



NEWS ROUNDUP

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BUSINESS MIRROR

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By: Jonathan Dimayuga

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MANILA BULLETIN

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JOURNAL ONLINE

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PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

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By: Eunice Dela Cruz

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RAPPLER

[Marcos in Davos: Same pitch, with a sovereign fund this time](#)

By: Bea Cupin

MANILA, Philippines – In President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s own words, his January 2023 visit to Davos in Switzerland for the World Economic Forum (WEF) won't be too different from his previous trips abroad. This time though, he intends to sell to foreign investors and fellow world leaders the controversial sovereign wealth fund his administration is pushing.

SUNSTAR

[DBM starts planning for 2024 budget](#)

By: Third Anne Peralta-Malonzo

DEPARTMENT of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Amenah Pangandaman has ordered the drafting of the National Expenditure Program (NEP) for Fiscal Year 2024.

[Environment groups appeal to Jica to withdraw support for WTE project](#)

By: Krizzy Daugdaug

AS Davao City is set on establishing its waste-to-energy (WTE) project, environmental groups and some residents of affected barangays appealed to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to withdraw its support from the government's project.

[\[Opinion\] Zero waste and zero emissions](#)

By: Joshua Villalobos

The month of January is declared National Zero Waste Month. Even before its official proclamation by the late Pres. Benigno Aquino, in 2014, civil society organizations have already been initiating many efforts to push for a zero-waste country and a zero-waste planet.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[\[Opinion\] 'Na-sampolan'](#)

By: Cito Beltran

The recent confiscation of a total of 40 kilos of onions from two different PAL flights and 10 crew members was clearly a case of “na sampolan,” or being made an example of, by the Bureau of Customs. The last thing the BOC wants is for a flood of onion filled luggage on every flight arriving from abroad. This is not a far-fetched possibility given how so many people currently traveling abroad have posted memes and images of luggage filled with onions.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

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[SSCIS Project To Enhance PH Capacities On Climate Action](#)

It won't be long before climate information services become more accessible to Filipinos.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Iloilo City to update local climate change action plan](#)

By: Perla Lena

ILOILO CITY – The local government here is preparing to enhance its Local Climate Change Action Plan that was prepared in 2013.

THE MANILA TIMES

[\[Opinion\] A change in attitude about climate finance](#)

By: Daphne Oseña-Paez

THERE has been a change in attitude from wealthy, industrialized countries with regard to policies and financing of climate change-related problems. They seem to be more receptive to the idea of investing in renewable energy, in keeping with the goals and targets set by the Paris Agreement.

THE VISAYAN DAILY STAR

[DENR, Globe hail winners of KLIMA-likasan Awards](#)

In celebration of the 2022 National Climate Change Consciousness Week, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Globe recognized the efforts of individuals, groups, and local government units (LGUs) to address climate change, contribute in disaster risk reduction, and promote cultural and behavioral shifts.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS MIRROR

[DENR leads multi-stakeholder dialogue to finalize list of GEF-8 proposed projects](#)

By: Jonathan Dimayuga

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) will hold a multi-stakeholder dialogue on January 18 and 19 in Taguig City to come up with the final list of proposed projects under GEF-8.

Dubbed GEF National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, the two-day event will gather around 200 representatives from the national government agencies, local government units, civil society organizations, the private sector, GEF Secretariat and implementing agencies to come up with a refined National Portfolio Formulation Document (NPDF) consisting of the final list of proposed projects for the Philippines.

In the Philippines, the proposed projects for GEF-8 are divided based on five different focal areas, namely, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Land Degradation, Chemical Waste and International Waters.

The DENR hopes to address identified gaps such as lack of policy coherence and integration between effective climate change adaptation and biodiversity actions, weak science-policy linkage and data generation in the environment and natural resource management, limited knowledge development and management and inadequate innovative financing mechanism to support sustainable resource management.

In implementing the projects, the DENR hopes to advance the country's efforts to address environmental issues by tackling the drivers of ecological degradation and strengthening the country's commitments to multilateral environmental agreements and contributing to global environmental benefits, supporting integrated approaches and ensuring that programs are inclusive and prioritizes the most vulnerable.

The projects are being eyed to help realign private sector capital to achieve wider scale and impact, empower local communities to harness their contributions, strengthen their capacities, protect their livelihoods, uplift their socioeconomic conditions and enhance resilience.

DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga and GEF CEO Carlos Manuel Rodriguez will deliver the welcome and keynote messages, respectively during the kickoff ceremony on Wednesday, January 18.

This will be followed by the opening of an exhibit showcasing the various projects and accomplishments of the DENR-GEF partnership in the same venue.

The dialogue will also pave the way for discussions on National Priorities and Strategies and GEF 8 Strategic Positioning and Programming Directions.

DENR Undersecretary Analiza Rebuelta-Teh, GEF-Philippine Operational Focal Point, will be sharing the climate lens and the geospatial approach to portfolio programming and discuss the way forward to conclude the event.

MANILA BULLETIN

[EU chief slams 'aggressive' Chinese clean tech bids](#)

By: Agence France Presse

DAVOS, Switzerland – EU chief Ursula von der Leyen took China to task over clean-technology industries on Tuesday, threatening investigations over Beijing's subsidies in the sector.

In a speech to the World Economic Forum Davos, Switzerland, Von der Leyen announced plans for a “sovereignty fund” and a “Net Zero Industry Act” to defend Europe's industrial base from massive US and Chinese subsidies.

“We see aggressive attempts to attract our industrial capacities away to China and elsewhere,” von der Leyen told the world's global political and business elite at their annual meeting in the Swiss Alpine resort.

“China heavily subsidizes its industry and restricts access to its market for EU companies,” she said.

“We will not hesitate to open investigations if we consider that our procurement or other markets are being distorted by such subsidies.”

Von der Leyen also renewed European worries over the US Inflation Reduction Act, a climate subsidy package worth around \$370 billion.

