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NIKKEI ASIA

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By: Shunsuke Ushigome

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PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

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President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. expressed gratitude to Germany on Thursday for supporting the development in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and for cooperating with the Philippines in addressing climate change.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[It's time to make polluters pay](#)

By: Aj Raymundo

It's 6 a.m. and you're already in your school uniform. There's an outpour outside. You tune in to the radio—or news and social media sites, depending on your age—waiting for the announcement. Whether or not classes got called off was beside the point. These moments were nostalgic. The anticipation of a free day was enthralling.

[Ralph Recto named as new Finance secretary](#)

House Deputy Speaker Ralph Recto has been named as the new secretary of the Department of Finance, according to lawmakers.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS MIRROR

Taiwan commits 3K MTs of rice for local poor, disaster relief

Representative Wallace M.G. Chow of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (Teco) in the Philippines, on behalf of the Republic of China's (Taiwan) government, handed over the first batch of 1,000 metric tons of milled rice on January 4.

Chair and Resident Representative Silvestre H. Bello III of Manila Economic and Cultural Office (Meco) received the donation. Department of Agriculture (DA) officials joined him in the ceremonial turnover.

Chow remarked that Taiwan has prioritized agriculture development and food-security cooperation with the government of the Philippines, as climate change has greatly affected the latter's farming industry. He pointed out that rice donation is yet another testament of the solid collaboration, among other ongoing projects between the two republics, such as the Taiwan Technical Mission on Agriculture in Tarlac, the Mushroom Demonstration Farm in Baguio, and the Filipino Young Farmers Internship Program in Taiwan.

He also emphasized that Taiwan is a dependable partner to the Philippines, "and this valued partnership will continue when we help and respect each other."

In response to the insufficient food supply caused by climate change, the Taiwanese government committed to donate 2,000 metric tons more of milled rice to the Philippines. The donation will serve as additional food security stocks to be distributed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development, in collaboration with DA to the pro-poor and relief operation programs, following the occurrences of calamities or emergency situations.

Meco was nominated to receive the donation on behalf of the Philippine government.

CNN

[Snow is disappearing as the planet warms. A new study shows who's losing the most](#)

By: Rachel Ramirez

Vast swaths of the US have been hit with powerful storms, including blizzards that have blanketed parts of the Midwest and Northeast in snow. But something's amiss: many states accustomed to white winters are now getting more rain than snow.

A new study published on Wednesday shows that the human-caused climate crisis has reduced snowpack in most parts of the Northern Hemisphere in the last 40 years, threatening crucial water resources for millions of people.

It might seem logical that a warmer world would be less hospitable to snow, but the relationship between snow and climate change is complex, and scientists have for many years struggled to make a clear connection between the two.

Part of the problem has been that snowfall is notoriously difficult to measure accurately, and scientific data from ground observations, satellites, and climate models have given contradictory signals on the role of climate change in declining snowpacks. Some areas have even experienced more snow in our warmer world.

But Wednesday's study, published by researchers at Dartmouth College in the journal *Nature*, offers the big picture — climate change has caused significant drops in snow in the world's north since the 1980s. Areas in the US Southwest and Northeast, as well as in Central and Eastern Europe, have experienced the steepest global warming-related declines of between 10% and 20% per decade.

"It's very clear that climate change has been having negative impacts on snow and water," said Alexander Gottlieb, lead author of the study and a doctoral student at Dartmouth College. "And every additional degree of warming is going to take away a bigger and bigger chunk of your snow water resources."

Less snow means less water supply

The researchers found that snowpack loss accelerates when average winter temperatures at a location rise above minus 8 degrees Celsius (around 17 degrees Fahrenheit), a point they refer to as a "snow-loss cliff." Past that, snow loss accelerates with even modest rises in temperature.

That's a huge problem for communities that depend on snow for water. Many of the world's water supplies are already threatened by climate change through drought and

heat waves that are becoming more frequent and intense. As the planet continues to warm, the study found that many highly populated areas that rely on snow are going to see increased losses in water availability over the next few decades.

