

DENR orders Bohol officials to draft long-term environment protection plan

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Panglao, Bohol -- *BW FILE*

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Wednesday ordered the Panglao Island and Tagbilaran Executive Council (PITEC) to draft their own sustainable action plan for environmental protection.

In a statement, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu told PITEC officials to commit to more long-term sustainable practices to avoid facing closure due to environmental violations, similar to what happened in Boracay, the country's top island destination.

"The plans you are making are good for now. But I want to see a development plan for Panglao for the next 30 years," Mr. Cimatu said.

The PITEC, composed of local government unit and stakeholders from the private sector, is also in charge of facilitating the development in Panglao Island amid the ongoing construction of the New Bohol International Airport.

During a meeting earlier this week, PITEC presented its plans, which includes a wastewater treatment plant for the Alona Beach in anticipation of the heavy tourist arrivals which can lead to overcapacity for the island's waste management system.

“Unlike Boracay, there are more reasons for people of all ages to come here. The tourism industry will really flourish and the infrastructure like sewage will have to change,” Mr. Cimatú said.

“You should have a plan, what will happen 10, 20, years from now to guide future leaders because [short-term] plans change when leadership changes.” —

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