

DENR returns two turtles to sea in Northern Samar

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Tacloban City – Two turtles were released back to the sea in a town in Northern Samar, according to a report released Friday by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regional office.

DENR Regional Director Leonardo Sibbaluca told Manila Bulletin that its field office in Northern Samar released the green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) in Bobon town.



Return to the Sea – A DENR employee gently lowers a green sea turtle into the waters off Bobon town in Northern Samar. (Restituto Cayubit|Manila Bulletin)

Sibbaluca said that based in the report from Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) in Northern Samar, one of the turtles was found ashore in Barangay Magsaysay, Bobon, by a resident and turned over to local authorities.

The other animal was found by a fisherman entangled in a fish net in Barangay Lucban in the same town.

Sibbaluca said the Bobon local government had requested the PENRO in Northern Samar to facilitate the immediate release of the rescued turtles in coordination with the Philippine National Police and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Before their release, DENR metal tags were placed on the turtles' flippers to determine their migratory patterns and ensure their protection, he said.

Bobon is considered a nesting site for marine turtles, Sibbaluca said.

He praised the efforts and involvement of the community, the local government unit, and other agencies in protecting the turtles.

He appealed for the public to support the Pawikan Conservation Project of the government. "Inform the nearest DENR office of any sightings of the pawikan or turn over to authorities if caught or trapped in fish nets or cages or any device at sea," he said.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) lists the green sea turtle as endangered. The IUCN said all species of marine turtles are fast diminishing due to animal predation and human exploitation.

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