



NEWS ROUNDUP

11 JANUARY 2023 [08:00 am]

- 'A world rapidly warming': The past eight years were the eight warmest on record for planet
- Climate Change Increases Fish Food Fights
- Intensifying efforts against climate change
- Baguio cops 2022 Gawad Kalasag Seal for disaster management efforts
- Harry and Meghan's California town ordered evacuated over mudslide fears
- From SBMA to Peza?
- Stronger momentum in US-PH ties in 2023
- Baler coastal cleanup drive yields 5 truckloads of trash
- Lanao floods leave 4 dead, 25K individuals affected
- Ozone layer's recovery on track, averting 0.5C temperature hike
- 11 people killed in Philippine storms: disaster agency
- Strong EU-PH relations discussed by Ambassador Véron

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- Climate Change Commission binista ang proyekto sa Surigao Del Norte

CNN PHILIPPINES

['A world rapidly warming': The past eight years were the eight warmest on record for planet](#)

By: Ivana Kottasová

The last eight years have been the eight warmest on record as the growing concentration of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere pushes global temperatures toward a dangerous tipping point, a new report shows.

FORBES

[Climate Change Increases Fish Food Fights](#)

According to a new study, climate change is changing the behaviors of the marine fishes living in coral reefs. This study found that as climate causes bleaching (more here), this affects coral reef butterflyfishes (genus Chaetodon), which eat coral. Hangry

butterflyfishes make poorer fight-or-flight decisions that lead to unnecessary fights, so they expend precious limited energy, and this could potentially threaten their very survival due to an increased risk of starvation.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

[Intensifying efforts against climate change](#)

BRIA Homes has cultivated a reputation as the fastest-growing real estate developer in the Philippines.

MANILA BULLETIN

[Baguio cops 2022 Gawad Kalasag Seal for disaster management efforts](#)

By: Comanda Rizaldy C.

BAGUIO CITY — For the second year in a row, this city was awarded the 2022 Gawad KALASAG (Kalamidad at Sakuna Labanan, Sariling Galing ang Kaligtasan) Seal for Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council's and Offices (LDRRMCOs) after being assessed as 'fully compliant' by the National DRRM Council (NDRRMC).

[Harry and Meghan's California town ordered evacuated over mudslide fears](#)

By: Agence France Presse

LOS ANGELES, United States – The star-studded California town that is home to Britain's Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle was ordered evacuated Monday, with firefighters warning mudslides there could engulf luxury homes.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[From SBMA to Peza?](#)

A former high-ranking official from the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) may soon take the helm at the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza), with two influential groups reportedly pushing for the appointment of this individual.

[Stronger momentum in US-PH ties in 2023](#)

By: MaryKay Carlson

The last five months of 2022 coincided with my first five months serving as US ambassador to the Philippines—an exciting time marked by nonstop engagements that strengthened our ironclad relationship as friends, partners, and allies.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Baler coastal cleanup drive yields 5 truckloads of trash](#)

By: Jason De Asis

BALER, Aurora – Some 200 volunteers from various sectors in this province took part in a cleanup activity along Sabang Beach here on Tuesday.

[Lanao floods leave 4 dead, 25K individuals affected](#)

By: Nef Luczon

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY – Floods in various parts of Lanao del Norte province have left four dead and more than 25,000 persons affected as of Tuesday.

[Ozone layer's recovery on track, averting 0.5C temperature hike](#)

NAIROBI, Kenya – The United Nations environment office in Kenya's capital Nairobi said Monday that the ozone layer is on the path to repair, which will help avert a warming of the planet of 0.5C.

POLITIKO

[11 people killed in Philippine storms: disaster agency](#)

At least 11 people have died in storms across the Philippines in the past week, with more heavy rain expected in already sodden regions of the disaster-prone country, authorities said Tuesday.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Strong EU-PH relations discussed by Ambassador Véron](#)

THE ambassador of the European Union to the Philippines, Luc Véron, delivered the 7th Installment in the UST Ambassadors Lecture Series. With the theme "Strengthening EU-PH relations," the discussion was held at the Dr. George SK Ty Function Hall.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

[DZRJ 810 - RADYO BANDIDO](#)

By: Chris Lucas

Binista ng Climate Change Commission ang Siragao Field School for Farmers and Fisherfolks sa Del Carmen, Surigao, Del Norte. Ang nasabing proyekto ay pinondohan ng People Survival Fund.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

CNN PHILIPPINES

['A world rapidly warming': The past eight years were the eight warmest on record for planet](#)

By: Ivana Kottasová

The last eight years have been the eight warmest on record as the growing concentration of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere pushes global temperatures toward a dangerous tipping point, a new report shows.

