

Dismantling of Laguna Lake fish pens now in full force

Published January 27, 2017, 10:00 PM | Manila Bulletin

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The dismantling of fishpens in Laguna Lake, the largest lake in the Philippines and the second largest inland freshwater lake in Southeast Asia, continues and is now in full force.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), together with Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), National Bureau of Investigation-Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD), the Philippine Army, and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), went on full force on Thursday to clear the illegal structures within Laguna de Bay.

This was two weeks after the agency issued a final notice to operators of fish pens and cages within the lake to conduct self-demolition.

In its first salvo, the demolition team was able to tear down two huge fish pens occupying around 100 hectares in Binangonan, Rizal.

“The DENR-NAECTF (National Anti-Environmental Crime Task Force) will see to it that Laguna Lake is cleared of fish pens before President Rodrigo Duterte delivers his second State of the Nation Address (SONA) in July,” DENR Undersecretary and NAECTF head Art Valdez said.

The dismantling operation is in line with President Duterte’s directive in his first SONA to dismantle big fish pens and cages in Laguna Lake to allow small fishermen to gain access to traditional fishing grounds.

LLDA General Manager Joey Medina said his office is set to clear 2,000 hectares of fish pens by June this year.

Valdez, lawyer Cesar Eric Nuqui of the NBI Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD) and PCG Chief Commodore Joel Garcia were joined by some 150 coast guard personnel, 14 NBI agents, 5 PA contingents and PNP officers at Talim Island detachment, for the operation.

(Article retrieved from: <http://business.mb.com.ph/2017/01/27/dismantling-of-laguna-lake-fish-pens-now-in-full-force/>)