“It is no secret that certain elements of the design of the Inflation Reduction Act raised a number of concerns in terms of some of the targeted incentives for companies,” she said.

“This is why we have been working with our US friends to find solutions,” the European Commission president said, adding that European firms and EU-made electric cars could also benefit from the act.

“Our aim should be to avoid disruptions in transatlantic trade and investment. We should work towards ensuring that our respective incentive programmes are fair and mutually reinforcing.”

At a separate event earlier in the morning, US climate envoy John Kerry said countries complaining about the act should instead try to imitate the United States.

“The reaction of other countries shouldn’t be, ‘oh my god, you shouldn’t be doing that, that’s putting us in an unfair position’. Do it, too. Everybody’s got to do the same thing to accelerate this process even more,” Kerry said at a panel discussion on boosting philanthropic involvement in climate change.

Mayor Binay: Women environment defenders crucial for a brighter future

By: Patrick Garcia

Makati City Mayor Abby Binay stressed the importance of women environment defenders in the fight against climate change and increasing the public's awareness on the different social and environmental issues the world is facing.

Binay, in a speech at the "She's On Fire: A Conversation on Women and the Climate Emergency" forum hosted by the Masungi Georeserve Foundation Inc. with the Canadian government, stressed that raising awareness on the impacts of climate change on women requires a combination of local and global initiatives.

She added that there is also a need to create forums to discuss and analyze the specific needs of women in climate change adaptation, mitigation, and resilience.

"Women environment defenders are crucial in ensuring a brighter future for all. As powerful advocates, we are leading the charge to protect our planet, raise awareness about environmental issues, and ensure that our voices are heard," Binay said.

A certificate of appreciation was presented to Binay by Executive Director of Spark Philippines Maica Teves, Ann Dumaliang of Masungi Georeserve, and Political Counsellor of Canada to the Philippines Colin Townson.

Aside from Binay, Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte also attended the event where she outlined her city's climate initiatives and its role as part of the C40 Cities Network.

Belmonte highlighted Quezon City's programs on urban farming, active transportation such as the use of bike lanes, and circular economy wherein sustainable programs such as Trash to Cashback and Vote to Tote program are being implemented.

"She's on Fire: A Conversation on Women and the Climate Emergency" aimed to raise awareness of the disproportionate impact of the climate crisis on women and to gain support for women environment defenders.

The event was created to gather local and international experts to share their insights and experiences with the community.

As a staunch advocate of mitigating the adverse effects of climate change and promoting sustainability, Binay spearheaded several programs in the city of Makati as

she aims it to be one of the most environment-friendly LGUs not just in Metro Manila but in the whole country.

In August, she declared a state of climate emergency in the city and called for a whole-of-society approach in responding to the growing issues of climate change in the country and in the world.

The mayor laid out her administration's programs and initiatives aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions in the city which includes the procurement of electric vehicles (e-vehicles) to be used by the city government, the installation of solar panels in public schools and government offices to minimize energy consumption, and ensuring the continuity of services during calamities.

"We call upon everyone to come together and act now. We must ensure aggressive application of the whole-of-society approach in combating climate change. We heard the data. We understood the science. And we are feeling its impact. Now is a crucial time to act, and we need to act fast. We need thinkers, doers, and movers," Binay said during her state of climate emergency declaration.

"The time for action is now. As the new breed of Makatizens and global citizens, it is our responsibility to take care of our city and ensure that it remains a livable place for future generations. We must promote sustainability and climate consciousness in all our actions. We must be the change we want to see in our city and the world," she added.

[Ukraine takes center stage as Davos returns](#)

By: Agence France Presse

DAVOS, Switzerland – The war in Ukraine is set to take the spotlight Tuesday as global business and political A-listers huddle in the Swiss Alpine village of Davos with the ambitious aim of uniting a “fragmented” world.

Military planes, troops and police have been deployed to guard the exclusive mountain resort as government leaders, CEOs, activists and celebrities gathered for the annual gabfest of the World Economic Forum.

The WEF has returned to its traditional wintry date after three years of Covid disruptions that forced the Swiss foundation to hold virtual meetings and delay its in-person meeting last year until May.

The week-long forum is taking place under the theme of “cooperation in a fragmented world” as the planet faces a perfect storm of crises — Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, soaring inflation, the specter of recession and climate catastrophes.

“We couldn’t meet at a more challenging time. We are confronted with so many crises simultaneously,” said the WEF’s founder, German economist Klaus Schwab.

“Only if we are involved with all our passion to construct and to shape the future, I am convinced we will overcome the present multicrisis,” he said at an event Monday night where British actor Idris Elba, his wife Sabrina and other artists were given awards for their humanitarian work.

The Ukraine conflict, which has forced Russians out of the Davos meetings, is again dominating the conversation and likely to be at the heart of Tuesday’s special address by European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen.

Other European leaders, including German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg will address the forum on Wednesday.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is set to make the first of three scheduled video appearances on Tuesday morning at a Ukraine-themed event on the sidelines of the forum.

Ukrainian ministers, military leaders, mayors and soldiers form one of the largest national delegations as Kyiv lobbies for more weapons and financial support from the West.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko, the former heavyweight champion boxer, told reporters Monday that the war was a tragedy because Russian President Vladimir Putin “has the sick idea to rebuild the Soviet empire”.

“We lived in the empire and we don’t want to go back to USSR. We see our future as part of the European family,” Klitschko said.

China comeback

China is also sending a high-profile delegation as it makes a comeback after lifting travel curbs last week following three years of severe Covid restrictions, which limited the country’s attendance at last year’s WEF.

Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, who led negotiations in a trade war with the United States, will give a special address on Tuesday and meet US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in Zurich the next day.

President Xi Jinping made a splash in Davos in 2017 when he presented himself as a champion of globalization.

Climate change has also been announced as a top topic, with US climate envoy John Kerry among the speakers.

