



## NEWS ROUNDUP

12 JANUARY 2023 [ 08:00 am]

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## **BUSINESS WORLD**

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By: Marifi S. Jara

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## **GMA NEWS**

### [Ozone layer on track to heal within four decades](#)

By: Marlowe Hood and Rochelle Gluzman

The ozone layer that shields life on Earth from deadly solar radiation is on track to recover within decades, a major scientific assessment said on Monday.

## **MANILA BULLETIN**

### [\[Opinion\] Community-level disaster resilience best defense vs climate change](#)

By: Sonny Coloma

The past year ended not with a bang or a whimper but with a strong whiplash, as described by the Associated Press in this dispatch: MANILA – Thousands of people in the Philippines remained in emergency shelters in the wake of devastating Christmas flooding, as the death toll climbed to 51 with 19 missing, authorities said Monday.

## **NPR**

### ["It's like gold": Onions now cost more than meat in the Philippines](#)

By: Mary Yang

A pound of red onions now costs more than a pound of beef in the Philippines. As of Wednesday, local red onions cost as much as 550 Philippine pesos (P) per kg, or \$4.50 per pound, according to the Department of Agriculture.

## **PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

### **[Media outlook: 'Solutions stories' may win back crisis-weary readers](#)**

By: Krixia Subingsubing

MANILA, Philippines — Newsrooms around the world are hoping to win back audiences by producing more solutions-oriented stories and better climate coverage, according to an annual forecast of challenges and opportunities for the media.

## **SUNSTAR**

### **[Iloilo City gets GIS workstation](#)**

ILOILO City Government got a Geographic Information System (GIS) workstation from United States Agency for International Development (USAid) and CRS Philippines' Climate Resilient Cities Project on January 10, 2023.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Climate smart agriculture is also about going green](#)**

By: William Dar

"CLIMATE smart farming, sometimes referred to as climate smart agriculture or CSA for short — is a farming method that aims to help the transition from traditional agricultural techniques to more sustainable, green, climate change-proof tactic."

### **[EU ambassador discusses strong relations with PH at UST lecture](#)**

THE European Union (EU) Ambassador to the Philippines, His Excellency Luc Veron, delivered the 7th Installment in the University of Santo Tomas (UST) Ambassadors Lecture Series (ALS).

## **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

### **[World Bank sees moderate growth for Philippines](#)**

By: Louella Desiderio

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine economy is projected to post slower growth this year as global demand weakens, but the expected growth will be among the fastest in the region, according to the World Bank.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### PANAY NEWS

[Dr. JU-IM T. JIMLAN, Western Visayas Champion Educator for Environmental Education is 2022 DANGAL NG BAYAN AWARDEE NATIONAL WINNER; Civil Service Commission](#)

By: Pearl Socias

Dr. Ju-im T. Jimlan has proven his genuine dedication to upholding the values of caring for the environment countless times.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **BUSINESS MIRROR**

### **[Addressing climate crisis with PHL: Germany partners for a greener world](#)**

THE catastrophic effects of the ongoing climate crisis can be felt extensively in many parts of the globe, with the Philippines being one of the most vulnerable countries.

With this in mind, Germany is upholding its promise to help create a greener planet, while limiting global warming both nationally and internationally.

“We consider the climate crisis the greatest security challenge of our time. The world cannot afford to wait longer. We need to end the fossil age, and rapidly reduce emissions,” Ambassador Anke Reiffenstuel said.

“This is why Germany has massively upped the pace on the shift to green energy, with the aim of being climate neutral by 2045. Globally, [my country is a reliable partner of those] that are vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as the Philippines,” Reiffenstuel further stated. “Being a priority country of the International Climate Initiative, Germany is currently implementing more than 50 projects with a total volume of more than €88 million [or around P5.2 billion] in the areas of climate, environment and biodiversity.”

Germany’s foreign minister Annalena Baerbock reemphasized her country’s commitment at the recent Conference of the Parties, or COP27, in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt: “[We are] putting climate justice at the top of our agenda,” she said, and added that the European country was to raise its contribution for climate finance directed to emerging and developing countries at the tune of \$6 billion per year.

Baerbock also stressed the “breakthrough on the issue of loss and damage” that was achieved in the conference, which is “opening up a new chapter in the area of climate justice.”

During its “G7” presidency, Germany also initiated the development of a “Global Shield Against Climate Risks,” which was unanimously supported by the group. The Global Shield, officially launched on November 14, 2022 at the COP 27, systematically analyzes—country by country—gaps in protection, and works with those hardest hit by climate change to develop protection packages, as well as financial protection against climate-related loss and damage.

### **Environment-friendly transport systems**

SINCE 2014 German development agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has been implementing projects that aim to transform the local public-transport system—a key sector for reducing emissions in the Philippines.

Jeepneys, a part of everyday Filipino life, use diesel—a fossil fuel proven to contribute to the production of ground-level ozone. Traffic jams in the city provoke longer idle time for the said vehicles and others that employ fossil fuels. According to a GIZ study published in 2016, there are 250,000 jeepneys in the Philippines, with 55,000 of them operating in Metro Manila alone. They account for 40 percent of vehicle trips, making them the biggest greenhouse-gas emissions contributor in the transport sector.

