

09 DEC 2013

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DAY : Friday

# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# 10-year solid waste management plans of LGUs approved

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

**T**he National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) has approved the 10-year solid waste management plans (SWMPs) of 160 local government units (LGUs) nationwide, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) disclosed.

Benny Antiporda, DENR undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Concerns, said that they are expecting cities and municipalities to fully implement their respective SWMPs and adhere to the provisions of Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

NSWMC is a DENR-led body tasked to oversee the implementation of RA 9003, which provides that the LGUs are primarily responsible for waste segregation and disposal.

"We have neglected our environment, but it's never too late. (The SWMP) is the answer to the worsening problem on waste," Antiporda told mayors and vice mayors who were present to personally receive the NSWMC resolution approving their SWMPs.

He vowed to strictly monitor the implementation of the approved SWMPs covering the periods 2014 to 2023, 2015-

2024, 2016-2015, 2017-2026, 2018-2027 and 2019 to 2028.

Also, he warned local executives that they may be held administratively and criminally liable for non-implementation of their approved SWMPs.

"The commission is serious in its war on waste. Waste is always the last and the least, and now it is in a very alarming situation," he said.

Earlier, Antiporda said the NSWMC was working to fast track the approval process for the SWMPs submitted by more than 1,600 cities and municipalities across the country.

The move, he said, would allow LGUs to immediately implement their respective plans for addressing garbage problems in their localities.



# DENR OKs waste management plans of 160 LGUs

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has approved the solid waste management plans of 160 other local government units (LGUs).

The National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWC), which was tasked to oversee the implementation of Republic Act 9003 or the

Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, approved the SWMPs during its meeting on Thursday.

Last August, the NSWMC approved the SWMPs of Quezon City and 15 towns in Ifugao, Aurora, Isabela, La Union, Quezon, Pangasinan, Bulacan and Nueva Ecija.

In September, the SWMPs of

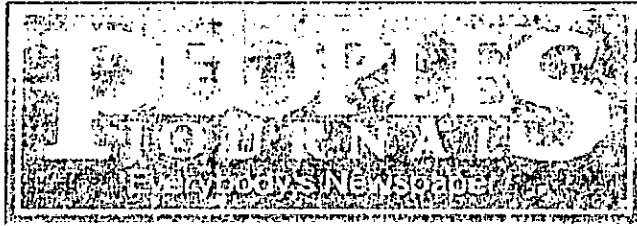
20 LGUs, including Iloilo, Bataan, Bataan and Tarlac, were approved.

The SWMPs of 67 other LGUs were approved last October.

"The SWMPs are the answer to the worsening problem on waste," Benny Antiporda, DENR undersecretary for solid waste management and LGU concerns and concurrent chairman of

the NSWC, said, noting that it would allow LGUs to implement their plans to address the garbage problem in their respective areas.

Antiporda vowed to strictly monitor the implementation of the approved SWMPs. He said erring local officials face criminal and administrative charges. - Rhodina Villanueva



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# 10-year waste management plan okayed for 160 LGUs

By Joel dela Torre

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) expects to gain more allies in the fight against waste pollution.

The National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) has just approved the 10-year solid waste management plans (SWMPs) of 160 local government units (LGUs) nationwide.

Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGU Concerns Benny Antiporda said after providing these cities and municipalities with "red carpet treatment" in assisting them in all aspects of environmental protection, the DENR expects them to reciprocate by fully implementing their respective SWMPs and adhering to the provisions of RA 9003.

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"The commission is serious in its war on waste. Waste is always the last and the least, and now it is in a very alarming situation," Antiporda added.

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The move, he said, would allow the LGUs to immediately implement their respective plans for addressing garbage problems in their localities.

In August, the NSWMC also approved during its en banc meeting the SWMP of Quezon City and of 15 municipalities from Ifugao, Aurora, Isabela, La Union, Quezon, Pangasinan, Bulacan and Nueva Ecija.

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## Solid waste management plans okayed

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NSWMC is a DENR-led body tasked to oversee the implementation of RA 9003, which provides that the local government units (LGUs) are primarily responsible for waste segregation and disposal. **(Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz)**



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## PROBLEMA SA BASURA TAPOS NA

SA wakas natuldukan na ni DENR Usec. Benny Antiporda ang matagal nang pinoproblema natin sa basura dahil kamakalawa lang ay inaprubahan na ng National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) ang 10 years na Solid Waste Management (SWM) plan sa 160 munisipalidad ng 15 Region sa buong-bansa .

