



28F Unit 2803 Summit One Tower 530 Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: (+632) 8534-6787 Telefax: (+632) 8534-6789 E-Mail: ulapnatsec@gmail.com, secretariat@ulap.net.ph
Website: www.ulap.net.ph Facebook: www.facebook.com/ulap.net.ph

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CUA URGES LGUS- BUILD 'GREEN WALL' AGAINST TYPHOONS

Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines president and Quirino governor Dax Cua on Monday urged local government units across the country to build a “green wall” for protection against natural disasters.

As Super Typhoon Karding battered Luzon on Sunday, “Sierra Madre” had been among the trending topics on social media, highlighting its role as a shield against the typhoon.

“Even as we are still assessing the extent of the destruction caused by Karding, one thing is clear—without Sierra Madre things would have been far worse,” Cua said.

The 540-km biodiverse mountain range that stretches from Cagayan to Quezon is known as the “backbone” of Luzon, and has historically protected urban dwellers from adverse weather conditions.

The governor, who is also the League of Provinces of the Philippines’ chairperson, then challenged LGUs to embark on a nationwide reforestation campaign.

“Now is our time to ‘walk the talk’ especially with regard to the environment. Huwag na tayong maghintay, let’s build a green wall of millions of trees that will help us ward off destructive winds, flood, and landslides,” Cua said.

He said that a reforestation or tree-planting drive could go a long way towards bolstering the country’s defenses against the climate crisis.

In 2019, Ethiopia, which had lost 98 percent of its forested areas over the past 50 years, planted an estimated 350 million trees in a single day.

Other countries such as Pakistan, India, and China have also embarked on mega-tree-planting activities.

According to Cua, there is no reason why the Philippines cannot do the same.

“We have shown with our Covid-19 vaccination efforts that we can channel our resources and focus them on a unified goal. This nationwide tree-planting activity is a worthwhile endeavor, and even a fun one where families can get involved in saving the environment,” he said.

He also emphasized that only indigenous trees should be planted so as not to risk biodiversity.

The Philippines is estimated to have lost about 90 percent of its original forest cover since the Spanish occupation. ###