

DENR and partners lead International Biodiversity Day Celebration in the Philippines

The Philippines along with 195 member countries of the Convention on Biological Diversity celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDBD) every May 22 annually to promote understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues with this year's theme, "Biodiversity for Sustainable Development."

The Philippines' Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) through the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) spearheads the yearly IDBD celebration in the country. Various activities are lined up for this year's event, which includes a Youth Summer Camp on May 19-21, 2015 at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center in Manila, the country's capital. This will be participated in by 150 students and teachers from six public schools in Manila. Partners for the conduct of camp activities include U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy and Ecosystem Resilience (B+WISER) Program, Haribon Foundation and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity. Sponsors for the camp include Maynilad, RFM Foods Corp., ARC Refreshments Corp., First Gen Corp., Gardenia Philippines, and EL Laboratories.

USAID's B+WISER Program in collaboration with Haribon Foundation is conducting an activity during the Youth Camp called "We Are Interconnected", which aims to educate students on the natural ecosystems, such as forest and freshwater ecosystems, through interactive activities to encourage them to engage in environmental conservation actions.

B+WISER is a five-year program which aims to conserve biodiversity, reduce forest degradation, build capacities of key stakeholders to conserve biodiversity, manage forests, and support low emissions, and contribute to disaster risk reduction in seven priority watersheds and protected areas in the country.

A photo contest called "Selfie Take 2 for Biodiversity", sponsored by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is also being run by DENR, encouraging the public to capture in a single photo, commitments and efforts on the conservation and protection of biodiversity.

Culminating the celebration is the Media Launch of the Biodiversity Advocacy Campaign to be conducted on the IDBD itself, May 22, 2015. The Campaign aims to get the support of media and other partners in disseminating relevant information to increase public awareness and appreciation on the values, importance and benefits of conserving biodiversity, and at the same time generate public support towards biodiversity conservation and protection.