

- Forests and forestry / Trees

Importance of mangroves in our community

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MANGROVES, which were once thought to be muddy wastelands, have been scientifically proven to benefit the Earth and humans in many ways, from providing fish breeding sites to carbon storage to flood prevention. They are enormously abundant ecosystems.

Mangroves serve as excellent breeding place for fishes, prawns, shrimps and other crustaceans. Several types of fish, including stingray, sailfish and scudder, seek refuge among mangrove roots as juveniles, then relocate to scavenge in the seagrass meadows as adults.

One of the many things that the Iloilo City government has done to clean and restore the Iloilo River was planting mangroves. We have seen a lot of improvements in the river in the past few years that is why it is important to mobilize other projects that will continue the redevelopment of the Iloilo River and encourage all Ilonggos to participate. This will help achieve our goal of bringing back the former glory of the Iloilo River and remove it from the list of the Top 50 rivers that greatly contribute to plastic pollution in our seas.

Mangrove forests contribute to global warming mitigation by eliminating carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, the majority of which is deposited in the plant. Once mangrove tree roots, branches, and leaves die, they are usually buried in the soil, which is then drowned under tidal water, decelerating material meltdown and increasing carbon storage.

Every year, bulk of leaves fall from each hectare of mangrove ecosystem, forming the foundation of an extremely efficient food chain. Crustaceans and algae benefit from decaying leaves. Many small organisms, including birds, earthworms, sea urchins, cuttlefish, prawns, and young fish, feed on these. Tidal currents also circulate nutrients between mudflats, coastal areas, and coral reefs, feeding species such as shellfishes that live on the sea bottom.

According to studies, mangroves surpass most of the other forests in terms of carbon storage capacity.

Mangroves safeguard both the seawater and surface water natural systems that they cross. The complex root systems of mangroves filter nitrates and phosphates that streams and rivers carry to the ocean. They also prevent seawater from infiltrating inland waterways.

Mangroves are more than just a plant. They are very beneficial that could help us in mitigating climate change and recovering the Earth's waters. Preserving mangroves would be definitely advantageous to different species and most importantly to us, humans./