Inaasahan ni Usec. Antiporda na maipatutupad ito ng mga alkalde at iba pang mga lokal na opisyal ng mga bayan, munisipalidad at lungsod sa pagkakaapruba ng 10-year plan ng solid waste management para sa kalutasan ng matagal nang pino-problemang basura sa bansa.

Kabilang sa mga tinutukoy ni Usec na polisya at alituntunin ng solid waste ang segregation. 'Ika niya, 'no segregation no collection policy' ng basura sa kanilang mga lugar ang pairalin upang malutas ang problema rito. Tinuran pa ni Usec na ang pagpapasara o operasyon ng open dumpsites ay mahigpit na babantayan ng solid waste management commission at DENR-EMB.

Dagdag pa niya, ang aprubal ng SWM plan sa mga bayan at munisipalidad ay nagpapakita lamang ng kanilang commitment para sundin ang probisyon ng R.A. 9003 hinggil sa tamang pagtatapon ng basura sa kani-kanilang lugar upang malutas na ang malaking problema sa basura sa bansa.

Kasabay nito, nagbabala si Usec sa lahat ng mga alkalde na hindi magpapatupad ng kanilang 10 years Solid Waste Management plan na maaring mademanda ang mga ito dahil sa hindi



nila pagsunod sa probisyon ng R.A. 9003 o Ecological Solid Waste Management Program ng gobyerno.

Kahit na matsugi na ang sinomang alkalde sa kani-kanilang mga puwesto, siyento por siyento ay itutuloy pa rin ang demanda laban sa kanila dahil sa hindi raw nila tinupad ang 10-year plan ng solid waste management program ng gobyerno.

O, kaya kayong mga alkalde, mag-isip-isip na kayo at maki-pagtulungan sa DENR.

### PASUGALAN SA LA TRINIDAD AT SI MAYOR

HINDI pa rin tumitigil itong si alias Yap Adam sa pag-o-operate ng iligal na pasugalan sa Trading Post sa Cherry Blossoms Bakery sa La Trinidad Benguet kahit ilang beses na itong tinutugisa sa mga social media at mga newspaper. Parang walang naririnig si La Trinidad Mayor Romeo Salda.

Anooooo ang dahilan, Mayor Saldaaaa!!!

Anomang puna o reklamo, i-text sa 09189274764, 09266-719269 o i-email sa juandesabog@yahoo.com o juandesabog-48@gmail.com.

# Gov't embarks on 'genetic diversity' program on narra

The government has embarked on a robust "genetic diversity" program of the endangered narra and industrial tree rattan as a commitment to conserve forests amid seemingly irreversible deforestation that threatens economic resources.

The Ecosystems Research & Development Bureau (ERDB) has started carrying out DNA analysis of these economically important tree species as a long term support to the DENR's national greening program (NGP).

Genetic variation is the basis of evolution and the catalyst for species to adapt to the ever changing environment.

"Assessment of genetic variation among and within populations is essential for the success of any tree breeding and selection programs. It holds vast potentials for the preservation of the forest ecosystems," said ERDB director Sofio Quintana.

Six provinces – Ilocos Sur, Cebu, Iloilo, Marinduque, Nueva Vizcaya and Quezon— have so far been identified as potential sources of good planting materials for narra reforestation.

"The genetic diversity analysis showed that the six populations of *Pterocarpus indicus* Wild (narra) from the six provinces have good levels of genetic variation and can serve as good sources of potentially useful genes," said ERDB genetic experts.

The government has deemed a top priority to conserve forests as a top economic asset as Philippines has among the most biologically diverse flora with five percent of the world's total.

Narra's timber is prominent among importers in Asia, Europe, US and Australia which "accept large volumes of sawn timber at high prices of \$600

per cubic meter according to the "Species Profiles for Pacific Island Agroforestry."

Narra is also known for its medicinal, ornamental, and nitrogen-fixing functions.

ERDB's project, "2018 Genetic Diversity: A Key Component for Conserving Philippine Forest Trees," aims to identify trees with molecular markers that indicate high survival rate as part of planting the targeted 1.5 billion trees under the NGP.

"With the increase in global average temperatures, some species of forest trees fail to cope with such changes. With more genetic variations, it is more likely that some individuals possess alleles (alternative form of genes) that better suit the environment," the ERDB said.