“When you have a regime shifting to one that’s no longer snow-dominated in the winter, but instead is rain-dominated, you have a situation where you can have reservoirs at half full, or less,” Justin Mankin, senior author of the study and associate professor of geography in Dartmouth, told CNN. “Then the question becomes ‘well, are we going to have a rainy spring?’” to compensate for water withdrawals from places downstream.

They also looked at river basins to measure how much snow water resource had dropped. The study found a declining trend in snowpack across 82 out of 169 major Northern Hemisphere river basins, including the Colorado River in the US and the Danube River in Europe, with 31 of those confidently showing the fingerprints of human-caused climate change.

“Most of the world’s people live in river basins that are at this precipice of falling off an accelerating snow-loss cliff, whereby every additional degree of warming means greater and greater snowpack loss,” Mankin said.

To reach their conclusions, the researchers specifically analyzed snowpack declines in March between 1981 and 2020, because it provides a “convenient summary of all winter weather,” Mankin said. He noted that the amount of snow on the ground in March indicates what the winter conditions were like that season before spring melts the reservoir that trickles downstream to supply water for households and agriculture.

“March snowpack is emblematic of everything that happened over the winter, and we do test the sensitivity of that measure,” Mankin said.

Back-to-back years of less snowpack in the western US have already given a preview of what future winters and springs could look like in many parts of the Northern Hemisphere, from unprecedented water shortages to worsening wildfires, said Mankin.

Snow also helps prevent wildfires or can reduce their intensity. Unlike rain, which can run off quickly, snow melts slowly over time and can provide a slow and sustained release of water into the soil, making it less likely to ignite and providing less fuel for fires to spread.

Less snowpack also carries a significant toll for places that rely on winter recreational activities, such as skiing and snowboarding, as key economic drivers. Many ski resorts in the Northern Hemisphere are facing such challenges already, with many now relying on snow cannons to ensure there’s enough snow to keep businesses operational. Some

places are approaching temperature thresholds that will make even machine-made snow unviable.

Mona Hemmati, postdoctoral research scientist at the Columbia Climate School, who was not involved with the study, said the research provided “compelling evidence” of how human-caused climate change is influencing snow patterns.

“What makes this study groundbreaking is its approach to isolating the effects of anthropogenic climate change from natural climate variability,” Hemmati told CNN. “This study serves as a crucial reminder of the escalating impacts of climate change and the imperative for immediate and concerted action to address this global challenge.”

ECO BUSINESS

Climate and health: How to build on COP28 progress?

By: Xia Zhijian and Cui Qiwen

Last year, the world emerged from the coronavirus pandemic only to face a spate of weather disasters and the hottest 12 months on record. The topic of climate change and health, their interrelated causes and solutions, has become more important than ever.

Health became a focus at the COP28 UN climate change conference in Dubai, where fossil fuels and energy targets took centre stage. The UAE presidency put the topic on the agenda with the first-ever health-themed day at a COP, and first climate-health ministerial meeting.

In Dubai, 143 major economies including China and the US, signed the Declaration on Climate and Health. According to a press release, the Declaration aims to “place health at the heart of climate action” and is the first time governments have come together to acknowledge their responsibility to “protect communities and prepare healthcare systems to cope with climate-related health impacts such as extreme heat, air pollution and infectious diseases.”

A study published on the eve of COP28 found that the number of people who die prematurely every year from air pollution has risen to 8.3 million. It further found that 5 million of those deaths are tied to pollution from fossil fuel use, though the Declaration does not mention fossil fuels.

Heat-related illness and deaths are also on the rise, with 189 million people exposed every year to extreme weather-related events, according to the COP press release.

What explains the sudden interest in health issues at COP28? And how might the introduction of climate-and-health-related objectives translate into action at the national level?

About time: Adapting the health sector to climate change

The attention given to health issues at COP28 reflects the importance attached to the topic following Covid, according to Wenjia Cai, director of Lancet Countdown Asia, and professor in Tsinghua University’s Department of Earth System Science.

To address the nexus between climate change and health, the Declaration focuses on enhancing the health sector’s capacity for adapting to climate change. Its stated objectives include: working with the most climate-vulnerable peoples to boost the roll

out of adaptation policies; improving the capacity of health systems to respond to climate-sensitive diseases; attending to the effects of climate impacts on human wellbeing; and mitigating future pandemics by enhancing the detection of diseases that spill over to humans from other animals.

