radial Road 10 (R10) in Manila, and will end at a connection to the South East Metro Manila Expressway at Circumferential Road 6 (C6).

PAREX, SMC added, will have entry and exit points at the University Belt area, San Juan, Buendia, Mandaluyong, Makati, Rockwell, Edsa, Pioneer St., Bonifacio Global City, C5, before terminating at C6.

The expressway is also seen to provide as an alternative and faster access to business hubs Makati, Ortigas, and Bonifacio Global City.

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# SMC to clean up, revive Pasig River as part of PAREX project

By [Wheels.ph](http://Wheels.ph) September 3, 2020



San Miguel Corporation (SMC) announced its plan to clean up and improve the flow of water throughout the entire length of Pasig River as part of the Pasig River Expressway (PAREX) project.

SMC president and COO Ramon S. Ang said on Thursday that the P95.40 billion project represents a “solution within a solution.”

“Of all the projects we have done, this will perhaps be among the most challenging, and at the same time, the most fulfilling. Not only will we be building a much-needed direct link between eastern and western Metro Manila, but we will also be leading a historic effort to bring the Pasig River back to health,” Ang said.

Ang explained that in order to build the 19.40-kilometer, six-lane elevated expressway along the banks of the river, the river bed has to be dredged and cleared of decades of debris and garbage in order to attain its optimum depth and ensure the constant flow of water. Ang added that this will also help address flooding in Metro Manila.

“For so many decades, even when I was young, the Pasig River had been synonymous to pollution. Many Filipinos have long wanted to clean it and revive it, bring it back to its old glory. There were even high-profile fund-raising projects and similar initiatives to clean it. But unfortunately, not much has changed,” Ang said.

Early this year, the company started a P1-billion corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative to clean up the Tullahan-Tinajeros River System as part of a wide-ranging plan to support the government cleanup of the Manila Bay, and address perennial flooding in low-lying areas such as Bulacan and other Central Luzon provinces.

In August, it reported that in just over two months, the company had extracted 20,000 cubic meters or 2,150 truck-loads of silt and garbage from a 5.25 km stretch of the Tullahan from Malabon to Navotas, which constitutes the first phase of the project.

The company has been removing some 600 tons of solid waste from the river every day.

The Pasig River Expressway, which will start from Radial Road 10 in Manila and end at a connection to the South East Metro Manila Expressway, otherwise known as Circumferential Road 6, is seen to reduce travel time from Manila to Rizal to just 15 minutes.



From R10, or the port area, it will have entry and exit points at the University Belt area, San Juan, Buendia, Mandaluyong, Makati, Rockwell, EDSA, Pioneer St., Bonifacio Global City, C5, before terminating at C6.

It is seen to provide an alternative and faster access to the country's largest business districts—Makati, Ortigas, and BGC.

Along with the PAREX project, SMC is also proposing to build the 420-kilometer, four-lane South Luzon Expressway Toll Road 5 (SLEX-TR5) project which extends the SLEX and SLEX-TR4 project from Lucena, Quezon to Matnog, Sorsogon.

Both projects are under a proposed Built-Operate-Transfer scheme for a concession of just 30 years, after which, government takes over the vital infrastructure assets.



## Pasig river rehab part of P95-B bid

Of all the projects we have done, this will perhaps be among the most challenging, and at the same time, the most fulfilling.

Published 4 hours ago on September 4, 2020 03:00 AM

By [Maria Romero](#)



After giving Tullahan River a makeover, San Miguel Corp. is training its eye on the ailing Pasig River as part of its Pasig River Expressway project. Removal of silt and garbage along with the deepening of the river will improve water flow and help address flooding. / Photograph courtesy of SMC

Diversified conglomerate San Miguel Corp. (SMC) will rehabilitate the Pasig River as part of its plan to build the P95.4-billion Pasig River Expressway (PAREX).

SMC president and chief operating officer Ramon S. Ang on Thursday said the project represents a “solution within a solution” since it will ease Metro Manila vehicle traffic while reviving the polluted Pasig River.

“Of all the projects we have done, this will perhaps be among the most challenging, and at the same time, the most fulfilling. Not only will we be building a much-needed direct link between eastern and western Metro Manila, but we will also be leading a historic effort to bring the Pasig River back to health,” Ang said.

