

Mining companies, permittees required to have bamboo plantations

By Jaime S. CabagPublished on July 20, 2020

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ILOILO CITY, July 20 (PIA) – The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Region VI has coordinated with mining companies and permit holders here on their commitment regarding the directive of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu for these companies to devote part of their permit areas to bamboos.

Earlier, Cimatu directed mining companies to allocate a portion of their permit area for the establishment of a bamboo plantation to help the country's economic recovery program in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Developing bamboo resources and technology has actually been pursued by the government prior to the COVID-19 health emergency to achieve socio-economic and environmental sustainability. Bamboo is seen as the next alternative for lumber and as an effective greening agent to increase forest cover.

MGB-6 issued a press statement through their Information Officer Laralournie Artajo citing that Cimatu has already instructed their Bureau in September 2019 to direct mining companies to allocate at least 10% of their mined-out areas to bamboos.

With the economic impact of the pandemic, the Secretary recently instructed MGB to require mining companies to establish a bamboo plantation equivalent to another 10% of their declared final mining area, bringing the total target bamboo plantation area to at least 20%.

MGB specified in its memorandum that for mining companies, contractors, and permit holders without a mined-out area yet that is under rehabilitation, a bamboo plantation outside of its contract area can be considered as an offset for the required bamboo plantation.

Mining companies can enter into a memorandum of agreement with private landowners and people's organizations for the establishment of the bamboo plantation, and ensure that the bamboo plantation is being cared for and its growth being monitored.

In Region 6, Artajo said in view of the new directive from the Secretary, they have reached out to the concerned companies and permittees on increasing their allocated area for bamboo plantation.

Meanwhile, Engr. Mierbert Wed M. Naldoza of MGB-6 won in the on-the-spot essay writing contest organized by the DENR Region 6 held to mark Environment Month in June.

The participants came from the regional office, filed offices and the line bureaus of DENR, MGB and the Environment Management Bureau.

The essay writing contest was anchored on the theme "The Joy and Pain of Being a Frontliner in COVID-19 Pandemic."

Naldoza, a mining engineer in the MGB Regional Office 6, wrote a piece "Losses and Gains: A Pandemic Experience" and bested all other 14 entries. It talks about his experiences and reflections on the COVID-19 pandemic and how this affected him as a person and as a mining engineer working in the public sector who usually works with a group of people in the field.

The top three winners were given cash prizes --P3,000, P2,000 and P1,000, respectively, token and certificates of recognition. (MGB-6/JSC/PIA6)

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