Organizers are keen for discussion to help prepare the next round of global climate talks, COP28, that will take place in the oil-producing United Arab Emirates from November 30.

But Greenpeace called the Davos gathering a “distasteful masterclass in hypocrisy” on Friday, as it published research showing the use of private jets by attendees of last year’s gathering.

Global charity Oxfam also seized on the meeting to call Monday for “billionaire-busting” policies, including higher taxes on the super-rich in order to cut their numbers in half by 2030 and lower inequality.

JOURNAL ONLINE

[Uncertain future looms for Philippine, Southeast Asian mangroves](#)

A comprehensive survey of over 300 mangrove studies across the Philippines and the rest of Southeast Asia (SEA) has found large gaps in our understanding of the current and future state of these already dwindling natural resources, according to scientists from the University of the Philippines – Diliman College of Science (UPD-CS).

The Philippines is the second worst country in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in terms of mangrove losses: it suffered a 10.5% decline between 1990 and 2010, according to independent studies included in the survey. It is surpassed only by Myanmar, which suffered a 27.6% loss between 2000 and 2014.

Less than a decade left

The findings are a stark wake-up call, given the international declaration of the years 2021 to 2030 as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, aimed at preventing, stopping, and reversing the degradation of ecosystems worldwide. With the countdown well underway, the comprehensive survey undertaken by UP Ph.D. Biology student Maria Elisa Gerona-Daga and Institute of Biology Associate Professor Dr. Severino Salmo III of existing mangrove restoration research helps identify ways to achieve the SEA region's restoration targets and safeguard their biodiversity.

The pioneering study is the first of its kind in SEA. Entitled “A systematic review of mangrove restoration studies in Southeast Asia: Challenges and opportunities for the United Nation’s Decade on Ecosystem Restoration,” it provides a systematic and quantitative synthesis of 335 mangrove restoration studies in the region that were published before February 2022. The investigation has also identified regional successes and failures in mangrove restorations.

Five priority topics were suggested by Gerona-Daga and Salmo for improving the science and practice of mangrove restoration towards realizing the UN’s targets for 2030: restoration areas and methods; mangrove restoration in climate change adaptation and mitigation programs; monitoring recoveries of biodiversity and ecosystem services; policies, governance, and community engagement; and strengthening of the ASEAN network.

Restoration and climate change adaptation

The researchers propose to add more mangrove faunal and floral species as bases for selecting and prioritizing sites for restoration, thereby furthering the UN's biodiversity goals and potentially generating useful data on genetic diversity. The approximately 3,000-square-kilometer restorable area across SEA, as estimated by University of Cambridge researchers in 2018, should also be earmarked and ground-truthed for each country to determine suitable restoration sites. Assessing the economic and policy impacts of restoration in places that are also being considered for human settlement and reclamation will help governments create realistic and sustainable plans, Gerona-Daga and Salmo added.

As a region vulnerable to natural disasters such as typhoons and tsunamis, restoration programs should be designed to adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts. Technological innovations for science-based green-gray coastal engineering are critical for facing changing climatic conditions.

The researchers underscored the increasing need for mangroves' adaptability to climate change. This, in turn, creates the need for new technologies and innovations that can fast-track the sustainable recolonization of mangroves.

Monitoring biodiversity recoveries, ecosystem services

Gerona-Daga and Salmo also point out the problems with data monitoring in mangrove restoration projects, particularly the lack thereof and the tendency of short-term monitoring to misinterpret findings. They also mentioned that while traditional monitoring methods such as transecting and plotting are crucial in assessing biodiversity, institutions should use more efficient and cost-effective monitoring methods such as environmental DNA (eDNA) and remote sensing.

Although vegetation metrics may be easier to measure and reflect mangrove traits that recover faster, the researchers note that correlating these metrics with ecosystem services will be more strategic in quantifying restoration effectiveness. The researchers also advise conducting a comparative assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services among intact, disturbed, and restored mangroves to shed light on restoration trajectory patterns.

Strengthening government interventions

The study suggests potential government policies to support continued research and community involvement in mangrove monitoring. Southeast Asian collaborations are essential in sustaining regional mangrove protection: establishing and strengthening

partnerships with neighboring countries will enable the region to form unified goals and facilitate more sustainable restoration measures. Sharing knowledge and other resources in the SEA region can also benefit countries with limited mangrove restoration research.

To this end, Gerona-Daga and Salmo propose an ASEAN journal focused on mangrove restoration, conservation, and management composed of a multinational scientific editorial board to share mangrove research to a wider platform efficiently and ultimately contribute to effective restoration practices.

“Our study aims to provide suggestions in line with international commitments of ASEAN-member countries,” says Salmo. “The pressing need is to establish and consistently monitor the state of the mangroves for each country, protect mangroves through biodiversity conservation programs, and more importantly, to stop or limit coastal reclamation projects,” he further explains.

Furthering collaboration among mangrove researchers

Gerona-Daga and Salmo expect to conduct another study as a follow-up to their September 2022 publication. They aim to spark deeper collaboration among mangrove researchers all over the region towards sharing recommendations and regular tracking of the progress of mangrove conservation and restoration programs.

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is a perfect opportunity to underscore the urgency of mangrove restoration. Mangroves provide a long list of ecological and socio-economic benefits, so much so that the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) refers to them as nature’s superheroes because they not only provide livelihood and habitats to animals but also mitigate climate change and reduce the impacts of storms and other natural disasters.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[Zero Plastic PH: Ways to be plastic-free](#)

By: Eunice Dela Cruz

Waste is an inevitable byproduct of human activity. Whether in large or small amounts, we all produce waste. And the way we manage it is what contributes to climate change.

Garbage crashing over shorelines, flooded roads, trashes in waterways are all effects of improper waste disposal. And the major contributor to all of these — plastics.