The proposed 19.4-kilometer, six-lane elevated expressway along the banks of the river, would require dredging and clearing decades of debris and garbage, to attain its optimum depth and ensure the constant flow of water.

### Clean rivers as project

Early this year, SMC has also started a P1-billion drive to clean up the Tullahan-Tinajeros River System to address perennial flooding in low-lying areas such as Bulacan and other Central Luzon provinces. It was also in line with the government’s Manila Bay rehabilitation project.

As of end-August, the company has so far extracted 20,000 cubic meters or 2,150 truck-loads of silt and garbage from a 5.25 km stretch of the Tullahan from Malabon to Navotas, which constitutes the first phase of the project.

### BoT offered

According to SMC, the proposed PAREX project is now under government review.

SMC is also proposing to build the 420-kilometer, four-lane South Luzon Expressway Toll Road 5 (SLEX-TR5) project which extends the SLEX and SLEX-TR4 project from Lucena, Quezon to Matnog, Sorsogon.

Both projects are under a proposed Built-Operate-Transfer scheme for a concession of just 30 years, after which, the government takes over the vital infrastructure.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/09/04/pasig-river-rehab-part-of-p95-b-bid/>



# Pasig River clean-up part of San Miguel's expressway project

**Published** September 3, 2020 7:23pm

By TED CORDERO, GMA News

San Miguel Corp. (SMC) said Thursday it would clean up and revive the Pasig River as part of its commitment in the multi-billion peso Pasig River Expressway (PAREX) project.

“Of all the projects we have done, this will perhaps be among the most challenging, and at the same time, the most fulfilling,” SMC president and COO Ramon Ang said in a statement.

“Not only will we be building a much-needed direct link between eastern and western Metro Manila, but we will also be leading a historic effort to bring the Pasig River back to health,” he added.

The P95.4-billion PAREX project, proposed by SMC, is now under government review.

Ang noted that the PAREX project represents a “solution within a solution”—a means to solve Metro Manila traffic, with minimal disruption on existing cities and roads, “with a built-in solution to clean up and improve the flow of water throughout the entire length of the Pasig River.”

The SMC chief said that to build the 19.40-kilometer, six-lane elevated expressway along the banks of the river, the river bed has to be dredged and cleared of decades of debris and garbage, to attain its optimum depth and ensure the constant flow of water.

This will also help address flooding in Metro Manila, according to Ang.

“For so many decades, even when I was young, the Pasig River had been synonymous to pollution. Many Filipinos have long wanted to clean it and revive it, bring it back to its old glory. There were even high-profile fund-raising projects and similar initiatives to clean it. But unfortunately, not much has changed,” he said.

SMC is not new to large-scale river clean ups.

Early this year, the company said it started a P1-billion corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative to clean up the Tullahan-Tinajeros River System as part of a “wide-ranging” plan to support the government cleanup of the Manila Bay, and address perennial flooding in low-lying areas such as Bulacan and other Central Luzon provinces.

In August, it reported that in just over two months, the company had extracted 20,000 cubic meters or 2,150 truck-loads of silt and garbage from a 5.25 km stretch of the Tullahan from Malabon to Navotas, which constitutes the first phase of the project.



The company said it has been removing some 600 tons of solid waste from the river every day.

The Pasig River Expressway, which will start from Radial Road 10 (R10) in the City of Manila and end at a connection to the South East Metro Manila Expressway (SEMME), otherwise known as Circumferential Road 6 (C6), is seen to reduce travel time from Manila to Rizal to just 15 minutes.

From R10, or the port area, it will have entry and exit points at the University Belt area, San Juan, Buendia, Mandaluyong, Makati, Rockwell, Edsa, Pioneer St., Bonifacio Global City, C5, before terminating at C6.

It is seen to provide an alternative and faster access to the country's largest business districts—Makati, Ortigas, and BGC.

Along with the PAREX project, SMC is also proposing to build the 420-kilometer, four-lane South Luzon Expressway Toll Road 5 (SLEX-TR5) project which extends the SLEX and SLEX-TR4 project from Lucena, Quezon to Matnog, Sorsogon.

