



NEWS ROUNDUP

02 JANUARY 2023 [08:30 am]

- Bill proposes state RE firm
- The year's most extreme weather shows what a warming planet is capable of, and what's to come
- [Opinion] Lessons on 'whole-of-society' climate action for Philippines at COP28
- DA Western Visayas officially receives Korean-style smart greenhouse
- Climate change to spur global migration, U.K. science journalist warns
- Baguio execs vow zero carbon emissions by 2050
- DBM adopting Green Public Procurement Strategy
- PUV modernization can't be sustained, not environmentally sound – groups
- NDC looking to invest in 8 priority areas
- [Opinion] A new world order

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- Loyzaga, Pascual, other PH gov't officials open national pavilion in COP28 site

BUSINESS WORLD

[Bill proposes state RE firm](#)

By: Beatriz Marie D. Cruz

A Bill that seeks to establish a corporation tasked with conducting research and helping develop the Philippines' renewable energy (RE) industry has been filed before the House of Representatives.

CNN

[The year's most extreme weather shows what a warming planet is capable of, and what's to come](#)

By: Mary Gilbert

In the hottest year on record, the fingerprints of a changing climate in a warming world were all over dozens of extreme weather events.

GMA

[\[Opinion\] Lessons on 'whole-of-society' climate action for Philippines at COP28](#)

By: John Leo Algo

Many issues of global climate action were tackled at the 2023 UN climate negotiations (COP28). Yet from the perspective of many groups in Philippine civil society, the most important issue is not on adaptation, mitigation, finance, or loss and damage. It was on inclusivity.

MANILA STANDARD

[DA Western Visayas officially receives Korean-style smart greenhouse](#)

The Department of Agriculture – Western Visayas (DA-WV) recently received the keys to the Smart Greenhouse and Capacity Building project, funded by the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs of the Republic of Korea (MAFRA).

NIKKEI ASIA

[Climate change to spur global migration, U.K. science journalist warns](#)

By: Akira Okaiwa

As global temperatures rise in the coming decades, the "four horsemen of the Anthropocene" -- heat, fire, drought and floods -- will push humanity across countries and continents, U.K. science journalist Gaia Vince said in an interview with Nikkei.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Baguio execs vow zero carbon emissions by 2050](#)

By: Allan Macatuno

Officials of this city have declared an ambitious plan to achieve a "net zero carbon emission" by 2050 across all sectors in the city.

[DBM adopting Green Public Procurement Strategy](#)

By: Jean Mangaluz

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) will prioritize more environmentally friendly procurements in government through the Green Public Procurement Strategy, Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman said.

PUV modernization can't be sustained, not environmentally sound – groups

By: Zeus Legaspi

The Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP) is not as sustainable as government claims it to be, some groups said on Saturday.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

NDC looking to invest in 8 priority areas

By: Catherine Talavera

Health, food supply chain and climate change mitigation are among the priority investment areas the National Development Co. (NDC) is looking at for 2024.

[Opinion] A new world order

By: Chit U. Juan

This 2024, what we thought we would only see in a futuristic movie is now here. And it is a mere five years until 2030, when we should have solved the challenges brought about by climate change. Yes, we must all think of 2030 like we thought of the year 2000 or the big scare of the millennium bug. Days before the clock struck midnight announcing the year 2000, we thought our computers would die, or something would explode somewhere near us.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

MANILA STANDARD

Loyzaga, Pascual, other PH gov't officials open national pavilion in COP28 site

The Philippines marked a milestone with the launching of its inaugural national pavilion here during the 2023 United Nations 28th Conference of Parties (COP28).

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS WORLD

Bill proposes state RE firm

By: Beatriz Marie D. Cruz

A Bill that seeks to establish a corporation tasked with conducting research and helping develop the Philippines' renewable energy (RE) industry has been filed before the House of Representatives.

"This bill seeks to accelerate the development of renewable energy sources in order to achieve energy self-reliance through the adoption of sustainable energy strategies," Pangasinan Rep. Maria Rachel J. Arenas said in House Bill No. 9535.

Under the proposed Philippine Renewable Energy Corporation Charter, the firm is tasked to promote and undertake research, development, utilization, manufacture, sales, marketing, distribution and commercial application of renewables.

The measure would then abolish the Philippine National Oil Company Renewables Corp. (PNOC RC) as its powers and functions will be taken over by the proposed Philippine Renewable Energy Corporation.

It will be mandated to conduct exploration and development of renewable energy sources in the country, as well as construct and operate renewable and hybrid energy generation facilities

These facilities will be in the Small Power Utilities Group (SPUG) and other unserved and underserved areas with the help of electric cooperatives or the National Power Corp.

The corporation will be headed by a board of directors, with the ex-officio chairman, president and chief executive officer appointed by the President of the Philippines.

The proposed law would need a P7-billion budget for its implementation.

The measure is currently pending in the House committee on energy.

"There is a need to reduce the Philippines' dependence on imported fossil fuels and reduce the jarring impact of climate change," Ms. Arenas added.

On Monday, Senator Sherwin T. Gatchalian called for an "energy transition measure" to phase out the use of coal.

“It’s important that we put in place as soon as possible an energy transition measure so that the coal phaseout, including its replacement, would be based on scientific optimization,” Mr. Gatchalian said in a statement.