Together with the Department of Transportation, the GIZ embarked on the “Jeepney+ NAMA,” or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action project, which aimed to create a modern, sustainable and climate-friendly transport system in Philippine cities. By 2026 the project strives to modernize jeepney fleets and reduce the share of diesel-powered vehicles by 22 percent. This means replacing them with electric jeepneys and public-transport vehicles that follow the Euro-4 emission norms.

The project also helps craft systems that will make public transport more efficient for users. Institutional reorganization and planning will also help fully modernize the country’s jeepneys.

“The transport sectors both in Germany and in the Philippines [are] key when it comes to reducing emissions. Focusing on public transportation benefits especially the lower-income segments of society, and has positive, sustainable long-term effects,” Reiffenstuel explained.

She went further that Germany has expanded its rail networks and financially incentivized the use of public transportation, while taxes on airfares were increased. At the same time, the said country has invested in making cycling more attractive and in incentivizing individuals to switch to e-mobility.

The envoy added that the “Jeepney+” project doesn’t stop there: The aim is to help create people-oriented cities, empowered by efficient, dignified and sustainable mobility. Through another GIZ-powered project called “TRANSfer,” similar efforts are being implemented to also modernize the Philippines’s bus systems.

### **Climate resiliency among farmers**

ANOTHER crucial but vulnerable sector affected by the climate crisis is agriculture, especially in Mindanao. Typhoons, floods and droughts—induced by the climate crisis—are now more frequent and destructive, leaving farmers’ livelihood at risk.

Partnering with the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, World Vision and GIZ, the German government is helping farmers adapt to climate change, while teaching them about eco-friendly practices that will sustain their yield.

The project initially focuses on farmers located on the North Cotabato side of the Liguasan Marsh: a low-lying tract of land that gets flooded during the rainy season. In such areas, floodwater takes longer to dissipate after heavy rains.

“Every year farmers lose so much of their crops due to the effects of climate change,” said Executive Director Marlon P. Palomo of PRRM. “This leads to financial loss for the farmer, but also has an effect on the rest of the country, as it means less rice and produce will be available for sale, leading to higher prices.”

As of September 2022, 360 farmers are now undergoing capacity-building workshops. These include biointensive gardening practices, information on the “Systems of Rice Intensification” methodology, and even seed banking to ensure genetic diversity in the area. Farmers are also being taught on ways to compost and make natural fertilizers for organic produce.

### **Keeping the world informed**

JOURNALISTS reporting on climate change carry the heavy burden of being the bearers of mostly bad news. As the world grapples with the pressure to adapt to climate change, the information is sometimes met with rejection and denial.

Armed with data and credibility, it is the members of the press’ job to help the world understand what is going on, and inform ways to help prevent the climate crisis from getting worse.

Through a five-day training with mentors like journalist Kyle James and Project Officer Deborah Urban of the Deutsche Welle Akademie, Filipino journalists from seven different news organizations went through an intensive course in October 2022 on the manner to better report about the climate.

Participating media practitioners were provided with an overview of global warming's causes and consequences, and were briefed on safety and security issues. They were also trained to better understand and use data to ultimately become better storytellers.

The journalists were given the chance to hear practical tips from Imelda Albano, the founding president of the Philippine Network of Environmental Journalists, and senior coordinator for the Philippines and the Pacific Region of Internews' Earth Journalism Network.

Participants and their mentors also visited the Technical Education And Skills Development Authority's main building and Green Technology Center to witness first-hand how projects like the "Greening Technical Vocational Education and Training and Skills Development" bring new employment opportunities to Filipinos, and improve existing job profiles to accelerate the transition to green economies and sustainable societies.

In the wake of Typhoon Paeng (international name Nalgae), Germany redirected part of the P70.4-million (€1.2-million) donation through the International Organization for Migration's strategic response and recovery plan for Covid-19 for the Philippines, to enable emergency assistance for communities affected by the typhoon.

Addressing climate change is a long and arduous process. Reiffenstuel however assures the Philippines that Germany will remain a committed partner in this fight.

## [SC decision on 2005 SCS joint fuel exploration deal lauded](#)

By: Jonathan Dimayuga

Environmental groups on Wednesday hailed the Supreme Court's decision declaring as unconstitutional the country's 2005 Tripartite Agreement for Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU) with China and Vietnam.

"For the environmentalists and people's groups in our network, this decision spells stronger protection of the resources of the West Philippine Sea [WPS] and their preservation for the next generation," Jon Bonifacio, National Coordinator of the Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan-PNE), said in a news release.

"This decision is also a big and concrete step in addressing the climate crisis, as it will serve as a deterrent to any plans...to explore fossil fuels in those waters," Bonifacio added.

The group noted that during President Marcos Jr.'s trip to China last week, the Philippines and China reopened talks, begun in 2018, over the possibility of jointly developing oil and gas resources in the WPS, which is contested by China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Thailand.