Both projects are under a proposed Built-Operate-Transfer scheme for a concession of just 30 years, after which, government takes over the vital infrastructure assets. **-NB, GMA News**

Source: [https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/companies/754121/pasig-river-clean-up-part-of-san-miguel-s-expressway-project/story/?utm\\_source=GMAnews&utm\\_medium=Twitter](https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/companies/754121/pasig-river-clean-up-part-of-san-miguel-s-expressway-project/story/?utm_source=GMAnews&utm_medium=Twitter)



## River cleanup

*posted* September 03, 2020 at 08:48 pm



After Tullahan River, San Miguel Corp. is now looking to clean up Pasig River as part of its Pasig River Expressway project. SMC says the removal of silt and garbage along with the deepening of the river will improve water flow and help address flooding. Shown is the initial phase of Tullahan River cleanup, where SMC is removing an average of 600 tons of silt and garbage daily.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/333181>



# Mining can buoy COVID funds

By ... -September 4, 2020

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) yesterday said this is the best time to lift the policy restrictions on the industry to help raise funds for the government's social amelioration programs for the pandemic.

Rocky Dimaculangan, CMP vice president for communications, said in a press briefing without the ban on open pit mining and on new mining agreements issued eight years ago, government revenues would have increased as many mining firms will be allowed to operate.

Miners have realigned their Social Development and Management Program (SDMP) funds to COVID-19 relief operations.

Dimaculangan said P402 million has been allocated by the mining industry to the government's COVID-19 response of which P364 million has been released. Seventy percent of the latter comes from the 364 members of COMP.

The mining industry was expecting new mining agreements would be allowed when the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion law was signed in 2019 which doubled from 2 percent to 4 percent the tax on gross income.

Mining contributes 12 percent to the GDP of the CARAGA region where the industry is concentrated, Dimaculangan said. In MIMAROPA, its contribution to the GDP is 9 percent.

Mining has 100,000 direct employees and up to 650,000 rely on the industry, Dimaculangan said. — **Paul Icamina**



## OceanaGold laying off 800 employees in Didipio mine

posted September 03, 2020 at 08:55 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

KASIBU, Nueva Vizcaya –OceanaGold Philippines Inc. announced Wednesday several hundreds of miners at the Didipio mine here will be laid off.

“We will be letting of go more than 80 percent or around 620 of [our] workers as mining operations were stopped and the Didipio mine continues to suffer financial losses due to continuing blockades by [the] local government,” Oceanagold said in a press statement.

Oceanagold said it complied with labor laws that requite companies to notify employees several months ahead of their termination.

“It is unfortunate that the authority granted to the company by the national government to continue operating pending [the] grant of renewal of the Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement was not being recognized by local government units,” OGPI said.

The mining company set the initial permanent separation of affected workers effective Oct. 13 this year as it could no longer hold the entire workforce after over a year of non-operations.

Oceanagold was constrained to halt the operations of the Didipio mine in July 2019 when a blockade was set up and a stoppage order from the local government effectively prevented the entry of supplies and the transport of mineral products to the market.

Underground mining activities ceased with the depletion of mining consumables as a result of the blockade. Milling activities were stopped in the fourth quarter of 2019.

The company said the national government has regulatory authority over the Didipio mine.

The enforced lockdowns amid the coronavirus pandemic worsened the situation, forcing the company to temporarily lay off the first batch of workers on April 15.

OGPI general manager David Way said that while there had been no mining operation and no commercial activities for around 10 months, the company held on to the entire workforce for as long as it could.

He said the continuing restraints to the operation and the economic impacts of the pandemic made it difficult for the company to keep all its employees.

“It is a painful decision. In as much as the company would like to retain everyone, our resources are no longer enough,” he said.

When in full operations, Didipio mine directly employs 1,500 workers, 770 of whom are directly employed by OceanaGold, the rest by its contractors. Most of them are residents of Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino and other neighboring provinces in north and central Luzon.

The remaining essential workers will continue to perform the needed tasks to maintain, preserve, safekeep and protect the Didipio Mine and its assets, while ensuring compliance with the regulatory requirements while the restraints on operations are in place.

“As a responsible resource developer, we know that our operation will be able to churn economic activity in the region and will enable us to help in the nation’s economic recovery. We will continue to work with the national government for our FTAA renewal,” Way said.