According to the 2021 report of the World Bank Organization, the Philippines generates a staggering 2.7 million tons of plastic waste annually and 20 percent of which winds up in the ocean, much of it in the form of unrecyclable, single-use sachets.

Fortunately, it is not too late to act because there are simple ways we can make to lessen our plastic footprint. After all, living without plastic is possible and doable.

Reuse water bottle

Plastic bottles and bottle caps rank as the third and fourth most collected plastic trash items in the annual Coastal Cleanup Day in more than 100 countries, according to Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Unfortunately, it takes at least 450 years for a single plastic bottle to completely degrade.

So, it's high time that we practice carrying a reusable bottle, opt for aluminum cans over plastic whenever possible, and recycle all plastic bottles.

Bring your own cutlery and cup

Plastic cutlery and straws are among the worst plastic pollution culprits. These wastes either end up in landfill or in our waterways and oceans. So, just as people are already carrying a reusable bottle and/or coffee cup when leaving their houses, why not bring your own cutlery kit as well? It's just easy. Wrap a spoon, fork, knife, and straw in a cloth napkin and stow it in your bag so it's handy when you need it. Because for one spoon, fork, or knife at a time you carry, you can actually help curb the plastic crisis and save the planet, too!

Skip plastic produce bags

Obviously, excessive use of disposable plastic bags has become a real threat to the environment and the best way to lessen this is by looking for more eco-friendly alternatives like bringing your own grocery or reusable bags. This action will eliminate your use of single use plastic bags. Stock up on reusable cotton or mesh bags of all sizes and carry it with you when you go to grocery or shopping.

Use glass jars

Glass is often an excellent replacement for plastics, aside from it being a very safe food storage option. So, instead of recycling glass jars, you can easily repurpose and use them for storing leftovers or dry goods, freezing food, take-out containers, and for bringing your lunch. It is also ideal to have a few mason jars as it can be used for drinking and they add fun for special casual occasions.

Pack food in reusable containers

Investing in reusable products in place of disposables can cut down significantly the wastes we generate. To help reduce our waste footprint, stock up on reusable containers like metal and glass in various sizes. Shy away from using single-use plastic packaging just for convenience when you can just use reusable containers to pack your foods.

These personal, individual actions may not be enough to clean up the planetary mess we've gotten ourselves in but they are an essential starting point. To live a plastic-free life can be a tough transition, yes, but it's high time that we do it, not only for ourselves and the future generation but more so, for the planet. Because if not now, then when?

RAPPLER

Marcos in Davos: Same pitch, with a sovereign fund this time

By: Bea Cupin

MANILA, Philippines – In President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s own words, his January 2023 visit to Davos in Switzerland for the World Economic Forum (WEF) won't be too different from his previous trips abroad. This time though, he intends to sell to foreign investors and fellow world leaders the controversial sovereign wealth fund his administration is pushing.

“In general, pare-pareho naman ‘yung ginagawa natin dito sa mga trips (what we do in these trips are the same). We talk about the Philippines, what the situation is as an investment destination. Now, as added to that, mayroon na tayong pwedeng pag-usapan na (we can now talk about the) sovereign wealth fund,” he told the media on board the presidential plane on the way to Zurich from Manila on Sunday, January 15.

Marcos has been to eight countries, thus far, in his first seven months of office. In early September, for his first state visits as chief executive, Marcos flew to Indonesia and Singapore.

Later that month, he spoke for the first time before the United Nations during its first in-person General Assembly. In November, he flew to Phnom Penh and then Bangkok for two high-level meets – the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit.

In December, Marcos flew out for one last time to Brussels for the ASEAN-European Union Summit. In early January, he was in Beijing for a little over 48 hours for his first state visit outside of Southeast Asia.

As he hops around the world, his mission – according to the President himself, the administration's communications arm, and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) – is the same: to sell the Philippines as ready and ripe for investments.

But are we?

Rappler columnist and economist JC Punongbayan says that while Marcos and his economic team are right – that the Philippines and our neighbors in East Asia are likely to buck the global recession – growth isn't looking to be any better, either.

Marcos flies to Davos as Philippine inflation hits a 14-year high, driven mostly by the rising cost of goods. The President has said the problem is our dependence on imports and that improving local production is important in solving the rise in food prices. Marcos is concurrently agriculture chief, meaning keeping production in check and food prices down is primarily his job, too.

According to a survey by the WEF ahead of the meeting, the following are top concerns of Davos attendees: the threat of recession, the cost-of-living crisis, mounting debt distress, and the failure to tackle climate change.

What the WEF?

This year, the WEF wants to talk about "cooperation in a fragmented world" – a befitting theme, given one issue that hangs over all attendee's heads: Russia's war on Ukraine.

Ukrainian first lady Olena Zelenska is among the first and most prominent speakers on the first day of the gathering.

The WEF – often referred to simply as "Davos" – is an annual gathering of business and political elite in the idyllic town of Davos in Switzerland. In 2021, the WEF was cancelled because of COVID-19 while in 2022, it was scaled-down and held in the middle of year, months after its usual winter schedule.

Its goals – at least on paper – are ambitious. On its website, the WEF says its goal is "solving the biggest issues facing our world."

Filipino magnate Enrique Razon, chairman and CEO of the International Container Terminal Services (ICTS) once vented about the forum in a 2014 interview with Bloomberg. "It's loaded with bloated self-importance... I'm here to do business, not save the world," he said then.

Razon is among the Filipino businessmen who are in Davos again for the 2023 edition.

What happens, exactly?

According to Reuters, WEF isn't too far off from every other international meet. Delegates, particularly those with white badges which get greater access, listen in on panels and speeches inside the Congress Center.

On the sidelines, business executives hold meetings and heads of state organize bilateral meetings, which Reuters notes takes up most of their time. Marcos, however, is not expected to hold bilateral meetings on Davos, at least according to the DFA in its briefing ahead of the President's trip.