The burning of fossil fuels is the main driver of climate change, to which the Philippines is highly vulnerable. It is made up of many islands that can be submerged or flooded by sea level rise, stronger and more frequent typhoons are already causing disastrous floods, and most Filipinos live on the country's vast coastlines and depend on climate-sensitive natural resources, the group stated.

"We call on the Marcos administration to respect the High Court's decision, and, at the same time, to put all his climate rhetoric into action by actually stopping all plans for fossil fuel exploration and development in the West Philippine Sea," Bonifacio said.

The JMSU was signed in 2005 between China's National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), Vietnam's Oil and Gas Corporation (PetroVietnam) and the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC).

Under the undertaking, joint explorations were to be conducted in 142,886 square kilometers of the South China Sea covering the six islands claimed and occupied by the Philippines in Spratly—the islands of Pag-Asa, Lawak, Kota, Patag, and Panata.

Because 80 percent of the JMSU site is within the Philippines's 200-mile exclusive economic zone, progressive groups filed petitions seeking to declare the agreement unconstitutional.

Today, after 14 years, the SC declared that the JMSU violated the Constitution for allowing wholly-owned foreign corporations to explore the country's natural resources without observing the safeguards provided in Section 2, Article XII of the 1987 Constitution. It voted 12-2-1.

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **[Bangsamoro region gets World Bank, UNDP help on beefing up disaster management](#)**

By: Marifi S. Jara

THE BANGSAMORO region in southern Philippines is getting support from the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as it beefs up its disaster management capacity following the impact of a tropical storm in October where 62 people died and thousands were displaced.

A program called PlanSmart Ready-to-Rebuild (R2R) kicked off last week, where the World Bank held a series of in-person and teleconference orientations in coordination with the Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority and the Ministry of the Interior and Local Government.

“R2R Program provides the ‘how’ — how to prepare people, communities, and local governments to be more resilient and ready to respond and recover from disasters better and faster,” Norhana Kamid, World Bank coordinator for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), said in a statement released by the regional government.

The program is jointly undertaken with national agencies, including the National Risk Reduction and Management Council and Department of Science and Technology, among others.

The R2R will include capacity-building activities designed for local government leaders, disaster risk officers, planners, and budget officers to speed up preparations and implementation of respective recovery programs.

The UNDP, meanwhile, has announced that it has tapped Filipino environment and climate expert Glenn S. Banaguas to lead a project on climate security risk and vulnerability assessment in the BARMM.

“This initiative is unique in that it also takes into account key social factors in addition to the usual metrics. We are aiming for a more holistic and customized approach to the BARMM,” Mr. Banaguas said in a statement from the Climate Smart and Disaster Resilient ASEAN.

The UNDP Philippines' Climate Security Project within the region aims to strengthen local capacity in dealing with climate-related security risks, and ensure that local governments are able to fund disaster management programs within their socio-economic and political vulnerabilities.

“This project will help every stakeholder understand how climate change, security and peacebuilding interact while highlighting the peace dividends offered by climate adaptation and mitigation efforts and disaster resilience mechanisms,” Mr. Banaguas said.

## **GMA NEWS**

### **Ozone layer on track to heal within four decades**

By: Marlowe Hood and Rochelle Gluzman

The ozone layer that shields life on Earth from deadly solar radiation is on track to recover within decades, a major scientific assessment said on Monday.

Since the mid-1970s, certain industrial aerosols have led to the depletion of ozone in the stratosphere, 11 to 40 kilometres (7 to 25 miles) above Earth's surface.

In 1987, nearly 200 nations agreed on the Montreal Protocol to reverse damage to the ozone layer by banning chemicals that destroy this naturally occurring stratum of molecules in the atmosphere.

That agreement is working as hoped, and is in line with previous projections, more than 200 scientists found.

"Ozone is recovering, this is a good story," John Pyle, a professor at the University of Cambridge and co-chair of Scientific Assessment of Ozone Depletion, told AFP.

The ozone layer should be restored — both in area and depth — by around 2066 over the Antarctic region, where ozone depletion has been most pronounced, according to the report, jointly released by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the UN Environment Programme, and government agencies in the US and the European Union.

Over the Arctic, full recovery will happen around 2045, and for the rest of the world in about 20 years.

An intact ozone layer filters out most of the Sun's short-wave ultraviolet radiation, which damages DNA in living organisms and can cause cancer.

At ground level, however, ozone is a major component of air pollution and exacerbates respiratory disease. Efforts to repair the ozone layer intersect with the fight against global warming.

### **Like a volcano**

The phase-out of ozone-depleting substances — some of them powerful greenhouse gases — will have avoided up to one degree Celsius of warming by mid-century

compared to a scenario in which their use expanded some three percent per year, according to the assessment.

A class of industrial aerosols developed to replace those banned by the Montreal Protocol also turned out to be powerful greenhouse gases, and will be phased out over the next three decades under a recent amendment to the 1987 treaty.

According to the UN Environment Programme, "if current policies current policies remain in place, the ozone layer is expected to recover to 1980 values."