## Kaliwa Dam papaspasan para sa water security ng bansa



September 3, 2020 @ 6:10 PM 12 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Prayoridad ng pamahalaan na tapusin na ang Kaliwa Dam para sa water security ng bansa.

Sinabi ni Presidential Adviser on Flagship Programs and Projects Vince Dizon na may mayroong 12 infrastructure flagship projects kabilang ang Kaliwa Dam, ang kina-klasipika bilang flagship programs for water security.

“Kasama dito ang Kaliwa Dam dahil napakaimportante ng Kaliwa Dam sa long term water sustainability dito sa Metro Manila,” ayon kay Dizon.

“Ito ay—alam ninyo iyong Kaliwa Dam, pinaplano ito panahon pa ni President Marcos, 1967 po to be exact ang unang study to build Kaliwa Dam sa bundok ng Sierra Madre,” dagdag na pahayag ni Dizon.

Aniya pa, sa maraming taon at ilang dekada ay kumbinsido si Dizon na panahon na para gawin o aksyunan ang Kaliwa Dam.

Samantala, sinabi ni Dizon na hindi lang ang Kaliwa Dam ang kanilang aaksyunan dahil mayroon pa aniyang 11 pa na iba’t ibang proyekto sa buong Pilipinas na kasama dito.

“At nagpapasalamat tayo sa Office of the President dahil naglabas ang Presidente ng AO32 para mabigyan ng prayoridad ang mga water projects natin sa buong bansa. Dahil kritikal ito, kailangan paghandaan natin ng mabuti ang mga parating na tag-init natin at ngayon na ang time para talaga lalo nating pabilisan pa ang ating mga water projects lalo na sa Metro Manila,” litaniya ni Dizon.

Noong nakaraang linggo ay nagpalabas si Pangulong Duterte ng administrative order na inatasan ang lahat ng ahensiya ng pamahalaan na iprayoridad ang pagrerebisa at pag-apruba sa infrastructure projects na may kaugnayan sa water supply.

Binigyang diin ng Pangulo na “the bureaucracy has routinely and excessively delayed programs on water security.” **Kris Jose**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/kaliwa-dam-papaspasan-para-sa-water-security-ng-bansa/>



# Kaliwa Dam still part of state's priority infrastructure projects

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Sep 3, 2020 4:09:24 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 3) — The controversial Kaliwa Dam construction project remains a priority of the government especially after President Rodrigo Duterte's order for the speedy approval of water-resource works, an official said on Thursday.

Bases Conversion and Development Authority President and CEO Vince Dizon on Thursday said that the administration has 12 infrastructure projects in the pipeline related to improving the country's water supply. He said water resource projects need to be fast-tracked for the dry season.

"Napaka importante ng Kaliwa Dam sa long-term water sustainability sa Metro Manila... Kritikal ito," he said.

[Translation: The construction of the Kaliwa Dam is important for water sustainability in Metro Manila. This project is critical.]

President Rodrigo Duterte on August 26 signed Administrative Order 32, directing the fast review and approval of water projects to ensure the unhampered delivery of "clean, stable, adequate, and affordable water" to Filipinos.

The China-led project, which would build an integrated reservoir bordering Rizal and Quezon provinces using Chinese funding and Chinese construction firms, is designed to augment supply from Angat Dam — Metro Manila's only source of water.

The Kaliwa Dam project has also been stalled by protests and criticisms from environmental activists, locals, and indigenous people.

Source: [https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/9/3/Kaliwa-Dam-construction-Administrative-Order-32.html?fbclid=IwAR1kduSYOrEems\\_TnDjDpiXKSyKDUt62k\\_nneLd3ehrh\\_dMr95vpJ7HpQPE](https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/9/3/Kaliwa-Dam-construction-Administrative-Order-32.html?fbclid=IwAR1kduSYOrEems_TnDjDpiXKSyKDUt62k_nneLd3ehrh_dMr95vpJ7HpQPE)



## 65 patay, 1,987 dagdag-kaso sa COVID-19 sa Pinas



September 3, 2020 @ 4:15 PM 15 hours ago

***Manila, Philippines – Medyo mababa kumpara sa mga nagdaang araw ang naitalang coronavirus disease case ngayong Huwebes.***

Base sa case bulletin no.173 nasa 228,403 na ang kumpirmadong kaso ng sakit kung saan nadagdagan ngayong araw ng 1,987.

