

The La Salle Botanical Gardens: A commitment in bloom for ecological regeneration and community engagement in the Philippines

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The La Salle Botanical Gardens (LSBG) represents a continuing story of De La Salle Philippines' (DLSP) commitment to the environment—an actionable and sustainable response to the call to care for our common home. It will be established in Porac, Pampanga, Philippines on a lahar-based site composed of various steepness of topography from gentle slopes to rugged terrain with unstable slopes and shifting soil. Now in its development phase, the 24-hectare LSBG was master planned and designed for ecological regeneration, guided by development principles of restoration, resiliency, collaboration, and reconnection, which represents a holistic approach to environmental stewardship and community engagement. Beyond being a repository of living plant collections, LSBG will serve as an outdoor, living school for conservation, education and research. Restoration will focus on the rehabilitation of systems that take away to systems that give back, showcasing and reintroducing of native flora to restore ecosystem health. Resilience will ensure utilisation of nature-based solutions for habitat restoration and environmental sustainability. Collaboration lies at the heart of the garden's principles, as partnerships, collective actions and knowledge exchange with local and international communities will become catalysts for positive change, inspiring a sense of interconnectedness and responsibility towards the earth. Contemplative spaces and immersive learning experiences will invite and nurture reconnection of visitors with nature and cultivate a deeper sense of spirituality and stewardship. Guided meditative walks, reflective gardens, and ceremonies rooted in indigenous wisdom foster a sense of reverence for the natural world and our place within it. In summary, the establishment of LSBG represents a commitment to ecological regeneration and spiritual renewal. It will illustrate a narrative of nature reclaiming itself, where barren land transforms from grey to green, embodying the strength and resilience of ecological restoration.