But while the world pulled together to tackle the damage to the ozone layer, it has failed to curb carbon emissions quickly enough to forestall dangerous warming.

A world barely 1.2C above pre-industrial levels has already been buffeted by record heatwaves, droughts and temperatures, and is headed for a disastrous 2.7C above that benchmark.

With emissions continuing to rise and time running out to avoid some of the worst impacts, controversial geoengineering schemes are moving to the centre of climate change policy debates.

These include proposals to blunt global warming by depositing sulphur particles into the upper atmosphere.

But the report cautioned this could sharply reverse the recovery of the ozone layer.

So-called stratospheric aerosol injection (SAI) is increasingly seen as a potential stop-gap measure for capping temperatures long enough to tackle the problem at the source.

Nature demonstrates that it works: the violent 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines — which spewed millions of tonnes of dust and debris — lowered global temperatures for about a year.

### **Unintended consequences**

Scientists calculate that injecting 8 to 16 million tonnes of sulphur dioxide into the stratosphere each year, roughly equivalent to Pinatubo's output, would cool Earth's temperature by about 1C.

Simulations over Antarctica in October — when the ozone hole is biggest — show that so-called stratospheric aerosol injection over 20 years would lower global temperatures by 0.5C.

But there's a trade-off: the ozone layer would be reduced to its 1990 levels, only a third of what it was before the impact of human activity.

The world would see "a continuing severe depletion of ozone while such solar radiation management continues," Pyle said.

The UN's climate science advisory panel, the IPCC, has warned of other unintended consequences, ranging from the disruption of African and Asian monsoons, upon which hundreds of millions depend for food, to a drying of the Amazon, which is already transitioning toward a savannah state.

The new report, the 10th to date, also highlights an unexpected decline of ozone in the lower stratosphere over the planet's populated tropical and mid-latitude regions.

Up to now, chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, and other molecules have mainly eroded ozone in the upper stratosphere, and over the poles.

Scientists are investigating two possible culprits: industrial chemicals not covered by the Montreal Protocol called "very short-lived substances" (VSLs), and climate change.

Still, the news is welcome. Sharing the good news on Twitter, UN Secretary General Antonio Gutierrez said "This is an encouraging example of what the world can achieve when we work together for the sake of our planet & its people."

## MANILA BULLETIN

### [\[Opinion\] Community-level disaster resilience best defense vs climate change](#)

By: Sonny Coloma

The past year ended not with a bang or a whimper but with a strong whiplash, as described by the Associated Press in this dispatch: MANILA – Thousands of people in the Philippines remained in emergency shelters in the wake of devastating Christmas flooding, as the death toll climbed to 51 with 19 missing, authorities said Monday.

Images showed residents in southern Misamis Occidental province sweeping away thick mud from the floors of their homes. In the seaside village of Cabol-anonan, coconut trees were uprooted and huts made of light material were nearly flattened.

The Northern Mindanao region bore the brunt of the disaster, reporting 25 deaths, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council. Most of the deaths were from drowning and landslides, and among the missing were fishermen whose boats capsized.

“What brought this about was not even a tropical storm or typhoon but another meteorological phenomenon: “A shear line – the point where warm and cold air meet – triggered heavy rains in parts of the country last week, causing the floods, the state weather bureau said.

Not less than 22 affected cities and municipalities declared a state of calamity to enable local governments to release emergency funds and expedite rehabilitation efforts.

In 2021, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank issued a series of Climate Risk Country Profiles. In a nutshell, the Philippines’ profile was described:

The Philippines faces some of the highest disaster risk levels in the world, and these are projected to intensify as the climate changes. The country is especially exposed to tropical cyclones, flooding, and landslides.

The number of tropical cyclones making landfall is steadily increasing, with tropical cyclones appearing to also have greater intensity.

Sea-level rise is happening at an above-average rate for some parts of the Philippines, exposing up to one million people to flooding from rising sea levels by 2070–2100; investing in adaptation could potentially bring this number down significantly.

The agricultural sector is especially vulnerable to climate change impacts. Both increased flooding and the increased likelihood of droughts could impact agricultural land. This could contribute towards decreased agricultural productivity.

Without effective adaptation and disaster risk reduction, climate change is likely to exacerbate high existing levels of income and wealth inequality; poverty alleviation progress will be slowed.

The last three items point to areas of priority attention: rising sea levels; vulnerability of the agricultural sector; and imperatives for adaptation.

Although the projected time frame is far into the future, it is apparent that what happened in northern Mindanao last month was ominous. Coastal communities were suddenly inundated by landslides and floods that brought on memories of the deadly storm surge that hit Leyte and Samar in Typhoon Yolanda's deadly onslaught nine years ago.

"A storm surge, storm flood, tidal surge, or storm tide is a coastal flood or tsunami-like phenomenon of rising water commonly associated with low-pressure weather systems, such as cyclones. It is measured as the rise in water level above the normal tidal level, and does not include waves." Such are the manifestations of triggers for widespread natural disasters.