An analysis by the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service published on Tuesday said that 2022 was the fifth-warmest year for the planet since records began. It also reported Europe recorded its warmest summer last year and its second warmest year overall, exceeded only by 2020.

Copernicus described 2022 as "a year of climate extremes" that brought record-breaking heatwaves in Europe, deadly floods in Pakistan, extreme widespread flooding in Australia, and that saw the Antarctic Sea reach its lowest minimum extent on record.

The report said that annual average temperature reached 1.2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, marking the eighth year in a row of temperatures at least 1 degree above the 1850 to 1900 reference period.

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement, most countries agreed to limit warming to well below 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels, but preferably to 1.5 degrees.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) identified the 1.5-degree mark as a key threshold and said breaching it would dramatically increase the risk of extreme weather events and irreversible changes.

Svitlana Krakovska, who heads the Ukrainian delegation to the IPCC, has an analogy for anyone wondering what difference a few degrees of warming could make.

"Your normal body temperature is 36.6. Now we have plus [1.2] degrees and we are already sick. And if we will have 1.5, or 2, look at the difference. We cannot allow this," she told CNN at the COP27 climate conference in Egypt in November. "Every bit of warming matters," she said.

The Copernicus report also highlighted the rising atmospheric concentration of CO₂ and methane, potent greenhouse gasses that trap heat in the atmosphere and warm the planet.

Before humans started to burn large quantities of fossil fuels, the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere was around 280 parts per million. According to Copernicus, it hit an annual average of 417 parts per million in 2022, an increase of 2.1 parts per million

compared to 2021. Records show the concentration of carbon in the atmosphere has not been this high in around 2 million years, Copernicus added.

The IPCC has said that the world needs to cut greenhouse gas emissions nearly in half by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050 to have any chance of keeping global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Scientists say the link between the greenhouse gasses concentrations and the rising temperatures is unmistakable.

“The tumbling of temperature records combined with the unprecedented heatwaves, droughts and intense rainfall and flooding events across the planet, along with the sustained global warmth over the past decade, are all entirely consistent with a world rapidly warming,” Richard Allan, professor in climate science at the University of Reading, told CNN in an email. Allan said this is happening because of “the additional heating effect of the greenhouse gases we’re collectively pumping out into the atmosphere.”

Scientists said 2022 was an exceptionally warm year despite the La Niña phenomenon, which has now been observed for three consecutive years and which normally leads to cooler global average temperatures.

“It is very likely that the recent La Niñas have been masking some of the warming from global climate change,” said Marybeth Arcodia, a postdoctoral researcher at Colorado State University. She added that because El Niño – the opposite phase of La Niña – tends to cause higher than average temperatures, it is “probable that when the next El Niño occurs, the global average temperature will be higher than what we have been seeing in the past few years.”

Extreme heat in Europe

The Copernicus report comes just days after the UK Met Office announced that 2022 was the UK’s hottest year on record, with an average temperature of over 10 degrees Celsius recorded for the first time.

In a report released last week, the Met Office said that human-induced climate change has made the record-breaking annual temperature around 160 times more likely. Its scientists calculated that what would normally be around “one in 500 year annual temperature” is now likely every three to four years because of climate change.

Météo-France, the French national meteorological service, said Friday that 2022 was the hottest year in mainland France since records began in 1900, adding that eight of the warmest 10 years on record occurred since 2010.

It said the extreme heat France experienced in 2022 was a “clear sign of climate change” and that similar temperatures could become the norm by mid-century.

Italy's Institute of Atmospheric and Climate Sciences said 2022 was the hottest year on record for Italy, while the German National Meteorological Service said 2022 was "at least" tied for the hottest year on record with 2018, and could surpass 2018 once final data is analyzed this month.

