

- **ECONOMY**
- **EDITORS' PICKS**

DENR to draft management plans for other tourist spots

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Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy A. Cimatu

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will come up with management plans for other tourist sites in the country to avoid the possible closure of these areas due to environmental violations.

In a statement released on Friday, Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said he has ordered DENR's regional offices to draft up their own list of tourist sites for the plans.

"I have instructed the regional directors to make an inventory of emerging tourist destinations in their areas and to craft management plans for them. We want to make sure that the problem in Boracay will not be repeated," he added.

“We will make sure that there is proper sewerage treatment facilities in the tourist sites, the easement zones are followed and that there will be no encroaching in forestlands.”

The DENR, together with the departments of the Interior and Local Government and Tourism, sent a letter to President Rodrigo R. Duterte unanimously recommending a one-year closure for Boracay starting April 26.

This is despite local tourism stakeholders of the island clamoring to be given another 60 days to rehabilitate their own establishments and for the government to close only the violators.

The one-year closure will give the government a leeway to rehabilitate the island which has been polluted due to improper water and solid waste management.

While Boracay is closed, Mr. Cimatú said other tourist destinations can be developed instead so visitors can be directed to other areas.

“The revenue that tourists bring to a municipality is very significant especially if it is situated in a third class municipality,” he added.

“If they focus only on development of the tourist destination and the projected revenues and fail to comply with environmental laws, then we will have another problem in the future.

Aside from the crackdown in Boracay, the DENR is also monitoring other tourist destinations such as Bohol, Cebu, and Palawan. — **A.G.A. Mogato**

<http://bworldonline.com/denr-to-draft-management-plans-for-other-tourist-spots/>