

Philippines to empower DA Soils Bureau for national soil health

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Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. President of the Philippines has vowed to empower the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Soils and Water Management (DA-BSWM), especially through capacitating soil laboratories nationwide to yield better data.

During the opening program of the 1st National Soil Health Summit, the President stressed the need to address the country's growing problem of soil degradation, acidification, and pollution.

"I cannot emphasise enough how significant and influential this 1st National Soil Health Summit is. With the discourse amongst our leaders and the agricultural sector's brightest minds, I anticipate that this summit will spark more informed decisions and much-needed innovations in the coming years," President Marcos said.

Under his leadership, the government has come up with a five-point priority agenda on soil and water management such as the National Soil Health Program and the implementation of Sustainable Land Management.

The chief executive said it will ensure proper soil use and management, address land degradation, enhance crop productivity, and improve farmers' income.

Through the DA-BSWM, the government conducts soil and land resources mapping and evaluation processes including soil-based and land-based level assessments, soil sample analyses, and digital map preparations under the Philippine Soil Land

Resources Information Program.

The administration also explores Water Security for Climate Resilient Rainwater Technologies and Cloud Seeding Operations for Agriculture to improve water conditions in production areas, critical watersheds, and reservoirs as part of the collective efforts to mitigate the effects of El Niño.

The 1st National Soil Health Summit is jointly organised by the DA-BSWM, Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCAARRD), House of Representatives, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), and Griffith University