Mr. Gatchalian reiterated the need to approve Senate Bill No. 157, calling for a just and clean transition to renewables.

“Since the commitment to phase out coal is voluntary, there needs to be sufficient policy signals that would provide incentive for such action,” he said.

CNN

[The year's most extreme weather shows what a warming planet is capable of, and what's to come](#)

By: Mary Gilbert

In the hottest year on record, the fingerprints of a changing climate in a warming world were all over dozens of extreme weather events.

There wouldn't be weather without heat; heat is energy, and weather is an expression of that energy, of an atmosphere trying to balance itself. But too much heat in the system raises the limits of what is possible in weather and pushes it toward the extremes.

So it's maybe no surprise then that this year's record heat was a "through line" in many of 2023's most brutal weather events, Kristina Dahl, climate scientist with the Union of Concerned Scientists, told CNN.

"Climate change influences our weather on Earth every day," Dahl said. "In my mind, the burden of proof now is to show that climate change hasn't influenced an event, because it's just so clearly influencing everything around us."

The extreme weather events of this year are not unique – they're a sign of what's to come.

"These types of events will continue to become more frequent and more severe if we continue to warm the planet," Dahl said.

These are just a few of 2023's most notable examples of what a warming planet's extreme weather can look like.

Off-the-charts rapid intensification

Record heat wasn't just in the air, it made it to the oceans too, which absorb most of Earth's excess heat.

"Sea surface temperatures were just so much warmer than they have been in any previous year on record," Dahl said.

Warm water acts like food for storms, and the exceptionally warm ocean water in 2023 not only created more storms in the Atlantic by neutralizing the storm-dampening effects of a strengthening El Niño, but also fueled explosive strengthening of the storms that formed across the globe.

This explosive strengthening, known as rapid intensification, is becoming more likely as the atmosphere warms.

A combined 12 tropical cyclones in the Atlantic and East Pacific basins rapidly intensified in 2023.

Lee was the strongest Atlantic hurricane this season and maxed out as a rare Category 5 hurricane in the open ocean in September after its winds strengthened by a staggering 85 mph in 24 hours. The outburst made Lee the Atlantic's third-fastest rapidly intensifying storm on record.

Idalia, the only hurricane to make landfall in the US this year, was yet another example of the more frequent rapid intensification of storms right before landfall.

The storm briefly reached Category 4 status before slamming Florida's Big Bend region as a Category 3 hurricane – the strongest storm to hit there in more than 125 years.

The East Pacific's Hurricane Otis was the most extreme example of rapid strengthening in either basin this year. Otis's winds increased by an astounding 115 mph in the 24 hours before its devastating Category 5 landfall in Acapulco, Mexico, in October.

Otis was the strongest Pacific storm to ever strike Mexico and came just two weeks after Category 4 Hurricane Lidia – also a rapid intensifier – made landfall just south of Puerto Vallarta as another one of Pacific Mexico's strongest storms.

Rapid intensification also helped Hurricane Hilary maintain enough strength to track across California as a tropical storm – the state's first since 1997. Hilary unloaded a deluge that broke tropical rainfall records in a few states and caused extreme flooding that lingered for months in one of the driest places on Earth.

A historic tragedy in a year of unusual wildfire behavior

Unusual wildfire behavior marked the year, both in where fires started and where they didn't.

Wildfires typically burn 7 to 8 million acres of land each year in the US, but only charred 2.6 million acres in 2023, National Interagency Fire Center statistics show.

This was due in part to a soaking start to the year in the typically fiery West, which kept wildfires to a minimum after years of destruction. One season a trend does not make, and as the world warms, wildfires are becoming more frequent and severe – particularly in the West, the latest National Climate Assessment notes.

Still, the season proved deadly and destructive as intense heat combined with a lack of rain to dry out soil and leave typically wet parts of the US and much of Canada vulnerable to fire.

Tragedy struck Hawaii's island of Maui in August in the form of the blazing Lahaina inferno.

Wind-driven flames surged so quickly through drought-parched invasive grasses, engulfing everything in their path, that some people fleeing for their lives had no choice but to jump into the Pacific Ocean. Many could not escape, and the Lahaina Fire became the deadliest on US soil in more than 100 years.

Louisiana is one of the wettest states in the US, but after a summer of endless heat, no tropical systems and little rain, the ground turned to tinder. The tremendous dryness peaked in November when 75% of the state was under exceptional drought – the most expansive such area in state history.

The state endured one of its worst fire seasons in recent decades as a result, according to data provided to CNN by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. Fires in the southern half of the state kept burning into the fall and their smoke fueled “super fog” that caused a fiery, deadly pileup near New Orleans.

Fires also affected much of the US, even when they weren't burning there.

Canada's worst wildfire season on record burned an area roughly the size of North Dakota and sent plumes of toxic smoke from its numerous massive fires into the US and all the way to Europe.

The smoke blocked out the sun and sent air quality levels plummeting in June across the Northeast. Apocalyptic, orange skies engulfed New York City as the city briefly had the worst air pollution levels in the world.

The hottest month for any US city in a summer of 'heat hell'

Heat records were shattered this summer across the Northern Hemisphere, including much of the US. In the US, a series of heat domes roasted the southern and central parts of the country.

