

DENR alarmed over decreasing forest cover

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BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya: With the decreasing forest cover in the province, the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) urged Novo Vizcayanos to act together and redeem what has been lost in the fight against climate change.

"We are appealing to the people of Nueva Vizcaya to help in the improvement, protection and preservation of the province's forest cover which is slowly diminishing," Penro chief Giovannie Magat said.

Because of its location within the watersheds of the Caraballo and Cordillera mountain ranges and its distinction as the major source of fruits and vegetables in the region, Nueva Vizcaya is hailed as a "watershed haven and agro-forestry hub" in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley).

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has recorded a decrease in forest cover in the province at the rate of 7.6 percent, or 14,106.65 hectares in the span of five years from 2015 to 2020.

Magat said the forest cover in the province from 2015 to 2020 has decreased from 183,310 hectares of the open and closed forest combined in 2010 to 169,909 hectares in 2015 and 169,203 hectares in 2020. In his "State of the Environment in Nueva Vizcaya" speech during the DENR Caravan and People's Day at the Nueva Vizcaya State University gymnasium on Thursday, June 8, Magat appealed for support in the reforestation program of the government.

"We need everyone's support and action to further improve our forest cover. Our programs and services are ready for our partnership," he said.

Magat said the forest cover in Nueva Vizcaya in 2020 only covers 42 percent of the province's total land area of 403,758 hectares.

Thus, aggressive tree-planting activities are needed, especially during the rainy season, to ensure the growth of the planted trees in various plantation areas in the province, he added.