FORBES

Climate Change Increases Fish Food Fights

According to a new study, climate change is changing the behaviors of the marine fishes living in coral reefs. This study found that as climate causes bleaching (more here), this affects coral reef butterflyfishes (genus *Chaetodon*), which eat coral. Hungry butterflyfishes make poorer fight-or-flight decisions that lead to unnecessary fights, so they expend precious limited energy, and this could potentially threaten their very survival due to an increased risk of starvation.

This study was something of an accident. An international team of researchers, led by marine macroecologist Sally Keith, a senior lecturer at Lancaster University, were working on an ongoing study of 38 species of butterflyfishes living on 17 Indo-Pacific reefs off Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia and Christmas Island.

In the midst of this study, disaster struck in 2016 in the form of a global mass coral bleaching event. *Acropora* corals, the main food source for butterflyfishes, were especially affected. *Acropora* is a genus of common stony corals comprising table coral, elkhorn coral, and staghorn coral, along with others. These are some of the widespread corals that are major contributors to the immense calcium carbonate substructure that makes up a coral reef.

The 2016 global bleaching event was one of the worst in history. But it did present the researchers the perfect opportunity to study how butterflyfishes' behaviors were impacted. These reef-dwelling fishes are the first to feel the effects of bleaching because their main food source, coral, diminishes rapidly and almost immediately.

Dr Keith and her collaborators found that coral bleaching forced butterflyfish species to re-focus their diets on consuming what's still left, which then pushes them into direct competition with other species for the same dwindling food resources and territories.

"Using a mass coral mortality event as a natural experiment and 3,770 field observations of butterflyfish encounters, we test how rapid resource depletion could disrupt recognition processes in butterflyfish," the authors write.

Wearing snorkels or scuba gear, the team followed 38 free-swimming butterflyfish species, 32 of which were observed in five or more encounters with five or more focal individuals — the criteria for inclusion in the researchers' statistical analyses — across 3770 encounters.

Dr Keith and her collaborators discovered that the butterflyfishes' ability to recognize competitor species and respond appropriately was adversely impacted by bleaching.

"By recognizing a competitor, individual fish can make decisions about whether to escalate, or retreat from, a contest — conserving valuable energy and avoiding injuries",

Dr Keith said in a statement. To do this, visual signals act as ‘rules of engagement’ between butterflyfishes of the same and different species.

Basically, when a butterflyfish signals to a competitor that a particular coral patch is theirs, they point their noses down and raise their spiny dorsal fins.

“It’s almost like raising your hackles”, Dr Keith said.

If this visual warning fails to deter a competitor, one fish will chase the other, until one of them gives up.

These chases are exhausting.

“I followed one for about 50 meters (165 feet) once, that was quite tiring, they’re very fast”, Dr Keith explained.

Before the 2016 bleaching event, Dr Keith and her collaborators found that butterflyfishes were able to resolve their disputes by using visual signals around 28% of the time. However, after the bleaching event, interactions became more aggressive: just 10% of disputes were resolved by visual signalling, indicating a large increase in ‘unnecessary attacks’ (Figure 1). Dr Keith and her collaborators also found that signalling between fish of different species became less common after the bleaching event, so encounters escalated to chases in more than 90% of cases – up from 72% before the event.

Dr Keith and her collaborators also found that the distance of these chases increased after coral bleaching, requiring the fish to expend more energy.

These findings are worrying; suggesting that, if mass coral bleaching continues, it’s possible that subsequent behavior changes could have strong negative implications for these species’ very survival.

“Making poor decisions about who to fight, and where to invest their really valuable energy, could be that little bit that tips them over the edge towards actual starvation”, Dr Keith said.

But these interactions are occurring everywhere as climate change worsens, not just amongst coral reef butterflyfishes, so these colorful fishes may provide important clues for what we can expect in the near future as the planet gets ever warmer. Already, we know this climate scenario is rapidly approaching: last year, modelling research indicated that even if the Paris climate goal of just 1.5 degrees Celsius is reached, 99% of the world’s coral reefs will die (ref). If the planet reaches 2 degrees Celsius (which is likely), 100% of the world’s coral reefs and all their citizens will disappear.

“By looking at how behaviour responds to real-life changes in the environment, and by seeing that those changes are the same regardless of location, we can start to predict how ecological communities might change into the future”, Dr Keith said. “These

relatively small miscalculations in where to best invest energy could ultimately push [species] over the edge.”