The heat index topped 130 degrees in Kansas, New Orleans hit its highest temperature ever recorded – 105 degrees – and much of Texas and Florida baked under exceptionally prolonged extreme heat.

But one city was emblematic of an extreme summer with heat scientists said was “virtually impossible” without human-caused climate change: Phoenix.

July in Phoenix was the hottest month on record for any US city. The city’s average temperature for the month clocked in at an astonishing 102.7 degrees Fahrenheit following brutally hot days and record-warm nights.

Phoenix endured an unprecedented 31 consecutive days with high temperatures at or exceeding 110 degrees.

The heat took a punishing toll.

At least 579 people died in 2023 of heat-related causes in Maricopa County, where Phoenix is located, in what was the deadliest year for heat there since the county began tracking in 2003.

Days where high temperatures exceed 100 degrees are becoming more common across many major US cities as global temperatures rise, but Phoenix has seen the biggest increase of them all. The city averages 18 more days above 100 degrees each year compared to historic averages. That translates to about 111 days above 100 degrees each year.

Supercharged flooding kills thousands

Storm Daniel brought deadly flooding to Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria in September before moving over the Mediterranean Sea and taking aim at Libya. Charged by the warm waters of the Mediterranean, Daniel became a “medicane” – a storm with similar characteristics to hurricanes and typhoons.

The storm unleashed torrential rainfall across Libya and one city recorded 16 inches of rain in just 24 hours. Horrific flooding unfolded as a result, killing an estimated 4,000 people.

The city of Derna was hardest hit. The flooding there burst two dams and unleashed a massive wave of water which swept away much of the city’s core.

The World Weather Attribution initiative – a team of scientists that analyze the role of climate change in the aftermath of extreme weather events – found planet-warming pollution made the deadly rainfall in Libya up to 50 times more likely and 50% worse.

A medicane or even a tropical system isn’t necessary to unleash devastating flooding in a warming world. As the atmosphere continues to warm it’s able to soak up more

moisture like a towel and then ring it out in the form of more extreme gushes of flooding rainfall.

This scenario played out multiple times in the US: A train of deadly atmospheric rivers pummeled California in January and March; catastrophic July flooding turned Vermont's capital city of Montpelier into a raging river and turned deadly in upstate New York; and a month's worth of rain fell in a matter of hours in New York City in September, sending feet of floodwater surging through parts of the city.

GMA

[\[Opinion\] Lessons on 'whole-of-society' climate action for Philippines at COP28](#)

By: John Leo Algo

Many issues of global climate action were tackled at the 2023 UN climate negotiations (COP28). Yet from the perspective of many groups in Philippine civil society, the most important issue is not on adaptation, mitigation, finance, or loss and damage. It was on inclusivity.

The “whole-of-society” approach is vital to decision-making, as the government itself would emphasize in practically every climate or environmental forum or policy document. When it comes to climate action, there are usually two sectors that are most often emphasized. Governments have the political power to implement at the national and local levels, while businesses have the capital and resources to rapidly produce innovations and solutions.

Yet there is a third sector that must not be forgotten: we from civil society. We hold the other two sectors accountable for their words and actions. We directly assist communities in responding to their concerns and engaging with governments and businesses. We promote issues and solutions in a more grounded, dynamic way.

For decades, Philippine civil society organizations (CSOs) have been at the forefront of climate action, from the local to the global level. In fact, it has been said by delegates from other countries that these groups collectively provide one of the strongest non-government voices at this stage.

Is it a decline?

Yet it is disappointing to see a general decline in inclusive climate decision-making in the past five years. A stark contrast is especially evident when comparing the early 2010s to the second half of the previous administration; we have gone from CSOs being a major driving force in the country’s COP positions to being actively excluded and even encouraged to be subjected to acts of violence.

It is no secret that CSOs, and activism in general, are being viewed with a stigma in the Philippines, especially during the previous leadership. Some of these perspectives of a few officials that generalize the entire sector still persist.

A few officials would just assume these groups lack science-based capacities, are not active in project implementation at the local level, or would use high-level events and platforms just to promote their own advocacies and cause disruptions. We even heard

how one high-ranking official back then issued an internal order that actively discourages engagement with civil society representatives in climate policymaking.

This is why relatively-speaking, the past two years have arguably been an improvement. To be fair, some of the government agencies and officials have maintained their openness to working with our sector, understanding the necessity for a diversity of perspectives, especially in addressing a threat as complex as the climate crisis.

Consultations with the sector on climate laws and policies are becoming more regular again. Dialogues between government and civil society and community representatives on climate and environment are becoming more frequent, certainly compared to the past few years.

But that is relatively-speaking; on an absolute scale, there are still clear issues from the side of the government that need to be addressed.

Lessons to be learned

The message is clear: one dialogue with someone from civil society does not count as genuine inclusive decision-making. Selecting one person who happens to be part of a sector does not mean the sector itself is truly representative. Only choosing to work with a few groups does not constitute a “whole-of-society” approach.

The government and CSOs will not always agree on how the policy direction on climate action in the Philippines should proceed. What we are asking for, as a good starting point, is consistency, transparency, and sustainability, especially when it comes to communications.