Sure, he's expected to mingle and meet fellow world leaders there, but these will likely be casual exchanges sans the procedure of an actual bilateral meeting. Previous trips, save for the state visits, always included bilateral meetings in the schedule.

At the Davos main promenade, shops and restaurants are rented out by companies and countries. This is where they host parties and discussions on the sidelines of the main WEF events, according to Reuters.

The Philippine delegation

Marcos brings with him a team of 16 official delegates, as well as his wife, First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos. His delegation, as published in the manual for Philippine media in Davos include:

1. Former president and House Deputy Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
2. House Speaker Martin Romualdez
3. Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno
4. Trade Secretary Alfredo Pascual
5. Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista
6. National Economic Development Authority Chief Arsenio Balisacan
7. Migrant Workers Secretary Susan Ople
8. Communications Secretary Cheloy Garafil
9. Special Assistant to the President Antonio Lagdameo Jr.
10. Presidential Adviser on Foreign Affairs and Chief of Presidential Protocol Adeline Angelito Cruz
11. Senator Mark Villar
12. House Senior Deputy Majority Leader Sandro Marcos III
13. House Accounts Chairperson Yedda Romualdez
14. DFA Undersecretary Carlos Sorreta
15. Finance Undersecretary Zeno Ronald Abenoja
16. Migrant Workers Undersecretary Patricia Caunan

Of the 17 in his delegation, 9 are part of the WEF's list of "public figures" participating in the event. Information and Communications Secretary Ivan John Uy and Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo are in the WEF's list but are not in the official delegation list.

Like his previous trips abroad, Marcos is traveling with several family members who are also ranking officials in Philippine government. Speaker Romualdez is his cousin and Representative Marcos is his son. Accounts Chairperson Romualdez is the wife of the Speaker.

The Presidential Communications Office (PCO), tasked with the government's communication and messaging, has not released an official delegation list for Davos.

The PCO, which was originally named the Office of the Press Secretary at the start of the Marcos admin, has never released the official delegation list of Marcos' travels, despite repeated requests from media.

Marcos' plans

The Philippines is expected to host on Tuesday, January 17 a "country strategy dialogue," or an event where economic managers – who make up the bulk of the official delegation – will talk about their plans for the country. They've hosted the same sort of event on the sidelines of Marcos' other trips.

Marcos said the Philippines will touch on its plans to develop "resilient infrastructure" to reinforce supply chains and improve food security, as well as its COVID-19 plans. The President is keynote speaker for the event.

The bulk of Marcos' schedule includes meetings with fellow participants, particularly from the business sector.

On January 18, Marcos will be part of a panel on "Moving Toward Nutrition Security." The same day, he will be speaking at a dialogue on "investing in infrastructure for resilience."

As his preliminary schedule suggests, the WEF is mostly talk.

In Davos, Marcos is angling to talk much about his pet sovereign wealth fund. "Sasabihin ko (I'll talk about) exactly what's happened that we are forming a sovereign wealth fund for investments in the... for big investments in the basic areas such as agri, energy, digitalization, climate change, 'yun ganon pa rin. But the point being is that now there is a social – there is a wealth," he told media.

But in a gathering that will focus on the threat of recession, the rising cost of goods, and conflict like the war in Ukraine that affects supply chains and the world's economic stability, will enough ears be listening?

SUNSTAR

[DBM starts planning for 2024 budget](#)

By: Third Anne Peralta-Malonzo

DEPARTMENT of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Amenah Pangandaman has ordered the drafting of the National Expenditure Program (NEP) for Fiscal Year 2024.

In a statement, the DBM said Pangandaman approved the issuance of National Budget Memorandum 145, otherwise known as the National Budget Call, which signals all heads of departments, agencies, bureaus, offices, commissions, state universities and colleges, and other instrumentalities of the national government to start preparing their budget proposals for 2024.

“The 2024 National Expenditure Program shall adhere to the policies and directions embodied in the government’s 8-Point Socioeconomic Agenda and the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028. We will make sure that the proposal shall support the achievement of the targets set by the FY 2022-2028 Medium-Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF),” Pangandaman said.

She said the National Budget Call seeks to put emphasis on:

- * Infrastructure development
- * Digital and social infrastructure development
- * Climate change and disaster risk vulnerable areas
- * Social sector
- * Basic public services
- * Capacity-building programs for local government units

“The President’s directive is clear -- we need to assure that no Filipino will be left behind. Everyone will be part of the development as we will give full support to the poorest and most vulnerable sectors by providing basic public services,” Pangandaman added.

She said the government will continue the adoption of administrative reforms for greater transparency, openness, accountability and reliability in terms of budget including the Cash Budgeting System, Open Government Partnership (OGP), among others.

Meantime, Pangandaman assured that the government will continue to implement interventions as a response to external pressures, such as the continuing Russian-Ukraine war and the economic scarring brought by the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in the areas of food security, transport and logistics, energy, bureaucratic efficiency and fiscal management, health, education and social protection.

[Environment groups appeal to Jica to withdraw support for WTE project](#)

By: Krizzy Daugdaug

AS Davao City is set on establishing its waste-to-energy (WTE) project, environmental groups and some residents of affected barangays appealed to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to withdraw its support from the government's project.

"We hope JICA will reconsider their position to support the WTE project considering this goes against the global trend," GB Villocino, Advocacy Officer of Masipag Mindanao, a network of farmers and a member of environmental groups in Davao City, said in an interview with SunStar Davao on January 16, 2023.

Villocino said there is a global effort to fight climate change.

"We only have less than 10 years to do something to reverse the impact of climate change, so this project is contradicting the global goal — going green," he said.

The statement was also supported by Lawyer Mark Peñalver of Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability Davao (IDIS-Davao). He said the project is not only a dangerous way to produce energy but also harmful to the environment.

"What's more, incineration is not a renewable or sustainable energy source. In fact, it actually produces more greenhouse gasses than coal. So not only is incineration a bad choice for the environment, but it's also not a wise choice from a climate perspective," he said in the press release from IDIS.

