

DENR launches program for Liguasan Marsh

BY MOH SAADUDDIN ON APRIL 7, 2017 REGIONS

BULUAN, Maguindanao: The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has launched an area development project for this province to help communities protect the environment and generate income by planting trees.

Environment Secretary Regina Paz Lopez and Gov. Esmael Mangudadatu led the launching of “Sustainable Integrated Area Development (SIAD) in Liguasan Marsh” with other implementing partners.

The SIAD is the DENR’s framework for localizing development, creating social enterprises in the countryside and building mini economic zones to generate employment, livelihood and equitable income-generating activities in the communities.

Lopez said the project will help alleviate poverty in Maguindanao, one of the poorest provinces in the country, by helping local communities make use of their idle resources.

Citing research, Lopez said the Liguasan delta has some 51 percent biodiversity potentials that could boost the Philippines’ recognition globally for having a large number of endemic flora and fauna.

Liguasan Marsh could be a model for development projects in the country, she added.

The project covers the Maguindanao portion of the 280,000-hectare Liguasan Marsh, a catch basin for more than a dozen large rivers in Central Mindanao.

An initial P21 million was awarded to Rajah Buayan town with a Memorandum of Agreement signed for the implementation of the program.

Rajah Buayan Mayor Zamzamin Ampatuan said they plan to make the town the “bamboo capital” of the country. They will start planting bamboo across the 1,000-hectare portion of the delta and plant trees in a two-hectare nursery.

Liguasan Marsh has been isolated from major development projects partly because of the presence of rebels and lawless elements, that roost in the area.

Meanwhile, Assemblyman Khadafi Mangudadatu of Maguindanao’s 2nd District, urged security forces and the Muslim rebels to completely address the security issues for the projects’ sustainability.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which has signed peace agreements with the government, vowed to work with government forces and local government units to address the security problem.

<http://www.manilatimes.net/denr-launches-program-liguasan-marsh/321581/>