No matter how anyone puts it, the bottomline is that the issue regarding the inclusivity in the multi-million-peso Philippine Pavilion could have easily been avoided through consistent communications. Even if it was the first-ever such pavilion inside the negotiations area, such a lapse should still not happen.

On transparency, we refer to the consultations during the past few months for the updated Philippine Energy Plan and the NDC Implementation Plan, both being key mitigation-related policies, no actual draft for either plan was presented to stakeholders that are invited to be consulted in the first place. When we contrast that with how multiple drafts of the National Adaptation Plan were shown during the consultation process, it clearly indicates a lack of sufficient coherence among government agencies on procedural matters like this.

Sustainability and climate action are inherently connected, especially when it comes to the pursuit of national development. But the government's focus on sustainability must be on procedural as much as it has been on the substantive. It should not be just the civil society that has to reach out to government agencies time and again.

The time has come to institutionalize the meaningful participation of CSOs in Philippine climate policymaking to prevent these incidents from happening again. There is no room for stereotyped views, mere assumptions, or shallow impressions when establishing proper coordination in addressing the climate crisis, or any other development issue.

We are not pointing out these lapses to promote dissention or purely for the sake of being contrarian. We do so as part of our mandate as civil society: to hold our government accountable for both words and actions. After all, these mistakes directly contradict the "whole-of-society" principle, and even several laws and policies.

If no one highlights them, these mistakes will keep happening. And in that case, we as a nation will suffer the consequences, in one way or another.

Being exclusive should be for two people in a romantic relationship, not as a principle in climate action.

MANILA STANDARD

[DA Western Visayas officially receives Korean-style smart greenhouse](#)

The Department of Agriculture – Western Visayas (DA-WV) recently received the keys to the Smart Greenhouse and Capacity Building project, funded by the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs of the Republic of Korea (MAFRA).

The P65-million project grant from MAFRA for ten greenhouses facilities—six for mushrooms and four for tomato and paprika—addresses climate change concerns and introduces advanced agricultural practices, marking a significant milestone in the continuing collaboration between the Philippines and Korea.

This climate-proof facility project was launched on March 21, 2022 situated at a 3,000 sq.m. area at Western Visayas Integrated Research Center (WESVIARC) in Hamungaya, Jaro, Iloilo City. It is managed by the Korea Agency of Education, Promotion and Information Service in Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (EPIS) and implemented by the Hankyong National University.

During the turnover ceremony held on Dec. 20, MAFRA Director General Yong Ho Jung expressed his appreciation to the Philippine government, the DA, EPIS, and the team from Hangkyong National University consortium for their instrumental role in the Smart Greenhouse project.

On the other hand, DA Assistant Secretary for Operations Arnel V. De Mesa said the turnover of the Smart Greenhouse project is more than the transfer of the infrastructure, it signifies a shared commitment to advancing farming practices, research, and technological innovation in the country.

De Mesa also urged the stakeholders to remain advocates for equitable access to these innovations.

“The benefits of technology should reach every corner of our agricultural landscapes ensuring that no farmer is to be left behind. Our shared success today lays the foundation for an inclusive and thriving agricultural community,” De Mesa emphasized.

Two trainee-adopters from Badiangan, Iloilo—Ed Roderick Canuto of Ephrathah Farms and Revie Palmejar of Panudlak Farm shared their experiences, detailing the valuable insights gained from the project and illustrating how they successfully implemented the advanced technology in establishing their respective greenhouses.

Looking ahead, the project aims to advance into a research hub, delving into new high-valued commodities and seeking funding for solar energy in the mushroom greenhouse.

Innovative initiatives, such as a pick-and-pay system and the display of soon-to-be-harvested Shiitake fruiting bags in malls, are in the pipeline.

The facility will continue to host training sessions for interested stakeholders, fostering success stories like trainees establishing their greenhouses and applying newfound knowledge to farming practices. Additionally, the project welcomes research collaborations with academic institutions.

NIKKEI ASIA

[Climate change to spur global migration, U.K. science journalist warns](#)

By: Akira Okaiwa

As global temperatures rise in the coming decades, the "four horsemen of the Anthropocene" -- heat, fire, drought and floods -- will push humanity across countries and continents, U.K. science journalist Gaia Vince said in an interview with Nikkei.

Vince, the author of "Nomad Century: How Climate Migration Will Reshape Our World," said that people living in equatorial regions, including large swaths of Asia, will be forced to move north to milder regions, necessitating changes in how humanity thinks about borders, immigration and the way we build cities.

Edited excerpts from the interview follow.

Q: What threats will climate change pose to humanity?

A: We have been, for the past 10 and a half thousand years, in this very warm, stable climate. And that has allowed us to flourish. It has allowed our species to become the dominant species on Earth.

We now decide the life on Earth, whether an animal or plant goes extinct. We've even changed our climate, the temperature of our atmosphere.

We are very interconnected, we're very networked around the world. So what happens in one city dramatically affects food prices, energy prices, people's cost of living in another part of the world. It made us very successful but it's also made us very, very vulnerable to shocks.

Now we are facing a climate which humanity has never before experienced.

The world's leaders came together at the COP meetings to agree to keep the increase in global average temperatures below 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial average temperatures. It was agreed at the 2015 COP in Paris to try our best to keep it below 1.5 degrees.