Also featured are the objectives of combatting inequalities among countries, eradicating poverty and famine, improving food nutrition and security, and enhancing climate adaptation in agriculture, housing, transport and energy.

As these goals show, health is intertwined with a great many other climate-related issues and encompasses many aspects of wellbeing. The impact of climate change on health – both direct and indirect – cannot be ignored, and the issue of adapting the health sector to a climate-changed world must be addressed.

The Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC, the UN’s climate science body, indicates that climate change is having a serious impact on human health, with an additional 2.5 million deaths per year expected globally by 2100 as a result of it, Cai points out.

“The amount of investment in health-related research has grown significantly in recent years,” says Cai. “The US, for example, invested US\$260 million into climate-and-health research in 2023, eight times more than in 2022, and the focus on climate and health from other major economies has also increased significantly.”

Financing: US\$2.7 billion promised for health

The question of financing goes to the heart of everything. On the same day the Declaration was signed, the UK, Asian Development Bank and nine charitable foundations pledged US\$1 billion to tackle the climate–health crisis. On Health Day, the UAE, along with several philanthropies, announced US\$777 million for eradicating neglected tropical diseases. So, in just two days, combined financing commitments reached US\$1.777 billion.

The amount seemed to have risen further at a press conference given by the presidency on 4 December. Taking stock of the previous four days, COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber said that US\$2.7 billion had been committed to healthcare, though he did not specify where the additional US\$1 billion came from. (The COP28 press office has been approached for comment on this figure.)

Details are lacking on how those funds will be used to help healthcare systems tackle climate change, says Yuan Yating, assistant analyst at the Institute for Global Decarbonization Progress (iGDP), a Beijing-based thinktank.

“Countries’ ability to engage in climate adaptation and mitigation largely depends on their fiscal capacity,” says Yuan. “But those that are most vulnerable to climate change – developing countries and small island states, for example – often have to rely on international fiscal support for action on climate. At present, only 2 per cent of climate adaptation funding and 0.5 per cent of multilateral climate funding is available to be spent on health.”

Yuan adds: “That money can still make a big difference if used for energy efficiency and carbon reduction in developing countries’ healthcare systems. While climate adaptation in healthcare is very important, burning fossil fuels is the main driver of climate change.”

How to incorporate health into national climate action plans?

Significantly, the Declaration sets out that signee nations will “[take] health into account, as appropriate, in designing the next round of nationally determined contributions (NDCs)”.

NDCs are the climate action plans that every UN member state must submit every five years, with the next instalments being due in 2025. How will nations incorporate health issues into their NDCs? For Wenjia Cai, three elements are involved: principle, action and objective-setting.

Firstly, says Cai, the core purpose of tackling climate change is to protect life and health, and this should be written into NDCs as the “guiding principle”. Then comes action. Cai explains: “If three projects for action on climate are backed with similar levels of investment, but one delivers greater health benefits, then that one can get higher priority.” Finally, objective-setting, meaning that health impacts are taken into account when setting targets for emissions reduction. “If incorporating public health impacts into emissions reduction targets reveals that keeping temperature rise within 2C is not a bold enough ambition, then efforts should focus on 1.5C instead,” Cai adds.

Reducing emissions from the health sector

In addition to adaptation, the Declaration also targets mitigation, that is, the reduction of carbon emissions from healthcare itself.

The sector is responsible for about 5 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, and at current rates of growth, these emissions could triple by 2050. They come from three sources: directly from healthcare facilities (including ambulances); from electricity generation to power such facilities; and indirect emissions from supply chains, including from producing and transporting medicine, food and hospital equipment. These indirect emissions account for the bulk (71 per cent) of healthcare emissions.

The Declaration proposes: “Promoting steps to curb emissions and reduce waste ... such as by assessing the greenhouse gas emissions of health systems, and developing action plans, nationally determined decarbonisation targets, and procurement standards for national health systems, including supply chains.”

