

DENR: Biochar technology alternative livelihood for displaced Caraga miners

Published April 13, 2017, 10:01 PM

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Butuan City – Miners and workers displaced by the closure or suspension of mining firms in the region can turn to biochar technology as an alternative source of income and livelihood, which was recently introduced by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Some 14 mining firms were either ordered closed or suspended by the DENR in Dinagat Islands, Surigao del Norte and Surigao del Sur.

Workers and residents from other areas of the Caraga region have ventured into biochar technology introduced by DENR Secretary Regina Lopez and are reaping economic dividends, DENR 13 Regional Director Dr. Charles C. Fabre said.

Biochar is a charred biomass strictly from agricultural waste such as rice hull and straw, coconut husk and shell, corn cobs, wood trimmings, twigs produced by high-heat with very limited oxygen.

Biochar is used as a soil enhancer and fertilizer to increase yield and is also linked to minimal carbon emissions.

“This technology can be the solution of the people in communities reeling from the effects of the suspension of the mining operation to augment their income,” the regions’ DENR chief said.

He added that workers in host mining communities who were formerly dependent on mining have now diverted their attention to agriculture while utilizing Biochar technology as their alternate livelihood.

“I believe that the Biochar can address environmental problems like unsanitary landfills, unsanitary livestock raising practices, unsanitary sewage disposal, green house gas emission from agriculture, greenhouse gas emission from landfills and heavy degraded land from mining.” Fabre added.

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