Villocino added the construction of the facility in Biao Escuela in Tugbok District will affect their organic farm in the area.

Aside from that, he said the residents were not properly consulted about the plan.

"A lot of people have been misinformed about the goal and gravity of the project. So, without this consultation, I think JICA should reconsider, until such time that all communities and stakeholders involved should be granted an opportunity to listen to the proposal so that they can recommend proper safeguards to the project," he said.

A total of 20 other barangays will also be affected by the project – Mintal, Santo Niño, Catalunan Grande, Langub, Waan, Callawa, Riverside, Balengaeng, Tacunan, Biao Guianga, Angalan, Los Amigos, Talandang, New Valencia, New Carmen, Matina Biao, Tagakpan, Ula, and Tugbok.

Meanwhile, Mintal Resource Collectors Association (MiRCA) in Barangay Mintal said there are more sustainable approaches that the city can take to overcome the problem when it comes to solid waste management.

“We collect recyclables and sell them for profit and WtE will only teach future generations to be lazy as it undermines recycling efforts if waste can be simply burned away.” Randy Catubag Irog, from MiRCA said in the press release.

In 2022, the city approved a P3.4 billion budget for the WTE project since the initial allocated budget provided by the Japanese government of P2.04 billion is not enough.

[Opinion] Zero waste and zero emissions

By: Joshua Villalobos

The month of January is declared National Zero Waste Month. Even before its official proclamation by the late Pres. Benigno Aquino, in 2014, civil society organizations have already been initiating many efforts to push for a zero-waste country and a zero-waste planet.

But before I continue writing on the subject, I would like to welcome you to this new column! As the name suggests, I will write about my thoughts about the people and the planet. As a young environmentalist, I have always been interested in protecting and fighting for both because I know we cannot have healthy people if we don't have a healthy planet and vice versa.

One might ask, why separate the youth? Aren't they people too? Yes, we are but in this context, we are also the generation that will bear the brunt of environmental degradation and the climate catastrophe as years unfold. However, beyond the victim narrative, this column also aims to shine a spotlight on the amazing work done by young people in Negros and beyond that shows that "we are not only victims to the broken world, but can be architects of a better one."

What is zero waste?

Going back, zero-waste is defined by different entities differently. But the most authoritative one, I think, is those of the Zero Waste International Alliance, which defined zero waste as:

The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse and, recovery of all products, packaging, and materials, without burning them and without discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.

That definition seems overwhelming. However, if one is to unpack this definition, the buzzword here is conservation.

The Zero Waste Movement dates back to the 20th century, and in the early 2000s, it peaked when it successfully attempted to transform zero waste theories into action.

With the global recognition of our problem with plastic pollution, more and more people, governments, institutions, and communities have adopted this model and are trying their best to achieve zero waste.

Zero waste as a solution

Unfortunately, many local and national governments are turning to waste incineration to address their garbage problem (which would not have occurred if they had adopted a zero-waste model), and this is a massive problem when it comes to the climate crisis. These incinerators, which come in various types, are harmfully emitting dangerous gases and substances into our atmosphere, which not only worsens climate change but also threatens people's health. Many researches have revealed the direct correlation of air pollutants from waste incinerators to lung cancers, heart and skin diseases, and even untimely deaths.

If cities such as Bacolod and Dumaguete are to adopt a zero-waste model in managing and disposing of their waste, it would have significant health, economic, social, and environmental gains. Many case studies around the world have shown that it is doable.

Doing zero waste means lesser emissions both of greenhouse gases and air pollutants. Longer life spans for our landfills, no more plastics in the oceans, more green jobs for waste workers, less spending on waste management, meaning more funds could be used for other social services, and many more.

In this era of plastic pollution and the climate crisis, I hope our leaders will make the right choice. Every month could be a zero-waste month!

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[\[Opinion\] 'Na-sampolan'](#)

By: Cito Beltran

The recent confiscation of a total of 40 kilos of onions from two different PAL flights and 10 crew members was clearly a case of “na sampolan,” or being made an example of, by the Bureau of Customs. The last thing the BOC wants is for a flood of onion filled luggage on every flight arriving from abroad. This is not a far-fetched possibility given how so many people currently traveling abroad have posted memes and images of luggage filled with onions.

The truth of the matter is that the Bureau of Customs is correct in confiscating the onions because there are rules about the importation of agricultural products and live animals from abroad. You need to have veterinary certificates or the like for plants and fruits. In reality however, the BOC is partly to blame for its long history of not applying the rules or for being very lenient if the goods are few or of little or no commercial value. Their second major failure is not consistently educating the public about such rules and requirements.

At a very recent dinner with DOTr officials, a senior columnist shared with the group that before their arrival at NAIA the columnist dutifully filled both the immigration and customs declaration forms. As he exited the terminal, he brought out the form and presented it to the customs examiner on duty. To his surprise and mild annoyance, the examiner simply waved him through, not bothering to take the completed form. People at the dinner were all under the impression that this was part of the decongestion and fast tracking of passengers at the NAIA. Apparently, it was just another example of inconsistencies.

While the NAIA BOC personnel did their job, they still lost PR points because as they applied the rules for “sampolan” purposes or to prevent future influx of onion pasalubongs, they underestimated the collateral damage to the PAL crew, to PAL as a company and subsequently the “backfire effect” of the BOC action.

Because of the “scandalous” or embarrassing publicity the PAL crew involved could or will be sanctioned by the airline, or worse, might be suspended or terminated. Imagine losing your job for an average of four kilos of onions per person involved.

PAL, on the other hand, ended up looking bad as the mother unit of the crew. The only divine justice or karmic payback in the matter is that a number of media outfits as well

as netizens painted the BOC as a bunch of hypocrites who targeted airline personnel but are blind to all the big-time smugglers of onions!

