

Greening program brings 6% more forest cover to Caraga: DENR-13

By: Philippine News Agency

<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1201483>

BUTUAN CITY – For the past 12 years, the government’s National Greening Program (NGP) has contributed six percent to the growth of forest covers in the Caraga Region.

From 2011 to date, the NGP has covered some 186,000 hectares in reforestation in the region.

“The six percent increase in forest cover is based on the 2020 assessment made. The impact of the NGP on the increase of forest covers in different areas in the country is done every five years,” Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the Caraga Region (DENR-13) Director Nonito Tamayo said in a statement Monday.

Data from the DENR-13 also indicated that during the period, a total of 186 million seedlings of various trees and fruit species were planted in the region through the NGP with a survival rate of 80 to 85 percent.

“Caraga Region has 300,000 hectares of potential areas for reforestation under the NGP,” Tamayo said.

For this year, DENR-13 has an allocation of PHP300 million for the NGP implementation that will cover 1,600 hectares.

“Our priority for the NGP implementation this year is the identified protected areas in the region,” Tamayo said.

The region has 12 protected areas that include the Agusan Marsh in Agusan del Sur; Tinuy-an Falls area in Surigao del Sur; Siargao Island in Surigao del Norte; watershed areas in Surigao del Sur; and Puting Bato watershed in Cabadbaran City, Agusan del Norte.

“The region has around 718,000 hectares of protected areas, and we need to identify those areas where reforestation is needed for this year’s NGP implementation,” Tamayo said.

Court conviction

Since 2011, a total of 135 individuals in the region were already convicted for violating the provisions of the Presidential Decree (PD) No. 705, or the Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines.

Data provided by DENR-13 said that in 2022, a total of 53 cases for violation of PD 705 were filed, of which 27 are pending at the prosecutor’s office, three were dismissed, 16 are under litigation, six were convicted, and one case archived.

Since January this year, 17 cases were filed for the same violations, 16 are pending and one is under litigation.