At this point, it is not clear whether butterflyfishes can adapt quickly enough to the changes caused by coral reef bleaching. But we do know that these global environmental changes are disrupting millions of years of evolution that allowed such an astounding collection of fish species to coexist in the same habitat. We also know that such changes in the relationships between species within a single community can reverberate up the food web.

“These rules of engagement evolved for a particular playing field, but that field is changing”, Dr Keith pointed out. “Repeated disturbances, such as bleaching events, alter the abundance and identity of corals – the food source of butterflyfish. It’s not yet clear whether these fish have the capacity to update their rule book fast enough to recalibrate their decisions.”

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

Intensifying efforts against climate change

BRIA Homes has cultivated a reputation as the fastest-growing real estate developer in the Philippines.

Initially primed to help address the mass housing backlog in the country, BRIA brought affordable homes closer to average Filipinos through their strategically located housing communities nationwide.

Offering eye-catching, well-built, and comfortable dwellings to aspiring homeowners all over the Philippines, BRIA has become the home of choice for Filipinos.

However, a key part of becoming a successful property developer is being aware of important issues that promote the well-being of existing and potential residents at all times.

And few problems require immediate attention as the need to mitigate the effects of climate change. After all, Filipinos are perennially subject to extreme weather conditions such as brutally hot summers and devastating super typhoons.

For this reason, BRIA Homes is committed to doing what it can to help preserve the environment, in both big and small ways. With tree-planting an enduring tradition at BRIA Homes, the company recently organized a tree-planting event at their Plaridel location in Barangay Lagundi. Taking place on December 17, the activity had several BRIA officers, employees, and agents as enthusiastic participants, proof that BRIA is indeed seriously invested in the protection of the environment.

One need not be an eco-warrior to know that tree planting is an important activity in the push for a healthier environment. This is because trees are a natural facilitator of refreshing the spaces around it. They absorb the carbon dioxide in the air, store carbon in the trees and soil, and release oxygen into the atmosphere via photosynthesis.

With BRIA Homes' Plantahan program, tree planting has become a regular activity in many BRIA residential communities across the country. To complement such efforts, BRIA likewise ensures that its residential enclaves have vast open green spaces, for which it earned an industry award as "Open Space Development of the Year".

Beyond the tree planting, BRIA has also incorporated environmental consciousness in the maintenance of their properties. BRIA Homes uses solar-powered lights in its recreational facilities, perimeter roads, gardens, parks, walking paths, and entrances.

Only by keeping the planet safe and clean for generations to come will BRIA employees and homeowners alike be able to live their very best lives.

MANILA BULLETIN

[Baguio cops 2022 Gawad Kalasag Seal for disaster management efforts](#)

By: Comanda Rizaldy C.

BAGUIO CITY — For the second year in a row, this city was awarded the 2022 Gawad KALASAG (Kalamidad at Sakuna Labanan, Sariling Galing ang Kaligtasan) Seal for Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council's and Offices (LDRRMCOs) after being assessed as 'fully compliant' by the National DRRM Council (NDRRMC).

The City DRRM Council (CDRRMC) is chaired by Mayor Benjamin Magalong, with City Mayor's Office Chief of Staff Engr. Felipe Puzon as action officer and CDRRM Office (CDRRMO) chief Antonette Anaban as head of its secretariat.

Anaban said the Gawad KALASAG (GK) Search for Excellence in DRRM and Humanitarian Assistance was established in 1998 and is based on past experiences and lessons learned.

The GK program was transformed into the GK Seal and Special Awards for Excellence in DRRM and Humanitarian Assistance and was made mandatory in the assessment of all local government units (LGUs).

"Major areas of assessment are on the structure, competency, management systems, enabling policies, knowledge management, advocacy, partnership and participation," Anaban explained.

She said the GK Seal for LDRRMCO is envisioned to serve as a performance assessment mechanism for all LGUs as they implement the mandatory provisions of RA 10121 (An Act Strengthening the Philippine DRRM System) on the institutionalization of their LDRRMCOs, including other NDRRMC issuances.