Once that temperature exceeds, it's not a threat particularly for life on the planet, but it is a big threat to the way humans live.

[These temperatures] lead to what I call the four horsemen of the Anthropocene, which are the four dangerous pushing points that make life unlivable for people. And they are heat, fire, drought and floods. All of these threaten human agriculture or food.

The huge storm surges [and] the sea level rise make life unbearable for people. And as the temperature goes up, the climate models show that large parts of our world are becoming increasingly unlivable.

Q: What effect will these threats have? Can we adapt?

A: Places in the equatorial regions, places in the tropics, the conditions will become too extreme for large populations to adapt to.

If you look at Mumbai, which is on the coast, it is receiving extreme storm surges. It's also in the tropics, it's receiving incredibly hot temperatures.

It's going to be impossible for this enormous population to remain in Mumbai in 2040, 2060. Mumbai will still exist. It will be a heavily adapted place like Qatar or Dubai.

But that is only feasible for a relatively small, wealthy population. To have that enormous population living under those conditions, it's not livable. Those people will have to move.

We are heading for [an increase in] temperatures by the end of the century of somewhere between two and a half to four degrees. That's where the most likely probability of our temperature ending up is. That is absolutely lethal. It's dangerous.

At the moment, most of the displacement is within borders. As the decades go on, by 2030, 2040, we are going to see people not just displaced within countries, but across borders, across regions, as more and more of these disasters occur concurrently.

Are we prepared? No, we're not.

Q: What will the world look like?

A: We're going to see these cascading multiple effects of fire, drought, heat, floods across the region that stretches throughout the tropics. And in the Americas, as far up as the Great Lakes, down as far as Patagonia, in the entire continent of Africa up into southern Europe, places that have already lost their former climate.

The Mediterranean climate of Spain and Portugal and Italy has now gone, it's a desert there. It's increasing up there, a large swath of Asia, the most populated parts of our

planet, all the way down through Australia. These areas will become increasingly unlivable.

I want to make it clear that nowhere on Earth will escape the negative effects of climate change, but some places will also profit from some positive effects of climate change and already are. If you look to the far north of our planet, for example, we're already seeing milder winters. That's much more affordable for heating.

We're seeing longer growing seasons for agriculture, several crop plantations where before there would just be one. If you look at the far north, we're talking about places from Canada, Scandinavia, the northern parts of Eurasia, even places [like] the north of Russia, Greenland.

It's not just simply a migration of families, of people moving. This is also a migration of capital, of money, of industry, of resources, of technologies, of agriculture. It's a migration of our human world north. I don't think people really understand that this is an economic shift, an industrial shift as well as the movement of individual humans.

Q: Will people accept the idea of mass migration across borders? Do we need to change our mindset?

A: This is not easy. There are no easy solutions anymore. Not everybody will have to move, but yes, a significant number of people will have to move. And that comes with it all sorts of problems because the human world that we live in now is restrictive. We have these artificial borders -- not just political borders, but also borders in our minds.

We have borders around things like our language -- people from different language groups find it very difficult to communicate in as natural a way. It's hard to find that network that we all rely on.

Where do you go to find a plumber? How do you get a job? What qualifications do you need? All of these things that we take for granted in our home, native culture and land. So the answer is to make that a lot easier for migrants.

We're going to have to be much more open to the idea of "home" being almost a planetary home where we can move. It's our shared safe places and the homes that we build in collaboration with others.

Q: How many people do you expect to migrate, and when?

A: The models for that vary considerably. Some conservative estimates put it at hundreds of thousands of people by 2050; the United Nations and the European Parliament say we could see 1.2 billion climate refugees by that date.

It depends on many things. Firstly, on how much we adapt the places that are the most vulnerable. At the moment, many of the poorest people and the people that are most impacted are the least adapted. They are receiving the least amount of money to help with that.

It also depends on our emissions cuts: how fast, how rapid, how severe our emissions cuts are.

Q: Many people have negative views on migration. Do you think it is possible to remove those psychological barriers?

A: The narrative around migration has become really toxic. And it's been led by nationalistic populist leaders across the world. It's economically very foolish. It's socially very divisive.

There is nothing easier than to blame your poor policy choices on a marginalized group. And immigrants are very easy to target because they're very vulnerable. They can quite often look different from the native population, so they're easy to identify for everybody.

That's what we expect from populist leaders from far-right groups and so on. The problem actually has been the application of responsibility from other leaders. We haven't had leaders challenging the false narrative around immigration.

That really is the problem because most people, most communities are very welcoming of strangers and they are happy to include them in their societies. But if they are constantly fed this poisonous narrative, that's where the trouble begins.

So we must challenge this, if only for pragmatic economic reasons, because it's completely foolish. There aren't any developed economies that don't rely on immigration in order to boost their workforce at the moment.

Q: The country of Tuvalu recently signed an agreement with Australia on migration. Do you have any examples of what you think would be ideal for migration?

A: This agreement that Australia signed with Tuvalu is historic. It's really an acknowledgment that people are going to have no choice but to move because of climate conditions, and it is very welcome. Australia has realized that and will accept people as citizens to continue their life with opportunity and purpose.