Sa karagdagang bilang na ito ng mga kumpirmadong kaso ay base sa total test na isinagawa ng 91 mula sa 113 current operational laboratories.

Sa 1,987 reported cases, 1,627 ang naitala sa loob ng nagdaang dalawang linggo mula Agust 21 hanggang September 3.

Sa NCR na nangnguna sa nakapagtala ng mga kaso sa nagdaang dalawang linggo na may 657, Region 4A,347, Region 6,151.

Ang aktibong kaso sa COVID-19 ay umakyat na sa 65,240.

Sa deaths naman ay umabot na sa 3,688 kasama na ang bagong 65 na nasawi.

2 rito ang pumanaw ngayong September, 55 noong August, 6 noong July, tig-isa naman noong June, at April.

Mula sa NCR ang 35 mga nasawi habang sa Region 4A ang 9; 6 sa Region 8; 34 sa Region 10; 3 sa CARAGA; tig-2 sa Region 1, 9, 12; at tig-isa naman sa Region 3, 6 at 7.

Samantala, inalis sa total case counts ang 24 duplicates kung saan 12 dito ang recovered cases.

Tatlong (3) kaso naman ang iniulat na recovered ngunit pumanaw na sa isinagawang final validation. ***Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden***

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/65-patay-1987-dagdag-kaso-sa-covid-19-sa-pinas/>



# COVID-19 case sa Pinas papalo sa mahigit 500K

By [Danilo Garcia](#)(Pang-Masa) - September 4, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Batay sa taya ng University of the Philippines (UP) ay posibleng pumalo sa 585,000 ang kaso ng coronavirus disease 2019 o COVID-19.

Ito ay makaraang palawigin ng UP COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team ang kanilang projection hanggang sa Dec. 31 ngayong taon.

Maaaring bumaba sa 402,000 ang detected cases ngunit posible rin pumalo sa 767,000.

Posible ring pumalo sa limang libo hanggang sampung libong pagkamatay na may projected average na 7,500.



# EU: Record CO2 emissions for Arctic wildfires

Published 13 hours ago on September 3, 2020 05:54 PM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



This year's Arctic Circle wildfires, still ablaze, have already surpassed the record set in 2019 for CO2 emissions, adding to the carbon pollution humanity needs to curtail, the European Union's Earth observation program said Thursday.

Uncontrolled forest fires across one of the planet's coldest regions have sent a quarter of a billion tonnes of CO2 spiraling into the atmosphere since January this year, topped by more than a third the total for 2019, according to satellite data.

The Arctic Circle includes latitudes upwards of 66 degrees North.

Almost all of the fires are in Russia, the EU's Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS) and the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts jointly reported.

Russia's Eastern Federal District, which includes parts of the Arctic Circle, emitted more than half-a-billion tonnes of CO2 from June to August 2020, also the highest amount to date.

"The Arctic fires burning since mid-June with high activity have already beaten 2019's record in terms of scale and intensity," said CAMS senior scientist Mark Parrington.

While satellite images do not reveal how these fires start, many of the blazes early in the summer are thought to have been caused by "zombie" fires that smolder through the winter and then reignite, he said.

Freakishly warm weather across large swathes of Siberia since January combined with low soil moisture — likely a consequence of global warming — have fuelled the flames.

## ***Arctic warming***

Siberia and the Arctic Circle are prone to large year-on-year temperature fluctuations, but the persistence of this year's warm spell is unusual, Carlo Buontempo, director of the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service noted last month.

"What is worrisome is that the Arctic is warming faster than the rest of the world," he said.

In both polar regions, average temperatures have risen more than two degrees Celsius since the mid-19th century, mostly in the last 50 years. That is twice the global average.



Worldwide, CO2 emissions from fires have averaged about seven billion tonnes a year since 2000, and were even higher in the 1990s, according to Copernicus.

But humanity's output of greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels — 37 billion tonnes last year — has increased by nearly 50 percent over the same period.

Out-of-control wildfires in the western United States, meanwhile, have been fanned by high winds and heatwave conditions, according to CAMS, which tracks fires around the globe.

And the number of fires in Brazil's Amazon basin last month were at their second highest level in a decade, according to official figures released this week.