Ideally, the BOC should have simply confiscated the items and posted or issued a subsequent press release reiterating that such undocumented importations are not allowed. As they say, “walang personalan.” I actually caught the BOC spokesperson in a TV interview and he also said more than a mouthful to justify the confiscation and publicity for a few kilos of onions by saying that even just one onion is basis enough for what was done.

True, but first “he who is without sin, let him cast the first stone.” BOC should get their house in order and their rules in place. At the very least, spend time educating the public and not adding to their annoyance and discontent.

Does President Bongbong Marcos give a damn?

President Bongbong Marcos has to be blind, deaf and illiterate in order not to realize the nationwide public dissatisfaction over food inflation and incessant shortages of agricultural products. He is either intentionally ignoring the media outcry on the state of inaction and incompetence of the Department of Agriculture which he leads, or his people are downplaying what is a potential threat to his presidency.

There is a familiar saying that “A man who is a failure at home can never consider himself as a success at work.” In the case of President Bongbong Marcos, his obsession with attending international events to legitimize his presidency and promote the Philippines is not going to fool world leaders or attract foreign investors. He first has to feed his people before he can sell the country. Economic data speak loud and clear. When the prices of basic food items rocket sky high to the point that it directly raises the rate of inflation, you know that a government’s fundamentals are out of order.

In the case of Philippine agriculture, no one is in charge. Only the traders and smugglers are in control and the Filipino people are paying the price of having incompetent officials in government. The worst is there is no longer a discernible or visible separation or balance of power between the three branches of government where one checks on the other or vice versa. They all lie together in the same bed.

In case PBBM and his cohorts have not noticed, our agricultural productivity is shrinking in an alarming way due to global events, climate change and, worst of all, the technical smuggling or flooding the market. For the last two months, many farms have been inundated by rain or washed over by floods. The weather alone will surely impact

harvests not just of rice but of corn and other essential products. The supply chain will surely get worse.

With imported pork and chicken reportedly clogging all local cold storage facilities, local producers can't go for the volume that gives them profits and this has led to producers deciding to cut back and to sell within their communities or only for their own consumption. As this develops, more people are starting to grow or raise food in their backyards. If 1 or 2 or 5 million families establish their own vegetable patch or raise chicken or fish together, their collective production for personal consumption can realistically displace traditional farms, farmers and businesses. In the end, the smugglers win.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PAGE ONE

[SSCIS Project To Enhance PH Capacities On Climate Action](#)

It won't be long before climate information services become more accessible to Filipinos.

In a press release, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) announced that the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) South-South Collaboration on Climate Information Services (SSCIS) Project Team paid a courtesy call on CCC Vice Chair and Executive Robert Borje, the Overall Program Director, on Friday to discuss the next steps in the implementation of the SSCIS.

The 5-million euro (PHP298.8 billion) SSCIS project aims to provide climate information services to national and local government and the academe, and establishes a South-South Center of Excellence as a venue for knowledge exchanges among climate-vulnerable countries.

“During the meeting, Borje welcomed the SSCIS Project Team tasked to handle project operations under the guidance of the CCC as the lead government partner, in coordination with relevant agencies and institutions,” the CCC said.

Borje described the SSCIS Project as an opportunity for CCC and the Philippine government “to further enhance knowledge and capacities in data management, including collecting, generating, and analyzing climate data as a basis of climate action.”

“The South-South Center of Excellence will allow us to further deepen our engagement with the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), promoting a whole-of-world approach in enhancing climate resilience of communities,” Borje said.

The CVF is an international partnership of countries highly vulnerable to a warming planet, according to its website. It serves as a South-South cooperation platform for participating governments to act together to deal with global climate change.

The SSCIS Project Team was led by Dr. Bjoern Surborg, Principal Advisor of the SSCIS Project and Cluster Coordinator for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management for GIZ Philippines Office.

“The GIZ Philippines, through the South-South Project, remains committed to work with the Philippine government in promoting data-driven climate action to enhance local knowledge on climate change,” Surborg said.

Surborg was joined by Chief Adviser Jimmy Loro and team members Theresa Lim, Denise Ann Suarez, Richard Antonio and Rune Ylade.

The Philippines’ geographical location and archipelagic formation make it one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change.

Based on Germanwatch Institute’s 2021 Global Climate Risk Index, the Philippines is the fourth most affected country in the 20-year period from 2000 to 2019.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Iloilo City to update local climate change action plan](#)

By: Perla Lena

ILOILO CITY – The local government here is preparing to enhance its Local Climate Change Action Plan that was prepared in 2013.

“I was self-targeting that by middle of this year we can complete our Local Climate Change Action Plan. At the moment we are about to enhance the CDRA (climate disaster risk assessment report) because we could not proceed with the updating if we don’t have accurate and more recent data,” said Iloilo City Planning and Development Coordinator Jose Roni Peñalosa in an interview on Tuesday.

He added that the available CDRA of the city was done more than a year ago together with the National Resilience Council (NRC), Manila Observatory, and the Ateneo de Manila University.

“These (CDRA) are technical maps, scientific data showing the city’s vulnerabilities to climate risks or climate impacts such as typhoons, storm surge, flooding, among others,” he said.

Peñalosa said Local Climate Change Action Plan that was prepared in 2013 was mandated by the Climate Change Commission and was a requirement to avail of the People’s Survival Fund.

“However, it was not as accurately made because at that time we have no scientific data regarding our climate change impacts and vulnerabilities. We only followed what was prescribed in the template,” he said.

This year’s updating will be done with the support of the City Environment and Natural Resources, City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, civil society organizations, and private sector.

Peñalosa said once the action plan is completed, the city can expect a lot of Climate Resilient Cities projects, such as greening the city more and converting motorized vehicles into safer fuels.

The planning office was the recipient of a geographic information system workstation under the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Climate

Resilient Cities Project that could help improve the city's data banking necessary for the updating.

The equipment and two sets of automatic weather stations were turned over to the local government on Jan. 10, 2023.

