

DENR-Calabarzon vows to enforce laws on protected areas

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The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Region 4-A has renewed its commitment to strictly implement environmental laws on protected areas in the Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon area during the 9th Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) Summit with the theme “Sama-samang Pagpapatupad ng Batas Pangkalikasan sa Pinangangalagaang Pook Upang Protektahan ang Samut-saring Buhay para sa Sambayanang Pilipino” in San Mateo, Rizal from Aug. 17 to 18.

DENR-Region 4-A executive director and Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) chairman Nilo B. Tamoria said the summit’s theme is in line with the four decision points presented by DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga to President Ferdinand “Bongbong” R. Marcos Jr.

These are: Establishment of natural resources geo-spatial database to manage the DENR’s readily available data, which can be useful in the implementation of government projects; investment in climate change adaptation and mitigation to avoid a decrease in protection of direct and indirect losses, including nature-based solution; establishment of a natural resources accounting system, including valuation of ecosystem services, and improvement of compliance, monitoring, and enforcement of environmental laws.

“Even before we held the 9th PAMB Summit, these decision points have already been submitted by our Secretary to the President. So these four decision points are exactly the theme of our Summit. This is contained in the sustainable, inclusive, and resilient development as the major thrust and direction of our department,” Tamoria said.

He said that the region’s large population, which has surpassed that of the National Capital Region (NCR), has a big impact on its protected areas and natural resources as many people depend on these resources.

Based on the 2020 Census of Population and Housing, Calabarzon had the biggest population in the country with 16,195,042, followed by NCR with 13,484,462, and Central Luzon with 12,422,172.

“The rapid population growth and the protection of our remaining fertile environment and nature, that’s the additional challenge in our region. So, I am calling on the members of the Protected Area Management Board and all those who have stakes in protected areas to come together. Let’s pool our talent and strength so that we can better protect and maintain the integrity of protected areas,” Tamoria added.

Calabarzon has 18 protected areas, nine of which are legislated, while nine are initial components of the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) yet to be assessed for potential proclamation as regular NIPAS components and enactment into law.