It's a tiny, tiny population we're talking about, but it's a first step and it's an important first step. We need to think about these bilateral agreements, but we also need to think regional agreements. We need to think right at the level of cities. I think city mayors can really take a lead on this.

But we also need to think globally. We need to have global agreements about this human movement because this is a planetary problem.

Q: What role will political leaders need to play?

A: We need to recognize, first of all, that migration is not a security issue. Most countries deal with their borders and with human mobility across borders as though it's a security issue. It really isn't, it's a labor force issue. It's an economic issue. Most people are moving for work.

And of course it's a humanitarian issue as well. So we need to recognize that we need to have much more joined-up thinking about where people move for work, how they move.

We can make it work for our economies, for the individuals who are moving, and for a better future. And that takes planning, takes making sure that people who move for work are rewarded for that and become part of the economy.

Q: What do you think cities should look like in the climate crisis era?

A: The cities of the future will be in different places. They will be much further north. We're going to have to expand existing cities, and we're going to have to build entirely new cities in safe areas. They will have to be denser, which means more people -- I say denser, for in comparison to the sort of suburban sprawl that you see, for example, in many American cities.

Tokyo is a really, really good example of a megacity that we will have to replicate around the world in other places, particularly in the north. But our cities will also have to be designed differently to cope with the environmental challenges we face. It's no longer any good for buildings to passively absorb and take in energy.

They will have to generate their own energy. They will have to be made from materials that are low carbon but also resilient to extreme heat, flash floods, violent storms. And infrastructure or streets will have to be able to manage sudden downpours of water and store it for times of drought.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Baguio execs vow zero carbon emissions by 2050](#)

By: Allan Macatuno

Officials of this city have declared an ambitious plan to achieve a “net zero carbon emission” by 2050 across all sectors in the city.

“We commit to enhancing energy efficiency across all sectors, including transportation, buildings and industries, through implementing innovative technologies and sustainable practices,” Mayor Benjamin Magalong said in a statement posted by the Baguio City Public Information Office (BCPIO) on Facebook on Sunday.

A key part of the goal would be for the city to transition toward electric vehicles and expand public transportation while establishing more safe bicycle lanes to promote carbon-free mobility, according to Magalong.

Baguio, which has been attracting thousands of tourists, especially during weekends and holidays due to its cool climate, has also had to deal with congested streets and heavy traffic. This despite calls from local officials for tourists to leave behind their vehicles in their accommodation areas while going around the city.

According to Magalong, Baguio would continue to strengthen its identity as a “walkable city” by continuously improving pedestrian infrastructure to reduce transportation emissions.

“We will promote a circular economy, minimize waste, and maximize recycling efforts to shrink the carbon footprint associated with waste management,” the mayor said.

He said the city government also committed to “raising public awareness around carbon reduction and sustainable living, fostering a culture of environmental stewardship among Baguio citizens.”

Only last week, the city council took steps to help manage Baguio’s waste by confirming the memorandum of agreement entered into by Magalong and the Metro Global Renewable Energy Corp. for the city to supply its acceptable solid waste to be used as feedstock to the proposed waste-to-energy facility that would be built in Sablan town of Benguet province, a report from the BCPIO said on Sunday.

Paris Agreement

According to the BCPIO, the city's zero carbon emission declaration was aligned with keeping global heating below 1.5 degrees Celsius, as protected by the Paris Agreement and required by climate science to avoid catastrophic warming impacts.

"Recognizing the urgency of addressing the root cause of climate change and understanding [that] transitioning to a carbon-free world is not only a responsibility but an opportunity to build sustainable and resilient future for all, the city government of Baguio declares our steadfast support for the global efforts to make the world carbon-free," Magalong said.

The mayor assured that the city government and the local business sector and communities have shown willingness to "transition towards renewable energy, regenerative agriculture, carbon, sequestration, circular resource flows, and nature-based solutions."

DBM adopting Green Public Procurement Strategy

By: Jean Mangaluz

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) will prioritize more environmentally friendly procurements in government through the Green Public Procurement Strategy, Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman said.

“Because sustainability is one of my advocacies and a commitment of this administration, we will adopt a Green Public Procurement Strategy to procure goods, infrastructure projects, and consulting services with reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle. We will also integrate green practices and environmentally relevant criteria in the procurement design of a project,” Pangandaman said in a statement on Thursday.

The DBM said the Green Public Procurement would entail government agencies seeking to procure goods, services, and works with reduced environmental impact.

The DBM also supported amendments to the Government Procurement Reform Act, which would establish green public procurement in government.

The proposed amendment stated that procurement “shall integrate green practices, as well as environmentally relevant criteria or requirements, in the design of their procurement projects in order to achieve broader policy objectives on energy, water, and material efficiency, waste reduction, pollution and emission prevention, climate change mitigation, local and rural development, greening supply chains, greening infrastructure and work, industry productivity, innovation and competitiveness, inclusive business models, green jobs, and circular economy.”

[PUV modernization can't be sustained, not environmentally sound – groups](#)

By: Zeus Legaspi

The Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP) is not as sustainable as government claims it to be, some groups said on Saturday.

These organizations' statements come a day prior to the December 31 deadline for franchise consolidation of public utility vehicles.

Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (KPNE) said the plan of Department of Transportation (DOTr) to replace the existing PUV units with "fragile" minibuses is not environmentally sound.

