

BUSINESS

DENR to put up bamboo forests

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October 24, 2021 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) plans to put up mini bamboo forests across the country in a bid to create a nature-friendly, export-oriented bamboo lumber industry.

During his meeting with with United Nations Development Program (UNDP) country representative Selva Ramachandran, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu discussed a potential collaboration for the establishment of a “community-based mini forest, bamboo plantation, urban forestry” project.

Cimatu specifically requested if the UNDP could design assistance for localities to put up bamboo nurseries.

Ramachandran has received the same request for support for bamboo plantation establishment during his visits to Albay and Cagayan provinces.

He said Vietnam has a thriving bamboo lumber industry, being a major exporter of bamboo to Canada.

Cimatu said the Philippines has the same opportunities in bamboo products as Vietnam.

Bamboo has both the potential to create a profitable industry and to be a tool for controlling soil erosion and sequestering pollutant carbon dioxide (CO₂).

“Bamboo prevents soil erosion to which riverbank communities have been predisposed to danger,” the DENR said.

According to the DENR, a hectare of bamboo retains 30,000 liters of water during the rainy season. It also absorbs a huge amount of pollutant CO₂.

The DENR’s National Greening Program (NGP) listed bamboo as among the preferred species for reforestation.

“Bamboo will help boost supply for food, products (timber, fiber, non-timber forest products), services, and provide aesthetic value to the environment,”the DENR said.

It has also been considered an excellent substitute for many raw materials in different industries, with its charcoal used as organic fertilizer, while its tall, erect stems and petiolate leaf blades make for good ornamental plants.

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