



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Required Report - public distribution

Date: 8/28/2006

GAIN Report Number: RP6039

Philippines

Solid Wood Products

RP Undertakes Massive Tree Planting

2006

Approved by:

Emiko Purdy
U.S. Embassy

Prepared by:

Perfecto G. Corpuz

Report Highlights:

On August 25, the GRP initiated a massive tree-planting program, which seeks to address the worsening air-quality situation. Called the "Green Philippine Highway Program", an estimated 500,000 saplings of indigenous tree species and ornamental plants were planted along the country's major highways.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Manila [RP1]
[RP]

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Angelo T. Reyes led an estimated two million volunteers in an unprecedented planting of over 500,000 tree saplings Friday, August 25, 2006, along major Philippine highways primary road networks from Northern Luzon to Davao City in Mindanao. Called the "Green Philippine Highway Program," the tree-planting activity reportedly covered 3,439 kilometers of the country's major highways and used indigenous tree saplings like narra, mahogany, acacia and banaba, as well as some ornamental plants.

According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), studies have shown that around 70 percent of pollutants in the country's air come from vehicular emissions while 30 percent comes from other land-based sources namely factories, power plants and other area sources (construction sites and unpaved roads). Studies have also shown that a single tree can sequester about 0.56 metric tons of carbon dioxide in its lifetime, and around 10 trees are needed to capture the emissions of one car. Since there are presently around five million registered motor vehicles in the country, about 50 million trees are required to contain air pollutants emitted by motor vehicles in the country.

Constrained by the lack of resources, the tree-planting project was not an entirely GRP endeavor but was supported by various communities, NGOs, media, the academe, religious, civic and other groups, according to the DENR. The program employs the "adopt-a tree" concept where communities and organizations look after the trees at specific sites for at least three years, or the minimum period needed by a growing tree to reach maturity.

The tree-planting project is not expected to significantly impact the Philippine air-quality situation, or the output of the local solid wood product industry, however, considering that a considerable percentage of these newly planted trees are not expected to survive and reach maturity. Tree-planting efforts in the past have largely been unsuccessful due to inadequate and appropriate seedling care, which require substantial resources as well as persistence.