How prepared are our coastal communities? Are there protocols in place for preemptive evacuation? Not so if it's a "shear line" event that is not a tropical storm for which there are existing alert levels, depending on wind velocity and projected rainfall. Recall that in 2013, there was a low level of awareness on the possible impact of a storm surge – and this accounted for complacency and unpreparedness that translated into high mortality rates.

Lawmakers are mulling the establishment of a Department of Disaster Resiliency. In my view, what is more important is to foster a high level of disaster awareness and resiliency at the barangay level. The following declaration is definitely reassuring:

"ADB will continue efforts to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities to disasters and climate change risks by linking community-level resilience-building measures to wider investments in community-driven development and comprehensive land use planning. ADB recognizes that while agriculture and natural resources, urban development, transport, and energy are vulnerable to climate change and disasters, they also offer opportunities for implementing adaptation and disaster risk mitigation measures and strategies."

Notice ADB's focus on community-level resilience-building measures as well as community-driven development. Filipinos must imbibe and develop a proactive and preventive mindset that builds upon the bayanihan spirit of unity and solidarity in warding off the perils of climate change.

**NPR**

**"It's like gold": Onions now cost more than meat in the Philippines**

By: Mary Yang

A pound of red onions now costs more than a pound of beef in the Philippines. As of Wednesday, local red onions cost as much as 550 Philippine pesos (P) per kg, or \$4.50 per pound, according to the Department of Agriculture.

A kilogram of beef costs up to 480P — \$3.95 per pound — while a whole chicken goes for up to 220P \$3.99.

That's a problem because onions are a staple in Filipino and Southeast Asian cuisine.

Onions are in almost every Filipino dish, said Marilene Montemayor, a senior assistant at the World Bank focused on East Asia and the Pacific. Montemayor works in Washington, D.C. but is from the Philippines. "How can you taste the food without onions?"

She said her family in the Philippines, whom she calls often, has been complaining about onion prices since Christmas.

"It's like gold," said Montemayor of the now-elusive allium.

**Onions have become a big headache**

Onion prices in the Philippines have been far above the world average since the fall.

Last Friday, the Department of Agriculture approved a plan to import of 21,060 metric tons of onions – equivalent to 23,215 U.S. tons – to address the national onion shortage and pull prices down.

The imported yellow and red onions are set to arrive on or before Jan. 27, according to Department of Agriculture deputy spokesman Rex Estoperez, who said it is a "temporary" solution.

The shortage comes even as local growers produced 23.30 metric tons of onions in the third quarter of 2022, up from 22.92 metric tons during the same period in 2021, according to Philippines Statistics Authority.

For the Philippines, which consumes around 17,000 metric tons of onions a month, importing onions is not anything new. It typically buys from China and other Southeast Asian countries.

But there are worries that importing onions will affect local onion growers as they prepare for harvest, which typically begins in February and lasts till April, according to Danilo Fausto, president of the Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food.

## **It's also to do with climate change**

Along with inflation, climate change has been a concern.

As an island country in a tropical region, the Philippines is especially at risk for rising temperatures and increased rainfall, which disrupt crop growth.

In August, a severe tropical storm in the Philippines forced schools to close the day after classes resumed for in-person learning after a shift to online learning during the pandemic.

"Developing countries are more vulnerable, lose more when these climate shocks hit, and have fewer resources to cope with the adverse effects of these shocks," Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said at a November summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Government officials in the Philippines are now hoping onion imports will tide the country over for the coming months.

One point of solace? Eggs in the Philippines are cheaper than they are elsewhere. A dozen eggs now costs around \$1.92 in the Philippines, down from lower than the U.S. average, \$3.59 in November.

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

### Media outlook: 'Solutions stories' may win back crisis-weary readers

By: Krixia Subingsubing

MANILA, Philippines — Newsrooms around the world are hoping to win back audiences by producing more solutions-oriented stories and better climate coverage, according to an annual forecast of challenges and opportunities for the media.

In a report titled “Journalism, Media and Technology Trends and Predictions,” the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) said 2023 would be “a year of heightened concerns about the sustainability of news media” as the “depressing and relentless nature of the news agenda — COVID-19, global warming and inflation — continues to turn many people away.”

According to the report, over half of the 300 newsroom executives it surveyed from 53 countries said they didn't feel confident about their business prospects.

Many continue to suffer from a post-COVID-19 slump and slower readership growth, while print outlets still see partial breakdowns in distribution networks due to lockdowns, it said.

“The prevailing mood in the news industry is one of uncertainty and some concern about what the next year might have in store,” the report said, adding: “The economic indicators do not look good, with rapidly rising costs and a squeeze on household spending expected to continue for some time.”

#### **Layoffs, slimmer editions**

Many of the newspapers surveyed, such as the Washington Post Magazine and the United Kingdom's Newsquest, are planning to slim down editions or even close their print editions altogether, the report said.

Several legacy broadcast outlets like CNN and NPR are also planning massive layoffs as advertisers have cut back on spending.

