

DENR considering Boracay single-use plastics ban

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THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is considering a ban on single-use plastics in Boracay after finding that the heavy use of such products played a role in the resort island's environmental deterioration.

Boracay island was ordered closed in late April for a six-month cleanup.

Among the environmental issues the island faces is the lack of an effective solid waste management program, with the island generating an estimated 90 to 115 tons of garbage a day.

Of this, only 30 to 40 tons can be shipped to Panay, the nearby major island, the DENR said.

It said the problem areas include single-use plastic products such as toothbrushes, sachets of shampoo and condiments, and soap wrappers, among others.

In a Tuesday statement, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said he is “seriously considering” a ban on single-use plastic items in Boracay to address its growing garbage problem.

“Plastic, particularly those from single-use packaging, has greatly contributed to the degradation of the environment... Plastic pollution continues to poison our oceans and injure marine life,” Mr. Cimatu was quoted as saying in the statement.

He added that when not properly disposed, plastics clog waterways and cause flooding.

“Let us go back to basics. We used to bring a glass bottle to the store when buying cooking oil and vinegar. Let’s do the same now,” Mr. Cimatu added.

The DENR said it will encourage hotels to use dispensers for liquid soap, shampoo and conditioner.

Meanwhile, stores will be asked to sell condiments like soy sauce, vinegar and cooking oil through refilling stations. — **Janina C. Lim**

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