

PRESS RELEASE

10.14.2020

IDIS, partners launch new project to save heritage trees

Davao City – The Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS) Inc. in partnership with International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), and Ecowaste Coalition launched a new project entitled “Save Heritage Trees: Mapping the Urban Heritage Trees in Davao City through Citizen Science” which will run from October to December 2020.

The Save Heritage Trees project initiative was proposed in response to the continuing urban deforestation in which large and old trees were already cut to give way to infrastructure development. IDIS and other environmental groups in the city have been campaigning to protect the existing trees which are of social, ecological, and cultural importance. Several campaigns like in stopping the cutting of trees along Dacudao Avenue in 2015, the actual tree cutting in Clifford Park in 2019 which ended in the public apology of the City Mayor, and campaigning to preserve the Molave and Sampalok trees in Chavez Street this year. Since there is no enacted local ordinance specifically stating the protection particularly remaining old city trees; these trees continuously threatened by this Build Build Build program of the current administration and the kind of development direction we have and we need to put a stop on it by lobbying for the passage of policy and full implementation to ensure their protection and conservation..

This project also aims to continue in addressing air pollution in the urban areas particularly the increasing amount of carbon monoxide, a common air pollutant by generating data to be utilized in pushing for the protection of existing trees that are threatened by the massive urban development in Davao City. Trees are known to remove carbon monoxide from the atmosphere by absorbing it. The more trees in the urban areas, the more will absorb it and the lesser would be the amount of ambient carbon monoxide in the atmosphere. It will also result to a stable climate and better air quality which will help avoid potential human health problems related to exposure to it.

The project will be implemented in Davao City, specifically the central business district core: Poblacion, Talomo, Agdao, and Buhangin. The main goal is to generate maps of the remaining heritage trees, analyze carbon sequestration capability, as well assess its condition and issues on ground. The method is through citizen science survey, geo-tagging of locally found heritage trees in the area. IDIS will provide capacity building and orientation. Volunteer citizen scientist will identify the tree (what species; native/non-native), measure the trunk, estimate height and age, collect GPS coordinates through geo-tagging, as well as to document the observed issues on the ground. All data submissions will be online and citizen scientist will use the KoboCollectData as survey tool.

Hence, IDIS calls for fifty (50) citizen scientist volunteers for this project. This is open to ages 18 and above, open to all students of any course, out of school youth, and professionals. Volunteers should have android phone for the application, measuring materials such as steel tape, and commitment to the project. The deadline of registration for volunteers will be on

October 24, 2020. At the end of the project, volunteers will receive Science Citizen Certificate, advocacy shirt, lots of learning, especially their contribution towards a greener Davao City, and they will be part of IDIS Alumni Network.

This heritage tree mapping project will be turn-over to the City Council as policy recommendation towards a Heritage Tree Protection Ordinance in Davao City.





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