About 72 percent of newsrooms were also worried about “news avoidance” among readers and viewers, especially about depressing topics like climate change and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The phenomenon, according to RISJ, has doubled in some countries since 2017 as people feel media coverage had gotten “negative, repetitive, hard to trust and leaves people feeling powerless.”

Even so, many media companies are hoping to see their subscriber base grow through better subscription bundles and are diversifying their revenue streams, the report said.

## **Providing solutions**

For example, the New York Times is now offering a package that combines its core news product with cooking apps, games, and Wirecutter review services, it noted.

The report also found “almost universal enthusiasm” for explanatory journalism, while many also plan to do more solutions journalism, or stories that provide solutions instead of just identifying problems.

Many were understandably skeptical about publishing “positive stories,” as research suggests that audiences still want journalists to continue to cover difficult stories.

But RISJ said this was not a “zero-sum” game, as news outlets could offer both — by upholding their mission to hold power to account while also giving people hope and inspiration.

Many newsrooms have also committed to revamping the way they cover climate change in response to criticism that it is being reported “breathlessly without joining up the wider dots [or] treating climate as a discrete subject.”

Among other steps cited in the study, nearly half of the newsrooms have pledged to create a climate team and to take measures to ensure that climate is considered across all beats.

Meanwhile, as Meta turns away from news and Twitter continues to be unpredictable, many news outlets are hoping to increase their presence on TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, according to the report.

## **Active on TikTok**

A recent Reuters Institute report found that half of the world’s top publishers are now active on TikTok, which many find to be a good way to engage younger users.

Many are also looking to diversify their content by investing more in podcasts, email newsletters and digital video. In fact, many outlets who already put out audio content told RISJ that their audio subscribers were among the most loyal and spent more time on their products.

Overall, companies that have completed their digital transition and have robust subscription businesses “remain in the best position to ride out the incoming year,” according to the RISJ report.

In contrast, those who remain overreliant on advertising might have a tougher time this year, it said.

Still, RISJ said it hoped that these shocks could “open up more radical thinking about the way news can be created and what a digital news organization should look like.”

“New technologies can be our ally in tailoring content more precisely to different audience needs,” it said.

But at the same time, it added: “Journalism will need to emphasize its human qualities and its track record of delivering trusted content if it is to stand out from the flood of automated and synthetic media that threatens to overwhelm internet audiences.”

## SUNSTAR

### Iloilo City gets GIS workstation

ILOILO City Government got a Geographic Information System (GIS) workstation from United States Agency for International Development (USAid) and CRS Philippines' Climate Resilient Cities Project on January 10, 2023.

"Climate change has changed a lot of our priorities in the city and we will continue to train our people to be more prepared," stressed Mayor Jerry Treñas.

Led by Philippine Disaster Relief Foundation, USAid and CRS Philippines support data-driven disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation (DRR-CCA) planning in the metro. This is coupled with a series of upcoming CRC training-workshops on enhancing climate data, which will contribute to accelerating data-driven DRR-CCA planning.

Following the turnover ceremony was the commitment signing on the Climate Change Competency Assessment Framework (3CAF) by the Iloilo City Technical Working Group (CTWG). The signing demonstrated strong commitment from City Government in driving the Climate Resilient Cities project forward, and to building the resilience of its citizens to climate impacts.

## THE MANILA TIMES

### [Climate smart agriculture is also about going green](#)

By: William Dar

"CLIMATE smart farming, sometimes referred to as climate smart agriculture or CSA for short — is a farming method that aims to help the transition from traditional agricultural techniques to more sustainable, green, climate change-proof tactic."

That is a statement from the article "Climate Smart Farming: All You Need to Know in 2022" posted on the [greenly.resources](https://greenly.resources) website (<https://greenly.resources>). And I fully agree with that statement.

I have written several articles and delivered a good number of keynote speeches about CSA and discussed how to make the global and local food system more resilient to extreme weather changes. And for this column, let me discuss more on how CSA should also aim for food systems to be both sustainable and "green."

And I must say when we pursue CSA with the primary aim of making it resilient against the effects of climate change, the aspect of making food systems "green" can get lost in the discussion. However, we cannot ignore the need to make food systems green or not harmful to the environment as we have witnessed how agriculture has become a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and environmental degradation.

According to the website of Our World in Data (<https://ourworldindata.org/>), the global food system as a whole, which includes refrigeration, food processing, packaging and transport, accounts for about 25 percent of GHG emissions.

Also, it mentioned that agriculture, forestry and related land use directly accounted for 18.4 percent of GHG emissions.

If there is any consolation, global energy production accounted for 73.2 percent of GHG emissions globally, according to Our World in Data.

So, let me restate the question asked in the article published in [greenly.resources](https://greenly.resources): "What is climate smart farming, and how can it help the agriculture industry and the environment at the same time?"

We have defined CSA at the beginning of this column, so let us answer the question on how it can help the industry and the environment.

In the context of the Philippines, CSA can save smallholder farmers from massive losses caused by strong storms and heavy rains, and drought. This, in turn, will allow them to continue producing food for our countrymen.