The CDRRMC conducted several contingency workshops and updated the city's contingency plans for earthquake and hydrometeorological hazards; conducted a Climate and Disaster Risk Assessment; formulated a Baguio City DRRM Plan for 2020-2022; CDRRM Operations Center standard operating procedure; Local Climate Change Action Plan; among other accomplishments.

[Harry and Meghan's California town ordered evacuated over mudslide fears](#)

By: Agence France Presse

LOS ANGELES, United States – The star-studded California town that is home to Britain's Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle was ordered evacuated Monday, with firefighters warning mudslides there could engulf luxury homes.

Montecito, which is also a favorite of American entertainment royalty such as Oprah Winfrey and Jennifer Aniston, was expected to get up to eight inches (20 centimeters) of rain in 24 hours — on hillsides already sodden by weeks of downpours. Emergency authorities in the town 90 minutes from Los Angeles said anyone in the area should get out.

“LEAVE NOW! This is a rapidly evolving situation. Please pay close attention to emergency alerts,” a fire department website said.

The town, whose multi-million dollar properties are perched in breathtaking California countryside, is particularly vulnerable to mudslides because it sits at the foot of a mountain range that was ravaged by fire five years ago.

Hundreds of square miles (kilometers) were scorched in 2017-18, denuding the hillsides of the vegetation that normally keeps soil in place. Without the trees and shrubs, rains can quickly turn treacherous.

“Over the last 30 days, Montecito has received 12-20+ inches of rain across the community, exceeding our yearly average of 17 inches,” Montecito Fire said on Twitter.

“This cumulative, saturating rain puts the community at greater risk of flooding and debris flow.”

Parade of cyclones

The evacuation order in Montecito came as California was being lashed by the latest in a parade of storms that have already killed 12 people.

A swathe of the Golden State was under flood warnings as it struggled to cope with yet more rain on top of near-record downpours in recent weeks — with even more forecast over the coming days. “Two major episodes of heavy rain and heavy mountain snow are expected to impact California in quick succession during the next couple of days in association with two of the more energetic and moisture-laden parade of cyclones that are aiming directly for” the state, the National Weather Service said.

Up to five inches (13 centimeters) of rain could fall throughout Monday in coastal regions of central California, the NWS said.

More rain will follow on Tuesday, including in the south of the state, while the Sierra Nevada mountains could get hit with up to six feet (1.8 meters) of snow, making for hazardous conditions.

Governor Gavin Newsom said 12 people had died over the last 10 days.

Last week he declared a state of emergency and on Sunday asked for, and was granted, a presidential emergency declaration.

“We expect to see the worst of it still ahead of us,” Newsom told reporters.

More than 100,000 homes were without power on Monday.

“The cumulative effect of successive heavy rainfall events will lead to additional instances of flooding,” the NWS warned.

“This includes rapid water rises, mudslides, and the potential for major river flooding. Susceptible terrain and areas near recent burn scars will be most at risk for debris flows and rapid runoff.”

Downpours in drought

While heavy rain is not unusual for California during the winter, these downpours are testing the state.

They come as much of the western US is more than two decades into a punishing drought that has seen a big increase in the frequency and intensity of wildfires.

Scientists say human-caused climate change, brought about by the unchecked burning of fossil fuels, has supercharged these wild swings in weather, making the wets wetter and the dries drier.

Storms last week around San Francisco left tens of thousands of people without power as they caused flooding.

That came on the heels of a ferocious downpour on New Year’s Eve, which left the ground sodden and waterlogged.

But even the recent heavy rains are not enough to reverse the drought.

Scientists say several years of above-average rainfall are needed to get reservoirs back to healthy levels.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

From SBMA to Peza?

A former high-ranking official from the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) may soon take the helm at the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza), with two influential groups reportedly pushing for the appointment of this individual.

A well-placed government source told the Inquirer that endorsement papers for this person had reached Malacañang, with a religious sect well-known for block voting during elections, as well as a political party affiliated with the previous administration pushing for this appointment.

Backers of this individual have apparently told our government source that the appointment is almost a certainty and will be announced sometime around the mass oath taking in Malacañang that is set to take place during the last week of this month.

Despite this, industry stakeholders seem to have gotten hold of this move from the grapevine, with some industry associations making their own pitch to the President, preferring Tereso Panga, officer in charge of Peza, instead to become chief of the investment promotion agency.

