

DENR eyes 4,000 hectares for bamboo plantation

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MANILA, Philippines - The government is eyeing increased bamboo plantation as it targets nearly 4,000 hectares in Western Visayas.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau is beefing up bamboo plantation in Aklan, Antique Capiz, Iloilo and Guimaras.

“Bamboo is considered to be the best conservation material because of its low maintenance compared to other plantations aside from the fact that there is a high return on investment and faster payback in bamboo,” ERDB executive director Henry Adornado said.

This is in line with the DENR’s nationwide goal of planting bamboo on a total of one million hectares by 2022 as required under the National Greening Program.

The enhanced NGP will rehabilitate the remaining 7.1 million hectares of denuded areas in the country using bamboo.

“This is also in line with the government’s goal of reducing poverty, mitigating climate change, rehabilitating watersheds, and conserving biodiversity,” Adornado said.

Bamboo is considered as high-value for mitigating climate change given its fast biomass production and renewability.

The ERDB is also partnering with the Department of Science and Technology and Department of Trade and Industry on value adding and marketing of bamboo products.

DENR plans to invest in the development of bamboo, which not only has proven high carbon sequestration capacity to support climate mitigation, but can also sustainably support local resource-based economies.

Studies showed that bamboo has the capacity to sequester 400 percent more carbon per unit area and gives off 35 percent more oxygen than other trees.

Bamboos can also stabilize embankments and prevent erosion brought about by sea level rise, which is one of the identified impacts of climate change.

Of the total 1,000 species of bamboo, 49 of which grow in the Philippines, giving the country the potential to become the second largest bamboo producer in the world, next to China whose current market share is around 50 percent.

In 2015, the international market value of commercial bamboo reached \$20 billion amid the growing demand for eco-friendly alternative to wood to conserve the world’s remaining forests.