

Philippines to host wildlife convention in October

By [Rhodina Villanueva](#) (The Philippine Star) | Updated August 24, 2017 - 12:00am

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MANILA, Philippines - The Philippines is set to host the world's largest wildlife conference this October.

This is the first time the Conference of Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS-COP12), or more commonly known as the Convention on Migratory Species, will be held in Asia since the international treaty was adopted in Bonn, Germany in 1979 and came into force in 1985.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Ernesto Adobo Jr. said that around 1,000 participants from 124 countries – parties to the convention – are expected to attend the CMS-COP12. They consist of high-level dignitaries and representatives from various organizations, private companies, and institutions recognized as champions of migratory species.

The DENR, through its Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), is the primary government agency tasked to oversee the conference.

“The Philippines is proud to host this year’s largest wildlife conference, which is geared toward providing greater protection to migratory species,” Adobo said.

Adobo is also chairman of the inter-agency committee created to manage the country’s hosting of the conference, slated Oct. 23 to 28 at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

He said that the Philippines acceded to the convention in 1993 by virtue of Senate Resolution No. 28. The BMB serves as the focal agency for implementation of the agreement.

Adobo added the event was aligned with the Philippine Development Plan, particularly on the key result area on Integrity of the Environment and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation.

“The COP presents an opportunity for our country to work with other parties to the convention on strategies and programs to protect migratory species and enhance transboundary cooperation on migratory species management,” said Adobo.

Meanwhile, DENR Undersecretary for policy, planning and international affairs Jonas Leones stressed the importance of conserving migratory species, which are constantly threatened to extinction by hunting, pollution, fish by-catch, habitat loss and collision with man-made structures.

Leones said that being a party to the CMS brings benefits especially in terms of ecotourism, collaborative research among range states, policy formulation on managing species and sites, and providing access to international cooperation and conservation funds.

The COP meets only once every three years, with the last one hosted by Quito, Ecuador in November 2014.

Leones noted that the Philippines is the only ASEAN country that is party to the CMS. “With the hosting of the COP12, the country is hoping to convince other countries in the region to accede to the convention,” he said.

For her part, BMB director Theresa Mundita Lim said COP12 would also serve as a “prime opportunity” for the Philippines to showcase its important role as host to a number of migratory species found in coastal, marine, wetland and forest ecosystems across the archipelago.

The Philippines is part of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, with over 150 species of migratory birds that annually visit the country’s migratory sites such as the Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Cebu, the Negros Occidental Wetland Conservation Area, Naujan Lake in Oriental Mindoro and the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area in Metro Manila.

<http://www.philstar.com/science-and-environment/2017/08/24/1731943/philippines-host-wildlife-convention-october>