A commitment signing on the Climate Change Competency Assessment Framework (3CAF) by the Iloilo City Technical Working Group (CTWG) was also done following the turnover as the city government commits to support Climate Resilient Cities project and build resilient citizens.

THE MANILA TIMES

[\[Opinion\] A change in attitude about climate finance](#)

By: Daphne Oseña-Paez

THERE has been a change in attitude from wealthy, industrialized countries with regard to policies and financing of climate change-related problems. They seem to be more receptive to the idea of investing in renewable energy, in keeping with the goals and targets set by the Paris Agreement.

It took some time. In fact, the world will not meet the Paris Agreement target of preventing the global average temperature rise by 1.5 C by imposing a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions despite the doomsday forecasts of activists and environmental organizations. But it is interesting to see other opportunities and policies beyond renewables being discussed — investments in flood control engineering, better housing for the poor, imposition of land use plans, improving local government capacities to plan for disaster resilience and preparedness, better storm forecasting equipment, STEM education, and even nutrition.

Climate change adaptation is in the center of most discussions at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Though economic cooperation is the unifying theme and ultimate reason for the participation of the world's wealthiest billionaires, there is more than a consciousness but also an acceptance of the reality of our changed world. This puts the Philippines in an interesting, or rather opportune, position as one of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We have been receiving the brunt of the effects of pollution, namely the burning of fossil fuels, by our wealthy trade partners for over a decade.

It wasn't so long ago that the Philippines' representative to the UN Climate talks in Warsaw back in November 2013 burst into tears while narrating the destruction left by Typhoon "Haiyan" ("Yolanda"). Naderev "Yeb" Sano refused to eat during the conference in solidarity with the people who were suffering in Tacloban. We have seen other environmental catastrophes since Haiyan. And the conversation about climate continued to revolve around humanitarian assistance after a calamity. It was very hard to ask the "West" to pay up. There have been times when President Duterte used expletive words to get the point across.

This is not to say that the Philippines just waited for assistance from outside. Before the change in government, Duterte designated Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez to represent the Philippines in the Climate Change Commission. It was an interesting

move to put a finance chief instead of an environmental expert at the helm of climate talks. This sent a strong message that the Philippines considered important the role of global finance in achieving climate goals in developing countries. The Philippines set the policies required by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in April of 2021 to commit to an acceptable reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. We played by the rules even though the Philippines only accounts for 0.3 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions and suffers the most from super typhoons.

Given that the Philippines now has most of the necessary climate policies in place, this puts us currently in an opportune situation as we are ready to implement financing of climate adaptation and mitigation. This puts the team of President Marcos in a good position every time they are in talks with potential investors or partners.

Reports show that there is a rare winter "heat wave" in Davos this season. A few days ago they were well above freezing, an unusual temperature for early January. My daughter was in New York last week, where the temperature was in the mid teens (Celsius). It has been a relatively mild winter in Toronto despite the one week "snowmagedon" storm warnings. These drastic changes in temperature signify to Westerners that, yes, indeed the climate patterns have shifted. For now it is the inconvenience of not having enough snow to ski in. But for us, on this side of the Pacific, it spells prolonged rain, landslides and floods. But that's another story.

THE VISAYAN DAILY STAR

[DENR, Globe hail winners of KLIMA-likasan Awards](#)

In celebration of the 2022 National Climate Change Consciousness Week, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Globe recognized the efforts of individuals, groups, and local government units (LGUs) to address climate change, contribute in disaster risk reduction, and promote cultural and behavioral shifts.

In line with its commitment to climate resiliency, Globe partnered with the DENR Climate Change Service (CCS) and is the lone private sector co-presenter of the 2022 Mga Kuwentong KLIMA-likasan: A Climate and Disaster Resiliency Recognition Awards.

Entries were evaluated based on their Climate and Disaster Resiliency content (60%), visual appeal of photos and videos (30%), and the geographical reach of the initiative (10%).

The board of judges composed of representatives from the Climate Change Commission (CCC), Office of Civil Defense (OCD), and Globe chose individuals, groups, and local government units that have come a long way in their efforts to address climate change impacts within their communities or beyond.

As the county's leading digital solutions provider, Globe recognizes that climate change is a huge challenge that requires collective action, hence the need to support and highlight the efforts of Filipinos from around the country.

"We see technology, which is a key enabler of industries, to help accelerate the just transition to a green economy," said Yoly Crisanto, Chief Sustainability and Corporate Communications Officer of the Globe Group.

First prize winners for the individual, group and LGU categories who won P30,000-P50,000 in cash were: Moises Butic – The Ifugao Muyong: Perpetuating a Forest Legacy; iRISE UP – Intelligent, Resilient, and Integrated Systems for the Urban Population; CDRRMO Baguio City – Smart and gender-Inclusive Flood Early Warning and Mitigation System.

KLIMA-likasan also gave out Climate Technology for Resilience Awards. Winners for this category were chosen for their contributions and initiatives that highlight the role of digital technologies in building resilience, including the use of artificial intelligence,

robotics, sensor-driven tools, smartphone applications, the Internet, SMS, and social media, among others.

The awardees are: Raheemah Hafsa Pangarungan's BIOPHIL, which intends to provide cleaner, cheaper, a more accessible energy source and products from water hyacinth, an invasive plant species within Lake Lanao; iRISE UP's Intelligent, Resilient, and Integrated Systems for the Urban Population, which aims to streamline the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Information System of Quezon City; and CDRRMO Baguio City's Smart and Gender-Inclusive Flood Early Warning, Information and Mitigation System for its online system, real-time data capture system, and flood mitigation action plan.

"The stories that we received from 16 regions in the country only say one thing: there are already significant actions happening on the ground. We need to take note of them, document them, map them and see how we can scale up the initiatives to expand to other areas in their community," shared Undersecretary Analiza Rebueta-Teh of the DENR.

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