#### 'Low tech' to the Fourth Industrial Revolution

I have already mentioned that among the resiliency measures that farmers can adopt to make their operations resilient to extreme weather events include low-tech" approaches such as rainwater impounding and harvesting, and aquifer recharging; forward-thinking approaches like adjusting the planting calendar and early harvesting before a storm; available and under development variants of crops that can thrive in flooded and drought conditions; and reforestation and watershed rehabilitation.

To make our food systems "green," we must push for the following: application of more natural or organic methods or inputs; tap technologies from the Fourth Industrial Revolution; and reduce food miles.

When I speak of the application of more natural or organic methods or inputs, I am not advocating going 100-percent organic in growing crops even if this is possible. My reasoning for this is I have yet to see large-scale traditional farming that is 100-percent organic that can ensure high yields and provide affordable food, especially for the poor.

So, the most appropriate measure to make CSA more green is to reduce chemical use starting with insecticides and fertilizers. For eliminating the use of pesticides, green advocates will quickly point to integrated pest management (IPM) as one of the viable solutions.

IPM, which seeks to establish a natural environment for the enemy of pests to thrive, will work in an environment where no pesticides are used and where multicropping is practiced.

There are also natural pesticides that are gaining ground commercially in the market.

I am also a strong advocate of balanced fertilization, or combining the use of chemical and natural soil inputs to grow crops. And the raw materials to produce natural inputs to improve soil health are in abundance in farms like biowastes such as discarded rice straws and hulls.

In early 2022, the Department of Agriculture then under my leadership launched the Balanced Fertilization Strategy (BFS) to address the rising prices of fertilizers by promoting the wider adoption of balanced fertilization and use of inorganic fertilizers, through integrated nutrient management of practices for crops such as rice, vegetables, fruits, among others. The BFS also seeks to intensify support for soil testing and the use of growth-enhancing inputs such as biofertilizers, foliar and biostimulants.

BFS, if applied successfully, can improve soil health as chemical fertilizer use is reduced. And soil with more organic matter can improve its water-holding capacity, leading to lesser water use in farms.

There are also many options from the realm of the Fourth Industrial Revolution to make food systems more green, like utilizing artificial intelligence to monitor soil health, climatic conditions and progression of crop maturity; drones to apply inputs (not only chemical) more efficiently; and the Internet of Things to gather vital information so producers can make data- and science-based decisions that results in the more efficient use of resources.

Now to reducing food miles — this is not simple as it sounds, as it requires the production of food supplies for a population center from major farming enclaves that are not so far away. This will also require land use planning, as converting large swathes of agricultural lands near urban centers to host new for commercial, industrial and residential developments will require sourcing food from more distant agricultural enclaves.

Also, reducing food miles will require establishing an efficient cold chain system, so fresh farm produce delivered to urban centers can be stored for a long period, minimizing food waste in the process. I also propose that cold chain systems also be powered partly or in whole by renewables like solar energy.

I have already said much about CSA and how it can save our food system from extreme weather events. But I still believe that besides technology, political will is also important for CSA to take root, literally. I hope our politicians are listening.

## EU ambassador discusses strong relations with PH at UST lecture

THE European Union (EU) Ambassador to the Philippines, His Excellency Luc Veron, delivered the 7th Installment in the University of Santo Tomas (UST) Ambassadors Lecture Series (ALS).

With the theme "Strengthening EU-PH relations," the discussion was held at the Dr. George SK Ty Function Hall.

In his welcome remarks, UST Secretary-General Rev. Fr. Louie Coronel, mentioned the participation of the university as an educational partner in the recently concluded European Higher Education Fair 2022.

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 Veron.

The ambassador 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 he 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," he said.

"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 ambassador added.

UST Graduate School Dean Prof. Michael Anthony Vasco, UST College of Science Dean Prof. Rey Donne Papa and UST College of Architecture academic staff Noel Cruz served as panel reactors.

Two-time winner of the Luciano Pavarotti Choir of the World trophy, the UST Singers, performed six songs during the event.

Diplomats who have previously served as speakers for the UST ALS include the former Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Philippines Han Dong-man (2018), former Deputy Chief of Mission of the Royal Thai Embassy in Manila Urawadee Sriphiromya (2017), and former Ambassador of the United States to the

Philippines Philip Goldberg (2016), among others.

"The Ambassadors Lecture Series is a forum for intellectual engagement between the embassies and the Thomasian academic community. It paves the way not only for linkages, but also for new learning opportunities," UST Office of Public Affairs Director Asst. Prof. Joreen Rocamora explained.

## [World Bank sees moderate growth for Philippines](#)

By: Louella Desiderio

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine economy is projected to post slower growth this year as global demand weakens, but the expected growth will be among the fastest in the region, according to the World Bank.

“After the strong rebound in 2022, growth in Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam is expected to moderate as the growth of exports to major markets slows,” the World Bank said in its latest Global Economic Prospects report.

The report showed the World Bank is projecting a 5.4 percent gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the Philippines for this year from its expected 7.2 percent growth for last year. These are the same forecasts the multilateral lender provided in its Philippines Economic Update report released last December.