There are existing blueprints that signatories can look to. In 2021, the international NGO Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) published its Global Road Map for Health Care Decarbonisation. That set out three core pathways for reducing emissions from healthcare systems globally: decarbonising infrastructure and service operations; decarbonising supply chains in the sector; and decarbonising the wider social and economic environment.

“Planning and implementing projects in line with the three pathways described in the HCWH roadmap will help healthcare globally to significantly reduce its greenhouse gas emissions,” Yuan Yating tells China Dialogue. If the pathways are followed, “cumulative emissions reduction in the sector between 2014 and 2050 could reach 44.8 billion tonnes of CO₂ [equivalent],” she adds.

More attention needed on health

At the Declaration’s unveiling, the director-general of the World Health Organisation (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, confirmed that the link between climate and health has been badly neglected: “The climate crisis is a health crisis, but for too long, health has been a footnote in climate discussions.”

From the number and type of activities on the COP28 agenda, climate and health issues would appear to have been paid unprecedented attention at a COP. We noticed, however, that, among Chinese attendees, the topic rarely came up in private conversation. It also received little coverage in COP-related reporting on international mainstream media websites.

Wenjia Cai also believes that the topic does not receive enough public attention. Referring to data from the Lancet Countdown’s China report on health and climate change, Cai says: “In the mainstream media that we track on Weibo, climate change features in an average of 1,400-plus posts per year, with health issues referenced in only 8.5 per cent of those posts. In the official print media, provincially, health issues come up only 6 per cent of the time in the context of climate change. It’s a fairly low proportion.”

Cai believes that there needs to be more investment in climate and health research in China. Only two such projects are currently part of China’s National Key Research and Development Program, and “the investment may be less than 30 million yuan [US\$4.223 million] per project”.

[WEF says world faces 'gloomy outlook' as AI, climate threats rise](#)

Progress on global development could come to a halt due to surging conflicts, accelerating climate change impacts and increasingly deep divisions over politics, a survey of risk experts, policymakers and business leaders showed on Wednesday.

They also warned that the spread of misinformation and disinformation, driven in part by new artificial intelligence (AI) tools, is a key risk to major elections in 2024 that could potentially undermine the legitimacy of new governments.

“(It) is like looking down in a big bowl of spaghetti - everything is interconnected,” said Carolina Klint, of risk strategy group Marsh McLennan, which partnered with the World Economic Forum (WEF) on its annual risk ranking.

The risk report, released ahead of the WEF’s annual Davos meeting next week, struck a pessimistic note about the eroding ability of global institutions to tackle escalating problems.

Nearly a third of more than 1,400 analysts surveyed in September 2023 said they saw an “elevated risk” of global catastrophes, such as extreme weather disasters, within the next two years, with two-thirds predicting such events within a decade.

Over the next two years, disinformation and misinformation - a new category of risk in this year’s survey - were seen as the biggest threat, following by extreme weather events, societal polarisation and cyber insecurity.

But over the next decade, climate and environmental risks - from biodiversity loss to shortages of natural resources - topped the list.

‘Bandwidth’ for multiple risks?

The wide array of fast-surgingly risks poses a big challenge for governments, which are struggling to find “mental bandwidth” to focus on crucial longer-term risks such as climate change, said Saadia Zahidi, the WEF’s managing director.

The survey results hint at why achieving rapid action on looming threats can be so difficult.

Business leaders surveyed, for instance, saw ecosystem collapse and environmental “tipping points” as a longer-term worry than government and civil society leaders, one potential barrier to winning the swift action needed to avoid them.

Global temperature rise since pre-industrial times hit 1.48 degrees Celsius in 2023, European scientists said this week - suggesting the 1.5°C “guardrail” limit set in the Paris Agreement is likely to be passed at least temporarily in 2024.

Scientists say if temperature rise above 1.5°C is sustained it is “likely” to lead to catastrophic major global tipping points in Earth systems that could drive surging hunger, conflict, weather disasters, nature losses and sea level rise.

Such risks, combined with growing economic disparity, divisions in access to key tech and other risks mean the world’s poorest and most vulnerable could find themselves increasingly “locked out” of opportunities.