Having less genetic diversity leads to uniformity, with population having individuals less likely to adapt and survive in the changing environment.

While monoculture in agriculture is good for harvesting a good volume of a single crop it will be a problem when disease or parasites attack the field in the long run.

Little genetic variation within species impedes the process of healthy reproduction as evidenced by the expression of harmful traits in the offspring resulting from inbreeding (mating of genetically related organisms or in human, within one family).

Inbred trees which grow slowly are often deformed and many die suddenly and

inexplicably before reaching maturity. Few inbred trees survive and reproduce in natural forest setting.

In 1890, an epidemic had spread across Panama wiping out hectares of banana production. Being genetically identical, banana plants are susceptible to the fungal disease, providing little to no resistance against the disease.

Such scenario ultimately leads to extinction of the population and eventually extinction of the species.

"Knowledge of the extent of genetic diversity in selected narra populations may be used in determining the susceptibility of these narra populations to pests like the ambrosia beetles which are the causative agent of fusarium wilt (*Fusarium oxysporum*)," the ERDB said.

Forestry experts use molecular markers as part of effective reforestation strategy because of the "ease, rapidity and reliability in producing results."

In order for plant geneticists to distinguish genetic variations, they use segments of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) sequence of the individuals to mine them out despite the limited availability of whole genome sequences from forest trees species.

After collecting the plant material (leaf, stem, or root), careful

optimization of protocols follows wherein the DNA of the material is isolated. This process is called DNA extraction. The process involves breaking the cell wall and cell membrane (cell lysis), removing the organelles, and destroying the nuclear membrane. After these processes, the "purest" DNA can be extracted.

Having a desirable amount of DNA with superior purity, molecular biologists then subject this DNA to a temperature sensitive process that produces millions of copies of it in a matter of an hour or two. This copying process is called DNA amplification or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) discovered by Nobel Prize winner Kary Mullis in 1985.

It involves a series of heating-cooling-heating the DNA. The temperature changes allow the enzymes and other reagents to copy the target regions (molecular markers) of the DNA.

PCR is an indispensable technique known to be used in medical and clinical laboratory research including forensic science in crime scene investigations.

It also holds a potential swing in improving forensic botany for higher productivity and survivability of forest trees species and for the trees to achieve superiority in growth parameters.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



**BAY CLEANUP** — Environment advocates conduct a cleanup drive along the shores of Manila Bay yesterday. (Janson Romero)

## Makati City promotes organic urban gardening, vermiculture in schools

By JEL SANTOS

Aiming to promote organic gardening and vermiculture in schools, the local government of Makati City recently held a search for the best organic urban gardening school in the city.

The top three winners among the 25 public elementary schools in the city were Comembo Elementary School (grand winner), La Paz Elementary School (second placer), and Rizal Elementary School (third placer).

The winners for the "Search for the Best Organic Urban Gardening and Vermiculture Raising" were named during an awarding ceremony on November 28 led by Mayor Abigail

Binay.

"My warmest congratulations to our winning schools. I sincerely thank you for your extraordinary efforts to promote organic urban gardening and vermiculture raising among our students, teachers, and parents," she said.

Binay noted that the main objective of the contest is to promote planting fruits and vegetables that can be used for the schools' supplementary feeding program.

"In partnership with DepEd (Department of Education) Makati, we came up with this project to promote urban gardening in schools coupled with vermiculture raising. Our primary objective is to be able to grow fruits and vegetables that we can use

for the schools' supplementary feeding program," the mayor said.

Developing these skills among the youth will have a substantial and long-term impact on the fight to end hunger and poverty through food sufficiency and entrepreneurship, she added.

The winners received cash prizes. The Comembo Elementary School received ₱100,000; La Paz Elementary School got ₱75,000; and Rizal Elementary School had ₱50,000. Three other schools received ₱20,000 consolation prize each.

The project was jointly undertaken by the local government and the DepEd Makati, with the support of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and non-government organizations.





By Bong S. Sarmiento  
@bongindano

**MAITUM, SARANGANI**—Under coconut trees swaying from the sea breeze, several fishermen would usually gather at a coastal village here on late afternoons to unwind from hard work with a gallon of "tuba" (coconut wine).