The IT and Business Process Association of the Philippines and the Semiconductors and Electronics in the Philippines Foundation Inc., among others, have endorsed Panga. But only time will tell if President Marcos would heed stakeholders' preference, or if he would go with the flow of designating a political appointee.

Conscientious mining

Eramen Minerals Inc. was honored this year as it bagged the prestigious Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Award (PMIEA) in the surface mining category and first runner-up for "best mining forest" in the metallic category at the 68th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference, held at the John Hay Trade and Cultural Center in Baguio City late last year.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) recognized Eramen for its exceptional commitment, initiative and innovation in environmental protection, safety and health management and social development.

In 2021, Eramen launched the Mine Environment Modernization (Memo) program to enhance its environmental protection and natural resource management. One of the projects under Memo was the development of a new one-hectare forest nursery with a capacity to grow 500,000 seedlings.

Eramen has planted over 510,000 trees covering more than 657 hectares, including mined-out sites, buffer zones, and bamboo plantations.

Eramen also developed an organic agroforestry farm to grow a variety of fruits, vegetables and other crops not only to augment food sources and sustainability of the mine but also to aid in reducing the impact of climate change. It maintains a program to manage air quality through road watering activities by installing road water sprinklers spanning nine kilometers.

All told, Eramen invested nearly P50 million for environmental management for the 2021-2022 fiscal year alone.

Stronger momentum in US-PH ties in 2023

By: MaryKay Carlson

The last five months of 2022 coincided with my first five months serving as US ambassador to the Philippines—an exciting time marked by nonstop engagements that strengthened our ironclad relationship as friends, partners, and allies.

Only three weeks after I presented my credentials to newly elected President Marcos Jr., Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited the Philippines. Numerous other high-level exchanges between our two countries followed. Mr. Marcos met with President Biden in New York in September. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin III met with DND officer in charge Jose Faustino Jr. twice soon thereafter, in Hawaii and in Cambodia.

Many other senior US officials met Philippine leaders from government, business, and civil society in 2022, including a 28-company trade mission from the US-Asean Business Council, a congressional delegation led by Sen. Ed Markey, multiple state department officials, the secretary of the navy, and a constellation of generals and admirals from the US military. These visits culminated with Vice President Kamala Harris' historic trip to the Philippines in November, when, in addition to meeting with Mr. Marcos and Vice President Sara Duterte, she became the most senior US official ever to visit Palawan.

In my 37 years as a diplomat, I have never seen this level of bilateral engagement in such a short period of time. It is a testament to the significance of our relationship. And if what we see on the calendar for the new year is any indicator, our ties will continue to flourish in 2023.

All of us at the US Embassy are committed to strengthening the US-Philippine relationship, a cornerstone of the Biden administration's Indo-Pacific Strategy. We are excited that the Philippines became a founding partner in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, and we look forward to expanding our collaboration during the US Apec host year. This week, the US Embassy will highlight the rich US-Philippine economic partnership during the fifth Indo-Pacific Business Forum (IPBF), the US government's premier annual regional event to promote trade, investment, and economic cooperation. The United States is the largest market for Philippine goods and services in the world, and the IPBF will highlight the Philippines' role as an essential economic partner in multiple sectors. We are honored by the many Filipino leaders from government and the private sector who will join us for this event.

Later this month, officials from the US state and defense departments will lead a senior US interagency delegation to the annual US-Philippine Bilateral Strategic Dialogue. The delegation will meet with representatives from the Departments of Foreign Affairs and National Defense, and other Philippine government partners to strategize about ways to advance cooperation in multiple fields, including energy and food security, defense, support for the judiciary, protecting the environment, and enhancing people-to-people ties.

In April, the US and Philippine militaries will begin Exercise Balikatan 23, the largest joint military exercise in the history of our alliance. Our forces will work shoulder-to-shoulder on shared operations and tactics on land, at sea, and in the air. Philippine and US forces will also conduct multiple humanitarian and civic assistance projects during the exercise, including school renovations and health engagements with local communities. Balikatan 23 will highlight the ironclad US-Philippine alliance as a source of strength and stability for our peoples and others in the Indo-Pacific.