“Could we be looking at the end of development ... a scenario where the current standard of living achieved gets frozen?” Zahidi asked at a press conference in London.

That would in turn fuel migration, crime, radicalisation and other problems, as well as eroding trust in institutions, the report said.

Election risk

The risk to key global elections in 2024 - from the United States and UK to India and Indonesia - from misleading or false content such as faked videos is “significant”, said Klint, Marsh’s risk management leader in Europe.

Potentially, she said it “could lead to elected governments’ legitimacy being put in question”, a trigger for social unrest.

John Scott, head of sustainability risk with the Zurich Insurance Group, another partner in the report, warned that if efforts to rein in the spread of disinformation and misinformation fail, “we may end up with a world where no one is sure who to trust”.

But efforts to rein in disinformation could also overstep, with governments moving to control information “based on what they determine to be ‘true’”, potentially undermining freedoms related to internet access and the press, the report warned.

Despite the dire scenarios outlined in the report, Zahidi said they were not inevitable.

Some potential threats - such as expanding use of AI technology - could be harnessed to tackle other complex problems, including cyber crime, Zahidi added.

“Yes, it’s a very gloomy outlook. But by no means is it a hard, fast, set prediction of the future. The future is very much in our hands,” she said.

NIKKEI ASIA

[Japan to encourage companies to participate in emissions trading](#)

By: Shunsuke Ushigome

The Japanese government will make 20 trillion yen (\$137.4 billion) available for decarbonization support to encourage companies to participate in the emissions trading system (ETS), Nikkei has learned.

Company participation in the ETS, which began on a trial basis in Japan last year, is still optional but the government will make participation a requirement for companies to receive its financial support for going greener.

The government will establish industry-specific guidelines for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, with a view to setting targets. It will also consider providing guidance and recommendations to companies that fail to meet their targets based on these guidelines from fiscal 2026, when the ETS comes into full effect.

Companies will then be able to set their own reduction targets based on ministry guidelines. Whether the targets are appropriate or not will be subject to certification by a third-party organization.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry plans to submit a draft amendment to the Green Transformation (GX) Promotion Act at the ordinary Diet session in 2025, and it will include these measures along with guidelines to make the system more effective.

Currently, companies are free to choose whether or not to participate in the ETS, and can set reduction targets on a voluntary basis. The ministry will not mandate participation even after fiscal 2026, but will establish a mechanism to encourage participation in the program.

Participation in the program will be a requirement for receiving government support through GX Economic Transition Bonds, worth 20 trillion yen in total. These will be issued over the next decade.

In December last year, the ministry formulated a process schedule for decarbonizing various sectors, including steel. The ministry will support the practical application of low emission manufacturing processes, such as steelmaking technology that uses hydrogen, with GX bonds.

The aim of the policy revision is to make emissions trading more active in Japan, which lags behind European and other countries.

As of December 2023, 568 companies are participating in the ETS, including Nippon Steel, Hitachi, Toyota Motor and Tokyo Electric Power Co. Holdings (TEPCO), but this only covers about 50% of domestic emissions.

Emissions trading is one of the popular methods to reduce greenhouse gases, and the European Union, China and several states in the U.S. have all already introduced it. The EU has mandated it for large power plants and factories, and has reduced emissions in targeted industries by 37% since 2005, when the program began.

A reason for creating guidelines is that different industries have different levels of difficulty achieving decarbonization. For example, the steel industry has among the highest emissions in domestic manufacturing industries, but its decarbonization technology remains a work in progress.

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

[PBBM recognizes Germany's support for Mindanao development, climate change mitigation](#)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. expressed gratitude to Germany on Thursday for supporting the development in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and for cooperating with the Philippines in addressing climate change.

The BARMM is currently designing its own government after being given with a degree of autonomy through a peace pact, President Marcos said during a meeting in Malacañang with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock.

“And so the assistance that we have received from Germany and from other countries has been invaluable. We hope that this will continue and so far as the best answer to conflict is always progress and that will allow us to say that we brought peace to the region and the part of Germany has been a very important,” Marcos said.

The President also recognized Germany's support in peace and rebuilding efforts in Marawi City, which was devastated following the attack of IS-backed militants few years ago.