As Filipino culture dictates, drinking sessions would not be complete without people partaking of the "pulutan" (appetizer). In the case of the Maitum fishermen, the plate on the table would often have exotic sea turtle, locally called "pawikan."

"The meat of sea turtle tastes like beef. We also don't spare turtle eggs. Eating them seems to stir our libido," fisherman Arnalyn Valderama told the Inquirer at the veranda of his small house built several meters from the shore at Barangay Klambing.

When not consumed, the turtle meat or eggs would be bartered by some for other commodities.

That was during the 1980s, Valderama, the father of three children, quickly added. Now in his 50s, he swore to high heavens that residents were "no longer a threat" to the marine creatures.

"We no longer kill sea turtles for their meat and we avoid eating their eggs to prevent their extinction," Valderama said. "It's a crime to slaughter the reptiles. You can go to jail or pay fines."

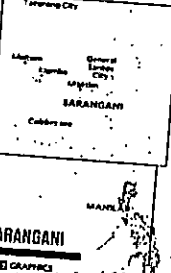
**Safe nesting areas**  
For decades, sea turtles have found safe nesting areas in Maitum and Maasin, set apart by another town but all facing the vast Celebes Sea. They belong to the olive ridley, hawksbill, green turtle and loggerhead species.

The olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), also known as the Pacific ridley, is the most common species. It is categorized as vulnerable, meaning its population is declining according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.

The IUCN classifies the hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) as critically endangered, the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) as endangered, and the loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) as vulnerable.

In several villages, the turtle eggs are eventually being taken care of by residents, saving the species from extinction.

**Hatching facility**  
"A lot of things have changed. [Before] the locals slaughtered sea turtles and sold their meat to the Chinese community in General Santos City. Others exchanged sea turtle eggs for rice or canned goods," Edibrando Paras told the Inquirer. General Santos is about an hour away from Maasin.



**EDUCATION** Information materials are available at the sea turtle hatchery at Maasin town in Sarangani to help villagers understand the value of conserving these endangered marine animals.

Before 2000, turtle meat was traded for P200 and P300 a kilogram, Paras said.

"Before, the villains to the sea turtles were our people. Now, our people are heroes in the eyes of sea turtles for helping prevent their extinction," said Paras, who acts as caretaker of the hatching facility on a parcel of property his family donated at Barangay Lumasa, Maasin.

Villagers from other communities were even turning over turtle eggs to the hatchery, he said.

He attributed the change in people's attitude to their education campaign that emphasizes the jail terms or fines imposed by the law against violators.

In 2001, the Philippines approved Republic Act No. 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

The law imposes a jail term of six to 12 years and fines ranging from P100,000 to P1 million for violators of species listed as critical; four to six years imprisonment and a fine from P50,000 to P500,000 if inflicted against endangered species; and, two to four years imprisonment and a fine from P30,000 to P300,000 if inflicted

against vulnerable species.

**Back to the sea**  
Since 2015, the hatchery in Maasin, which has eight known nesting sites, has released at least 8,000 hatchlings to the sea.

It takes 45 to 60 days for the turtle eggs to hatch, and the annual nesting usually occurs from January to June.

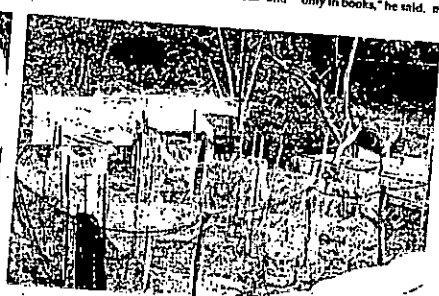
Success in hatching using the natural method (eggs are buried in the sand, not put in an incubator) depends on the

weather. When it's sunny, average hatching rate is 90 percent and when rainy, 60 percent, according to Paras.

In Maitum, a half-hour travel by car from Maasin, a P2-million Pawikan Hatchery and Learning Center is nearing completion at Barangay Klambing, Hannette Nacional, the municipal environment and natural resources officer, recalled seeing the turtles on the beaches during her childhood. "They are still around until now," she said.



**SANCTUARY** A caretaker transplants sea turtle eggs that were turned over to the "pawikan" hatchery in Maasin.



Maitum was actually the first to operate a turtle hatchery facility in Sarangani. The first facility was set up in Barangay Old Poblablan in the early 2000s.

As the local population grew, it was transferred to its present site in 2015, Nacional said.