The World Bank’s 2023 GDP forecast is lower than the government’s six to seven percent growth goal for this year.

While the Philippine economy is projected to slow down this year, the World Bank expects the country to have the second fastest growth in Southeast Asia next to Vietnam, which is projected to grow by 6.3 percent this year.

The World Bank expects the Philippines’ GDP to grow faster this year than Cambodia’s 5.2 percent, Indonesia’s 4.8 percent, Malaysia’s four percent, Laos’ 3.8 percent, Thailand’s 3.6 percent and Myanmar’s three percent.

For next year, the World Bank expects the Philippine economy to grow by 5.9 percent, placing the country next to Vietnam, which is projected to grow by 6.5 percent, and Cambodia’s 6.3 percent.

The Philippines is expected to post faster growth than Indonesia’s 4.9 percent, Laos’ 4.2 percent, Malaysia’s 3.9 percent and Thailand’s 3.7 percent next year.

The World Bank said there are multiple downside risks to its projections for the Philippines and other economies in the East Asia and Pacific region. These include renewed pandemic-related disruptions.

“A prolonged war in Ukraine and intensifying geopolitical uncertainty could further reduce business and consumer confidence globally and lead to a sharper slowdown than projected in the region’s export growth,” the World Bank said.

The multilateral lender said persistently high global inflation could also lead to more monetary tightening than expected.

This may cause a sharper-than-expected slowdown in global growth and capital outflows from emerging markets and developing economies.

“Tighter global financial conditions could lead to debt distress, particularly in countries with high debt levels and large external financing needs,” the World Bank said.

In addition, it said climate change-related weather events could lead to costly disasters in the region.

The World Bank expects the global economy to grow by 1.7 percent this year and 2.7 percent next year from the estimated 2.9 percent last year.

The global growth forecast for this year is the third weakest in nearly three decades, and reflects the aggressive monetary policy tightening aimed at containing high inflation, worsening financial conditions, and continued disruptions from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### PANAY NEWS

[Dr. JU-IM T. JIMLAN, Western Visayas Champion Educator for Environmental Education is 2022 DANGAL NG BAYAN AWARDEE NATIONAL WINNER; Civil Service Commission](#)

By: Pearl Socias

Dr. Ju-im T. Jimlan has proven his genuine dedication to upholding the values of caring for the environment countless times.

For one, he developed Tuklas-Aral, an eco-centered teaching approach integrating the concepts of environmental protection. Tuklas-Aral was conceptualized to provide an opportunity for experiential learning with the aid of “sciencetoons”.

It contributed to sustainable community projects like coral and mangrove planting, coastal clean-up, and mentor-a-tree. It is also one of the official entries for the 2022 Japan Education for Sustainable Development Award organized by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization and the Ministry of Education Cultural Sports Science and Technology.

He conceptualized the Eco-School Toolkit, where teachers and school leaders are guided to eco-school management. This includes well-researched exercises in advocating environmental awareness, reviving ecological sensitivity, and promoting a nature-oriented lifestyle.

Eco-School Toolkit was born from his dissertation, which was published in the Journal of World English and Educational Practices (E-ISSN 2707-7586) in London, United Kingdom. It was also presented at the KLIMA-kialam Climate Change Forum organized by Green Architecture Advocacy Philippines.

Lastly, as Program Director of Lifelong Initiatives in the Formation of Ecosystems (LIFE) Inc., he was instrumental in the creation of EARTHAN Strategic Intervention Material for eco-motivated actions.

It was acknowledged by the International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Material Studies with ISSN: 2799-0664. This ESIM is condensed from the book authored by Mr. Arnel Caranto, a United Nations delegate for the Climate Change Commission Fora by Al Gore. The book itself was endorsed by Climate Change Commissioner Emmanuel de

Guzman, DepEd Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones, and former president Rodrigo Duterte.

On the other hand, Dr. Ju-im T. Jimlan is the only national winner of the Dangal ng Bayan from Western Visayas out of 27 official entries regionwide.

He will be receiving a trophy designed by the late National Artist for Sculpture, Napoleon V. Abueva, a gold-gilded medallion handcrafted by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and cash. He is also entitled to an automatic promotion or an increase in salary grade.

Some of his notable community projects were Project I Speak, I Care, I Share; Project WE RISE (Resilience, Innovation, Synergy, Empathy); and Project US Nature, Society, Economy, inspired by the Triple Bottomline Concept.

He also donates 10% of his monthly income in the form of school supplies. It is a 7-year-long project that has been able to support over 5,600 learners.

He is also active in charitable works at the Dr. Rafael Tumbukon Memorial Hospital (Isolation Ward), the Missionaries of Charity, Akeanon Bukidnon (IP learners in Barangay Vivo Tangalan Aklan), and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Aklan.

The Dangal ng Bayan Award for Outstanding Public Officials and Employees is conferred to government workers for their exemplary public service, exceptional ethical behavior, and consistent observance of the eight norms provided under Republic Act 6713, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

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