The Philippine government is starting to rebuild the Islamic city and Germany has been playing an important part in its reconstruction, the President said.

“We have taken full advantage of all the assistance that we have received from Germany. And we would like to thank Germany for that assistance and hope that we continue down that road as it has become more and more important that we maintain peace considering the complexity of the geopolitical situation here in the Philippines.”

Aside from Mindanao peace and rebuilding efforts, Germany has been the country's vital partner in climate change mitigation initiatives, Marcos said, citing the European nation's role in the effort with the introduction of important technologies useful for the Philippines.

It is unfortunate, Marcos said, that the country is still considered as one of the most vulnerable countries when it comes to climate change.

“Thank you very much for the assistance. And I hope that you will be able to support us in our efforts to bring the assessments of those different issues to the Philippines,” the President told the German official.

For her part, Baerbock said the topic of climate change is among the issues where bilateral relations can be strengthened, as she raised German companies' interest in the Philippine renewable energy sector.

“There are huge companies looking forward to investment in renewable energy... I would say we talk about raw materials, we talk about also skilled labor... I think this is really a field where it's a win-win situation, or even a triple win situation for employees, for workers, also for our countries, and therefore we are looking forward to it,” Baerbock said.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[It's time to make polluters pay](#)

By: Aj Raymundo

It's 6 a.m. and you're already in your school uniform. There's an outpour outside. You tune in to the radio—or news and social media sites, depending on your age—waiting for the announcement. Whether or not classes got called off was beside the point. These moments were nostalgic. The anticipation of a free day was enthralling.

Now that I am in college (perhaps wiser, who can say?) I find the constant barrage of weather-related school cancellations troubling— especially when college students, as I remember, were often exempt from suspensions. It's like climate change, as palpable as it could get, has been normalized to the point of commonplace.

Climate change. Filipinos know it, feel it. Stronger rains, rising temperatures, unpredictable catastrophes. The country has had a fair share of disasters, but it wasn't until ten years ago, when Super Typhoon Yolanda hit the Philippines, that we had a collective reckoning with the magnitude of the climate crisis. And yet, its effects continue to haunt and reverberate among Filipinos, especially the locals in Visayas whose lives were affected in ways unimaginable.

In commemorating the tragedy, Greenpeace's ship Rainbow Warrior once again makes the rounds in the country to bear witness to the lives of climate survivors, amplify it to the world, and demand reparations.

The ship first arrived in the Philippines in November, just in time for the commemoration of Yolanda and climate talks at COP28 in Dubai. Carrying the call #ClimateJusticeForAll, Rainbow Warrior visited climate-impacted communities in Tacloban and Bohol, docking in Manila as its final stop.

"It's very hard to say 'This is the amount of money you have to pay' because a lot of people lost their homes but are unable to reveal what they lost," explained Samantha Rodriguez, one of the crew members of Rainbow Warrior. We were aboard a ship under the sweltering Manila sun. "But also, they lost their family. That's something you cannot put a price on."

Despite this, she says that companies "should be aware of the fact that they gain profit for polluting the planet and it's impacting communities across the world" and these companies should pay for that. "Otherwise, they just get richer and richer at the expense of other people."

The team running the ship comprises 17 individuals hailing from 13 countries, the youngest being 20 years old; taking the helm is their ferocious female captain, Hettie Geenen. Their mission: campaign around the world on issues relating to the worsening climate change.

At the core of their most recent tour in the Philippines is their call for the government to enact a climate accountability law that will hold corporate climate polluters accountable. “Filipino communities shouldn’t be shouldering the human and financial costs of climate disasters,” said one of their campaigners. “This call for reparations is a call for climate justice.”

According to PulseAsia, 65% of Filipino adults observed the substantial impact of climate change in their communities. The same poll showed that 71% of Filipinos considered climate change a significant threat to them and their families. These numbers, however, barely scratch the surface of the complex reality of how the climate crisis affects Filipinos.

“The Philippines is at the frontline of the climate change crisis, especially with the sea levels rising,” explained Clement Barbet, another crew member of the Rainbow Warrior, from France. “We are here to speak with communities to get their stories because they are living it. This is not something you just see on television,” added Barbet. “You can touch it, feel it, see it.”

