

Special Areas in the Watershed

One distinct feature within the lake's watershed is Mt. Makiling—an isolated peak to the south of *Laguna de Bay* in southern Laguna Province, about 50 km south of Metro Manila. It is a significant watershed area drained by 78 streams and contribute approximately 8.5 million m³ of water annually to the lake. Although Mt. Makiling rises to just over 1,000 m and is located in a densely-populated part of Luzon, it still retains extensive forest cover. The forest is mainly lowland in type, with some mountain forest around the peak above 900 m. Likewise, the lake also serves as habitat for various species of birds.

To date, the *Laguna de Bay* has been receiving recognition as an important conservation site and was included in the list of lakes for biodiversity conservation and research during the National Biodiversity Conservation Priority-Setting Workshop (NBCPSW) held in December 2000.

Current moves are also being made by the LLDA, in close collaboration with other government and private agencies and academe, in preparing a proposal for biodiversity research in *Laguna de Bay* and nearby Mt. Makiling. Likewise, the ASEAN Regional Center for Biodiversity Conservation held a Seminar-Workshop on Biodiversity Management of Invasive Alien Species, in order to identify and analyze the present status of invasive species in specific ecosystems and review and recommend management approaches, policies and procedures.

Likewise, as its commitment to preserve and conserve the *Laguna de Bay's* resources, the LLDA has expanded the coverage of the Environmental User Fee System (EUFS) to include the industries that drain into the

Pasig River. Parallel with this is the government's greater support to the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission.