2023 will also be a year to celebrate a milestone in bilateral ties: the 75th anniversary of the Fulbright program in the Philippines, and of people-to-people exchanges between our countries. Fulbright Philippines is the oldest continuously operating Fulbright program in the world. The program was the first in a rich array of exchanges with the Philippines, including the International Visitor Leadership Program, the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative, and many other programs. Thousands of Filipinos and Americans have benefited from these exchanges and brought those benefits back to their communities. We are also excited to welcome Peace Corps volunteers back to the Philippines this year.

Every day, the US Embassy team and I strive to channel the positive momentum in US-Philippine relations to advance our shared priorities. The economic, political, security, and cultural efforts highlighted above represent just a fraction of what we expect to do in 2023. The work we do together with our Filipino friends, partners, and allies is important: The US-Philippine relationship is central to ensuring an Indo-Pacific region that is free and open, connected, prosperous, secure, and resilient.

I can't wait to see what we can achieve together in 2023 and beyond.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Baler coastal cleanup drive yields 5 truckloads of trash](#)

By: Jason De Asis

BALER, Aurora – Some 200 volunteers from various sectors in this province took part in a cleanup activity along Sabang Beach here on Tuesday.

The move aims to raise awareness of the importance of environmental sanitation and cleanliness.

Lt. Col. Julito B. Recto Jr., commander of the Army's 91st Infantry Battalion, said about five trucks of both recyclable and residual wastes were collected in the one-day cleanup drive.

"This activity aims to save our natural resources, which in the future will benefit us and the generations to come. Hence, there is a need for us to keep our surroundings clean so as not to pollute our water sources and put our health and environment in grave danger. Baler beach is the birthplace of surfing in the Philippines and we should maintain its natural beauty," Recto said in an interview.

He also encouraged the public to promote waste reduction and create public awareness of waste management and environmental concerns.

"Let us support our government in finding ways and means to protect and serve our environment. Let us work to identify and eliminate eyesores, and beautify the local environment. Let us do beach clean-up to attract more tourists and raise public awareness on environmental care and protection," Recto said.

He cited the need to take care of the coastal beaches since this province is known for surfing and its natural beauty.

Lanao floods leave 4 dead, 25K individuals affected

By: Nef Luczon

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY – Floods in various parts of Lanao del Norte province have left four dead and more than 25,000 persons affected as of Tuesday.

In a statement, Gov. Imelda Quibranza-Dimaporo said the floods should serve as a "wake up" call in taking care of the environment.

"All of these happen because we abuse our environment," she said, even as she urged local officials to conduct pro-environment activities, such as regular tree-planting activities.

"But it should not be just mere tree planting, the seedlings must also survive," Dimaporo said.

Based on the recent data from the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (DRRMC), flood-hit families rose to 7,675, with four injuries.

The floods, which started on January 2, were caused by rains brought by the trough of a low pressure area.

The Regional DRRMC in Northern Mindanao said nine Lanao del Norte LGUs are affected.

Meanwhile, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. will visit Gingoog City in Misamis Oriental on Wednesday (Jan. 11, 2023) to check the situation of flooded areas in the province.

Misamis Oriental, along with Misamis Occidental, were also hit with floods and landslides last month.

Ozone layer's recovery on track, averting 0.5C temperature hike

NAIROBI, Kenya – The United Nations environment office in Kenya's capital Nairobi said Monday that the ozone layer is on the path to repair, which will help avert a warming of the planet of 0.5C.

According to a statement from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), efforts to halt climate change are being aided by the global phase-out of chemicals that damage the ozone layer.

The UN said the ozone layer is expected to regenerate within the next 40 years.

Meg Seki, the executive secretary of UNEP's Ozone Secretariat, said the fact that "ozone recovery is on track according to the latest quadrennial report is fantastic news. The impact the Montreal Protocol has had on climate change mitigation cannot be overstressed. Over the last 35 years, the Protocol has become a true champion for the environment."

The Montreal Protocol phases out substances that degrade Earth's ozone layer. The 1989 agreement is one of the most influential worldwide environmental agreements. Thanks to global cooperation, the UN notes that now the ozone layer is recovering, bringing environmental and economic advantages.

The report has been compiled by a large international group of experts, including many from the World Meteorological Organization, UNEP, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the European Union.

POLITIKO

[11 people killed in Philippine storms: disaster agency](#)

At least 11 people have died in storms across the Philippines in the past week, with more heavy rain expected in already sodden regions of the disaster-prone country, authorities said Tuesday.