Developing countries like the Philippines suffer the most from the devastating impacts of climate disasters. Yet, big corporations and developed countries bear the most responsibility in this crisis as they are responsible for almost 80% of global carbon emissions that worsen the crisis.

During their campaign in Tacloban, Rodriguez was particularly struck by a story she encountered on the islands. “He was declared a missing person,” shared the crew member. “To be declared a missing person, and (be unable) to find your name among the tombstones, it should be hard for the family to not have closure.”

Rodriguez was referring to Mark Anthony Simbajon, a Yolanda survivor whose family has declared him missing to the government. Simbajon was later found alive, but despite not having withdrawn the declaration, he never found his name in the monuments and walls of remembrance. It speaks to the inscrutability of the impact of the Super Typhoon and how a lot of people who died and went missing remain unaccounted for.

Other crew members also shared their experiences in Bohol. At a makeshift gallery at a church in Pandacan called People’s Museum of Climate Justice, which Greenpeace

also opened during the ship's tour, one of the objects in the exhibit is a calendar. Owned by a Bohol resident, it has a tide chart instructing them on whether or not they will need to evacuate: a high tide of more than two meters would engulf their homes amidst the rising sea levels.

"Of course," Rodriguez continued, "the people who are suffering first are mostly the poor communities. But at some point, everyone is going to suffer the same." Climate change doesn't discriminate.

To this end, Rodriguez called the youth to speak up on issues related to the crisis. She is inspired by the climate justice movements led by the young ones.

"I remember when I was a kid, people would say 'Kids are the future. They have to solve the problems when they grow up,' which, to be honest, is passing on the responsibility to the next generation," Rodriguez voiced. "But I think the youth is standing up. 'I don't have to grow up (in order) to make big decisions'—that's something the youth now knows."

"They realize that we don't have time and that if the situation doesn't change, they won't have a future." Though the youth do not have the political power to make the decisions themselves, they can "put pressure on the government and big industries," she added.

I left the ship in the afternoon to visit the gallery they mounted in Pandacan. On my way out of its shade, the oppressive heat draped itself over me. Even the breeze from the Manila bay was warm. The thought that it's only about to get hotter makes me anxious; climate experts predict a continuous temperature rise given the rate at which the world—primarily big oil companies and developed countries—is emitting carbon into our atmosphere.

On the way to Pandacan, I saw pedestrians, street vendors, and people living in makeshift homes. How vulnerable and fragile these lives are, I thought, when pitted against climate catastrophes. How violent, made even more so when the struggles of people most affected by extreme weather are depicted as some kind of honorable resiliency.

We cannot "resilience" our way out of climate change. We need to make the big polluters pay.

Ralph Recto named as new Finance secretary

House Deputy Speaker Ralph Recto has been named as the new secretary of the Department of Finance, according to lawmakers.

In a statement, Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri said that he welcomes Recto's appointment as the new Finance chief, remarking that Recto was known in the Senate as the "resident numbers genius."

"More than most, he understands how to bridge the gap between the abstractions of mathematics and the very concrete realities that we face as a nation," Zubiri said.

House ways and means chairperson and Recto's colleague in the lower chamber, Rep. Joey Salceda (Albay, 3rd District), also said in an earlier statement that Recto's appointment was "likely."

Salceda said Recto will bring to his new role "a wealth of experience in economic legislation and deep and longstanding relationships with members of Congress."

The lawmaker added that Recto's background as a tax reformer and a senator who chaired the Senate Ways and Means panel will aid toward "meaningful reforms to address cost of living, create employment, and expand our fiscal space."

Recto is replacing outgoing Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno.

Diokno was handpicked as Marcos' fiscal chief in May 2022 and before that had served as governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas from 2019 to 2022.

In September 2023, Diokno admitted to reporters that the president did not consult his economic managers before implementing a controversial price ceiling on rice, saying that he was "shocked" by the executive order implementing the measure when it came out.

Diokno said that while price ceilings don't work in "ideal market conditions," the presence of price manipulators like smugglers and hoarders led to the president's decision.

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