Videoke noise and cottages there were distracting the turtles from nesting so the nursery was moved to a donated land in Klambing, she added.

**Vital role in ecology**  
Nacional stressed that the villagers embraced the conservation of the endangered creatures following a sustained information and education campaign on their vital role in marine ecology.

Jessica Gullao, chief of the Biodiversity Management Services for Maasin (Maasin-Klambing-Maitum) of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office, described sea turtles as the "janitors" of the ocean as they feed on sea grasses and sponges.

"These sea turtles are likely among the factors why different kinds of fishes thrive in our ocean. They help maintain the health of sea grass beds and

coral reefs [that are crucial other marine elements to play]," she said.

Gullao stressed the need to conserve the turtles, nests of the thousand hatchlings released to the ocean, only would reach maturity if their exposure to the elements including predators "Out in the wild, it's a survival fittest," she said.

"The awareness of the communities is high due to continuing education campaign which is a key component of conservation efforts," she said. Arnel Ortiz, dean of the College of Fisheries of Mind State University in GenSan, commended the conservation efforts of Maitum.

"The presence of sea turtles indicates a healthy and its marine environment. If it's not around, it means the environment is not well," said a marine biologist.

For Sherwin Cuasam, caretaker of the hatchery ambly, it is but fitting to prevent the extinction of it turtles.

"We don't want our generation to see the sea turtles only in books," he said. ■



# AMID DIN OF CLIMATE CHANGE TALK, YOUTHS WANT THEIR CRIES HEARD

By **Jhesset O. Enano**  
@JhessetEnanoINQ

**KATOWICE, POLAND**—At ground zero of the crucial United Nations climate talks, Greta Thunberg was easily a standout in this southern Polish city.

With her blonde hair braided in two long pigtails, she walked along the corridors of the massive Spodek arena, the venue for the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The Swedish girl was no taller than the shoulders of the climate negotiators and campaigners, many of whom stopped for a quick chat with her.

Thunberg is only 15 and she feels she is exactly where she needed to be: at the heart of the climate conversation.

On one Friday in August, the ninth-grader from Stockholm rocked her government after she decided to skip school to stand outside the Swedish Parliament, demanding that Sweden must act on climate change.

That solo picket became a

weekly Friday demonstration where she was joined by other Swedish citizens until the movement she inspired later spread like wildfire to other countries. In Australia and Germany, children also went on strike, demanding actions to stop climate change.

Young people are trying to raise a simple call above the cacophony of voices at COP24—Listen to us!

### Show of solidarity

Outside closed doors where most negotiations take place, the young activists are showing solidarity amid the crisis that threatens their shared future. They are the faces of the urgent need to stop climate change now.

After all, science has already shown that by the time many of them reach their 40s, millions of people would have been driven to extreme poverty and displaced by ever stronger storms and harsher droughts unleashed by the rapidly warming planet.

Doing her share in helping stop global warming, caused in

large part by greenhouse gas emissions, she traveled over 1,000 kilometers from Stockholm to the coal mining city of Katowice with her father, Svante, on their electric car.

For Thunberg, taking charge of her future was a black-and-white issue.

"This is the most important question humanity has ever faced. What we do now is essential for how the future will turn out," she said in an interview with the Inquirer. "I thought no one was doing anything and nothing was happening. And I guess I have to do something."

### 'Road to madness'

At a meeting with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa, she made a strong case for her generation: "We are facing an existential threat and there is no time to continue this road to madness."

Every Friday since August, Thunberg skipped school to educate the people who joined her outside the Swedish government building about the climate crisis.



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Her own parents and other people did not like her Friday rallies.

"My parents don't support me skipping school, but they understand why I am doing it," she said.

For the past few years, she has involved them in her fight. For instance, the family had decided not to travel by plane, which produces huge carbon emissions, and instead take their electric car or bicycles to go around the city or across the country.

Aside from Thunberg, many other young people are making their stand at COP24, beyond formal negotiations.

Joanna Flisowska, a native of Katowice, began her climate activism when she was 16 years old. Today, 12 years on, she serves as the coal policy coordinator for Climate Action Network-Europe.

As a Polish citizen, her work to shift away from coal and fossil fuels can run against many traditions in her country, whose growth has been fueled by the coal mining industry.

"Coal is something that people are proud of. For many years, coal mining provided security for people in Poland," she said. "But coal has no future anymore in Poland. And now more people are waking up."