Bad weather has plagued the country's southern and central islands since the Christmas weekend when downpours triggered flooding and landslides that left 52 people dead and forced hundreds of thousands to flee their homes.

Since January 3, back-to-back storms have killed 11 people as floodwaters swept through houses, cut roads and swamped crops, the civil defence office said.

The state weather forecaster warned Tuesday of "serious flooding" in low-lying areas and landslides in the mountains of the central island of Samar.

Heavy rain has already inundated villages, with water levels reaching three metres (10 feet) in some places.

So far, one person was missing and more than 2,200 people had been evacuated from their homes, said Josh Echano, Northern Samar provincial disaster officer.

The number of evacuees was expected to rise.

"The flood is progressing since yesterday, it's not subsiding," Echano said.

"This could be fatal. This could be one of the worst (floods)."

The Philippines is ranked among the most vulnerable nations to the impacts of climate change, and scientists have warned that storms are becoming more powerful as the world gets warmer.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Strong EU-PH relations discussed by Ambassador Véron](#)

THE ambassador of the European Union to the Philippines, Luc Véron, delivered the 7th Installment in the UST Ambassadors Lecture Series. With the theme "Strengthening EU-PH relations," the discussion was held at the Dr. George SK Ty Function Hall.

In his welcome remarks, University of Santo Tomas (UST) Secretary-General Rev. Fr. Louie Coronel made mention of the participation of the university as an educational partner in the recently concluded European Higher Education Fair 2022. Fr. Coronel also underscored the previous collaborations of UST and EU — highlighting the importance of such partnerships in strengthening the internationalization thrusts of the university. This was followed by the talk of Ambassador Luc Véron.

Ambassador Véron began with a background of current relations between the EU and the Philippines, which is based on a bilateral partnership and cooperation agreement, and then gave insights on key points, such as trade, good governance, maritime security and human rights, among others.

A key highlight that he shared with the over 200 onsite student participants was on climate and the environment, where Ambassador Véron shared that as the EU commits to further cut emissions by 55 percent by 2030 and to become climate neutral by 2050, they will also support the Philippines and other countries in their own efforts to mitigate and to adapt to climate change.

"Climate and the environment have been one of the priorities in the EU cooperation programs with the Philippines for some time and will continue to be so in the coming years. We have been supporting the development of renewable sources of energy, the protection of biodiversity and waste management through several projects which have also aimed at providing livelihoods to poor communities. The top priority for our development cooperation with the Philippines until 2027 will be the transition to a Green Circular Economy and the support to sustainable sources of energy," the EU ambassador said.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DZRJ 810 - RADYO BANDIDO

By: Chris Lucas

Binista ng Climate Change Commission ang Siragao Field School for Farmers and Fisherfolks sa Del Carmen, Surigao, Del Norte. Ang nasabing proyekto ay pinondohan ng People Survival Fund.

Layunin ng pagbisita na kumustahin ang progress o development sa pagpapatupad ng proyekto.

Pinangunahan naman ni CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert EA Borje at ni Del Carmen Mayor Alfredo Matugas Coro II, kasama rin si Surigao Del Norte State University-Del Carmen Campus Director Dr. Romy Jun Sunico.

Ang Siargao Climate Field School ang pangunahing component ng PSF Project ng bayan ng Del Carmen na naglalayong makapagbigay ng pinakamainam at pinaka-latest na Science and Technologies para sa pag unlad ng agrikultura at pangisdaan.

Ang proyektong ito ay naapubrahan noong 2016 at may pondong 80.7 milyong piso.

Ayon kay Mayor Coro ang Climate Field School ay nagsisilbing training ground ng mga magsasaka at mangingisda upang mapabuti pa ang kanilang kabuhayan sa gitna ng climate change.

Dagdag pa ni Coro ang proyektong ito ay naging halimbawa na para sa iba pang mga LGU na island municipalities sa rehiyon.

Samantala ipinaabot naman ni Borje ang commitment ng CCC na tiyaking magiging modelo para sa iba ang Siargao Climate Field School. Tutuling din aniya ang komisyon para sa paghahanap ng mga potential partners upang mas mapaunlad pa ang project implementation nito.

=END=