KPNE prefers the rehabilitation of the existing units.

"Importing surplus minibuses that break down easily, in the context of worsening climate change impacts like flooding, and essentially wasting thousands of PUV units when they can be rehabilitated, can hardly be called sustainable," KPNE National Coordinator Jon Bonifacio told INQUIRER.net.

Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) Department Order 2017-011 laid out the rules for PUVMP.

It states modern PUV units shall be fitted with combustion engines that comply with EURO IV emission standards.

Other units that use alternative fuel sources, such as electric and solar vehicles, shall also be deployed to replace traditional PUVs, LTFRB said.

Bonifacio, however, added while government's intentions may be good on paper, DOTr might be forgetting the principles of "just transition."

"The DOTr and the Marcos Jr. administration can throw around all the pro-environment language they want, but the PUVMP, at its core, violates the principles of a just transition," he explained.

He said just transition entails "ensuring that people's rights are protected as we address environmental issues."

Youth Advocates for Climate Action Philippines (Yacap) likewise pointed out government's enforcement of the modernization program trample on the rights of transport workers.

“In transitioning towards a more sustainable and genuinely eco-friendly future, the processes involved should be fair, equitable, and just,” Yacap said in Filipino in a post on social media.

“A project or a policy cannot be considered environmentally friendly if it is not pro-people,” the group insisted.

Meanwhile, fishers group Pamalakaya said its opposition to PUVMP does not mean its members are anti-progress.

It said Pamalakaya is just concerned with the loss of livelihood in the transport sector.

“We clarify that we are not against the modernization of public transportation as long as it is based on the capability and capacity of the operator, not for privatization,” the group said.

The group’s remarks come, despite DOTr’s repeated statements that the modernization program will provide a “climate-friendly, and environmentally sustainable transportation system in the country.”

For its part, transport group Piston on Friday said over 28 million Filipinos will be affected by a “transport disaster” in Metro Manila.

This event will supposedly happen if the modernization program will push through.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

NDC looking to invest in 8 priority areas

By: Catherine Talavera

Health, food supply chain and climate change mitigation are among the priority investment areas the National Development Co. (NDC) is looking at for 2024.

“So these remain the (same) areas. We call it NDC priority sectors,” NDC general manager Antonilo Mauricio told reporters.

Among the eight priority sectors, according to Mauricio, are health, which also covers pharmaceuticals, as well as food supply chain.

He also identified climate change mitigation as another priority sector, which also includes environmental, social and governance (ESG) projects.

Other priority sectors include water, construction, education, connectivity and technology innovation.

“So those eight areas are in our strategic map that is submitted to the GCG (Governance Commission for Government-Owned or -Controlled Corporations) every year and that is going to be our long term priorities,” Mauricio said.

And these areas are actually all aligned with the Philippine development plan and the President’s directive.”

As an example, Mauricio explained that investments in technology innovation is in support of the digital transformation thrust of the current administration.

Asked how much investments the NDC is targeting to make in 2024, Mauricio said it would be quite tricky to answer noting that they are currently limited with their funds.

“Our current projects shortlist requires a funding of P30 billion, but we don’t have P30 billion in cash. You know, we have that in assets, but we don’t have that in cash,” Mauricio said.

“So we will have a fundraising that basically will say look, NDC is here, and we are very confident that it will attract the right strategic partners and strategic investments for these projects as most of these projects have interested investors. But we just need to firm them up with NDCs participation,” he said.

Based on a shortlist from the NDC in December, there are at least 18 projects with expected investments worth P30.7 billion that are in various stages of evaluation.

Among the projects in the shortlist are the vaccine manufacturing plant in Batangas of Glovax Lifescience Corp., in which NDC is investing P150 million, as well as the biowaste-to-organic fertilizer project of Davao Thermo Biotech Corp., where the NDC is investing P40 million.

The NDC is also evaluating a P50-million investment for an animal vaccine project of Glovax, P1.5 billion investment in a medical waste disposal project, and P18.5 billion investment in the One DTI Building, among others.

Also in the list is a P150-million investment in a waste-to-energy project of Australian firm Cyclion as well as investments in Singapore-based Kacific Broadband Satellite with P1.1 billion for the purchase of broadband capacity and P550 million for equity.

[Opinion] A new world order

By: Chit U. Juan

This 2024, what we thought we would only see in a futuristic movie is now here. And it is a mere five years until 2030, when we should have solved the challenges brought about by climate change. Yes, we must all think of 2030 like we thought of the year 2000 or the big scare of the millennium bug. Days before the clock struck midnight announcing the year 2000, we thought our computers would die, or something would explode somewhere near us.

Notice how we have accepted or started to accept many changes in our lifestyle since the pandemic caused lockdowns. We now find it oh so normal to not carry cash, and instead pay with e-wallets. We also now have to go online for almost anything that we need: ordering food, paying for services, booking a doctor's appointment, among many others.

The pandemic period 2020-2022, almost three years in total, taught us many new things to embrace and to learn to do despite our resistance to change. The pandemic changed us and changed how consumers behave, changed how we react to disease and changed even the way people work or play. Do you agree?

