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# Big investments in nature needed to avoid another pandemic

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by [Madelaine B. Miraflor](#)

Billions of investments in nature are needed to help countries avoid another pandemic while also generating revenues, according to biodiversity financing strategist BIOFIN Philippines.

In a statement, the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN), a project of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), has urged the government and private agencies to “invest in nature” as this will generate \$350 billion in revenues per year globally in improved ecosystem services while contributing to the elimination of future pandemics.

BIOFIN is co-implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the Philippines.

As part of its call, BIOFIN project implementors are now pushing policymakers to contribute to financing the Philippines’ 13-year biodiversity plan.

The Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP), which started in 2015 and will last until the year 2028, will cost P24 billion yearly.

This amount, as some argued, is not enough, and that there is actually a budget deficit of P19 billion in order to implement it.

“According to Campaign for Nature, protecting the world’s land and ocean resources outweighs financial costs at least five-to-one. Globally, this can lead to \$250 billion in increased yearly economic output, plus \$350 billion in improved ecosystem services,” said Angelique Ogena of BIOFIN.

The other critical reason for investing in nature is human health itself. When watersheds and forests—the habitat of wild animals — are destroyed, direct interaction between humans and the wildlife that carries diseases unknown to man becomes imminent.

“75 percent of emerging infectious diseases in humans originates from zoonotic pathogens. That is enough reason to revisit and reprioritize resources toward the improvement of natural resources management especially in protected areas to prevent future pandemics,” Ogena said.

Right now, BIOFIN is pushing for a proposed Presidential Proclamation to proclaim June 2021 to May 2022 as the “Year of the Protected Areas” and June of each year as the “Month of Protected Areas”.

Both are in support of Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Law (NIPAS).

“Nature is a reliable provider of our daily basic needs such as clean water for drinking, air for breathing, and other resources such as medicine, jobs, and climate change mitigation to create a more resilient nation,” said Ogena.

“If we zoom in to the ecosystem and species levels, national parks are at the top tier when it comes to natural wealth and therefore the most in need of protection and sustainable management,” she added.

According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, a global network of protected areas can store at least 15 percent of terrestrial carbon, boosting the value of conserving protected areas to new heights.

[https://mb.com.ph/2021/06/08/big-investments-in-nature-needed-to-avoid-another-pandemic/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=big-investments-in-nature-needed-to-avoid-another-pandemic](https://mb.com.ph/2021/06/08/big-investments-in-nature-needed-to-avoid-another-pandemic/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=big-investments-in-nature-needed-to-avoid-another-pandemic)