### Taking the lead

While the climate movement is not yet very strong in her own country, Flisowska is encouraging young people around the world to take the lead in engaging their governments to ensure they have a future ahead of them.

"Sometimes, decision-makers forget about it. They feel 2050 is so far away and they may not be there anymore," she said.

"It is important for someone to remind them that it is not that far away ... It is important for them to see the faces of the people whose future they are deciding on."

Filipino-American activist Kristy Drutman, who works with the youth-led sustainability group SustainUS based in the United States, said that young people should take advantage of

the technology and tools they have to share their stories.

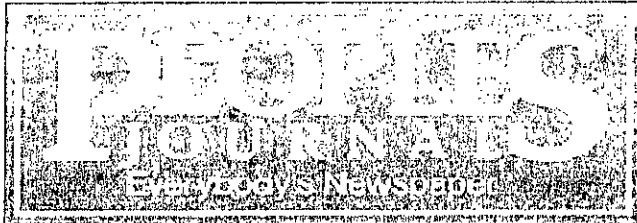
The 23-year-old is active on social media, engaging other youths who are also affected by climate change and rising to the challenge of fighting for the planet.

"This is an issue that concerns young people and we should hold responsible the adults who caused this to happen," she said. "Young people have a role to play in this, because for us, this is personal."

Drutman said the youth's diverse narratives about how their lives were going to be impacted by their governments' inaction could spell the change in their present and their future.

As climate negotiators scramble to finish the rule book for the Paris Agreement, particularly in limiting the rise in global temperature to just 1.5 degrees Celsius, young activists like Thunberg, Flisowska and Drutman are looking at more challenges ahead.

"You are never too small to make a difference," Thunberg said. INQ



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## German farmers sue over missed climate targets

**VETSCHAU, Germany -** Dismayed by the German government's failure to meet climate protection targets, dairy farmer Heiner Luetke Schwienhorst has filed a lawsuit against Berlin to force it into action.

"Some describe this as a fight between David and Goliath. To me, that's besides the point," said Schwienhorst, who suffered his poorest harvest in three decades after a record drought.

"The attitude of political representatives, the way they trivialise climate targets by giving up what they have set, is something that we need to bring to political accountability. That is important," he told AFP.

Together with two other farmers and Greenpeace,

Schwienhorst has launched a challenge against the German government for having "given up" trying to achieve cuts in greenhouse gas emissions set out under its own climate target, as well as under European law.

A dairy farmer near Hamburg and a livestock farmer on the North Sea island of Pellworm have joined the first such lawsuit to seek "climate protection, not monetary compensation".

Berlin had pledged to take action to slash greenhouse gas emissions in Germany by 40 percent by 2020 compared to 1990 levels.

But in its latest annual climate protection report published in June, the government admitted that it was now expecting to

achieve 32 percent in reductions compared to 1990.

The shortfall of 8 percentage points is equivalent to about 100 million tonnes of carbon dioxide.

"It was clear in the climate protection report that the government is not planning to take further measures in order to reach the target. Instead, it has simply given up," said Anike Peters of Greenpeace.

"We're saying we're not going to accept this. Because it's not about a lack of technical possibilities to reach the target, rather it's about a lack of political will.

**'Do what you promised'**

With the help of lawyer Roda Verheyen, the plaintiffs lodged their case at

the administrative court in Berlin at the end of October.

The court now needs to decide if there is any merit to the case.

Verheyen is no stranger to such climate cases.

In another high profile case in Germany, she helped bring to court a challenge by a Peruvian farmer against energy giant RWE over climate change damage in the Andes.

While the initial ruling went against them, the case is now at the appeals court.

Verheyen said that in her latest case, the issue is whether the government can be held liable for failing to implement climate protection measures, as the targets it set are not written into law.

"Here the plaintiff families say, yes. Do what you've promised, government, implement the 2020 climate protection goal!"

The environment ministry, which is taking the lead in responding to the case, said the plaintiffs had every right to bring the issue to court "to seek public attention" and increase the pressure for better climate protection.

"Although Germany's climate protection efforts have made progress, they have not yet reached our goals," ministry spokesman Andreas Kuebler told AFP. "That's why we're focusing on getting ahead in climate protection.

"We are united in the same goal," Kuebler said. It was up to the court to decide whether the legal action was justified. AFP