Now that a new year is upon us, it may be worthwhile to sit down and reflect, think about what we still cannot accept as reality and go with the flow so our lifestyles may not be restricted. We need to think about what we cannot change anymore and just move on to the next year with ease.

At the end of 2023 I met a few people who made me realize further that habits must change if we are to leave a greener planet to the next generations. At 37 years of age, this professor, lecturer and practitioner of organic agriculture shared with us how he has embraced teaching about Nature. While he wanted to be a barista in his college years, one thing led to another, which brought him to the agriculture path until he finally went on to get a Doctorate in Permaculture Design and Sustainability. Yes, at this age below 40 he can create change, positive change, among his peers and everyone younger in his school.

But it does not stop there. He also became a master at Drone Technology and is using this new way, not for vlogging or taking beautiful wedding photos, but to "see" Nature improve as man repairs what man has destroyed.

Dr. Jabez Flores is an example of youth embracing the new world order to create positive changes in people's habits, such as farming organic vegetables and consuming

only safe and better food. He is in charge of the Permaculture garden in UP Open University campus in Los Baños, Laguna where he can show the examples of working with Nature for a better tomorrow.

Another impressive person I met accidentally is Maurizio Mariani, a multi- talented consultant for logistics, food literacy and nutrition. He states that children in school are the citizens of tomorrow and must be fed well so they can be better thinkers, while college students are the leaders of tomorrow and must be gathered to spread one gospel: eat well so we can think well.

And both age groups must be taught Food Literacy. Many of us grow old being illiterate about food. We are not aware that there are only two poisons in our food: sugar and salt. We use so much of these two ingredients today to make up for the lack of taste in industrialized food or food produced in plants and not from plants. In the past, we used herbs to flavor food instead of salt and/or sugar. But modern day food production starts with a fertilizer-laden plant that lacks nutrients, so we make up for it by heavy processing so it can still have some taste.

Maurizio further correlates industrial food production with health issues. They follow the same line – as one increases, so does the other. It is because we have little choices in food available for sale, as many farmers have stopped planting on small scale and big producers replace these lost small farmers with mono-cropping food production. Mono-cropping produces food lacking in nutrients which then become processed to simulate what Nature can give naturally, albeit with salt and sugar.

The bigger part of food cost is logistics and he knows what he speaks of, because he has been in the logistics business, transporting food from different countries to one place. Even processed food must be made in a plant which then requires distribution – so we are in fact paying for distribution rather than paying the farmer for what he has done to produce good food. Do we get it? Over 30 percent of what we pay for tomatoes or vegetables does not go to the farmer – it goes to the distribution system. The farther the source, the more we pay for the logistics, and not for the food itself.

Meeting these two gentlemen over two days made me think about what the New Year brings – there is hope but we must strive to learn more about food production and food consumption. The shorter the line between the two, the healthier we can be, and the better we can address new health issues of the future.

Responsible food consumption and production starts with education. If we know where our food comes from, we can start to make changes in how it comes to our plates. We

can buy local, buy fresh and generally change the way we shop for food. We want farmers to thrive as they produce food for us to carry on with life.

This New Year, let us eat better by buying wiser and better. And asking – where does my food come from?

CCC IN THE NEWS:

MANILA STANDARD

[Loyzaga, Pascual, other PH gov't officials open national pavilion in COP28 site](#)

The Philippines marked a milestone with the launching of its inaugural national pavilion here during the 2023 United Nations 28th Conference of Parties (COP28).

With the theme “Together Today for Tomorrow,” the Philippine Pavilion showcases the country’s scalable and concerted efforts in confronting the challenges and impacts of climate change.

“The pavilion manifests the Philippines’ commitment to climate action and to resilience. It was designed to convey our country’s contributions to local, national, and global climate challenges and is underpinned by three pillars that are embodied in our Philippine Development Plan of 2023 to 2028,” said Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga, head of the Philippine Delegation to COP28.

Loyzaga led the opening of the Philippine Pavilion, along with Special Assistant to the President Antonio Lagdameo, Trade and Industry Secretary Alfredo Pascual, Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno and Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa,

Joining them are Department of Migrant Workers officer-in-charge Hans Leo Cacadac, Climate Change Commission Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert Borje, Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista, Science and Technology Secretary Renato Solidum Jr., Philippine Ambassador to the UAE Ferdinand Ver and Deputy Representative of the Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations in New York Ambassador Leila Lora Santos.

“The Philippine Pavilion illustrates how the country combines climate change adaptation and mitigation with resilience and sustainable pathways rooted in equity. What you see is a showcase of the whole-of-country and whole-of-society approach that the Philippines takes in addressing climate change,” said Ver.

The Pavilion’s design represents the narrative of the country’s commitment to sustainability and resilience following the theme of “Ridge to Reef.” It is inspired by man-made structures coming together with the country’s rich natural resources and represented by traditional textile patterns in shades of blue and green.

To complement the design, digital tablets are spread across the Pavilion space where guests can scan QR codes to dive deeper into the videos and visual materials that best encapsulate the country's scalable climate solutions. The Pavilion will embody the Philippines' position for COP 28 to champion solutions centered around building resilient communities, protecting biodiversity and pursuing low-carbon economic development.

COP28, hosted by the United Arab Emirates, is the annual climate change negotiations within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
DENR News

=END=