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By: Jemy Gatdula

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By: Lade Jean Kabagani

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By: Anna Felicia Bajo

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MANILA BULLETIN

[\[Opinion\] New era in climate change](#)

By: Rey Ilagan

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[World Bank warns of slow growth for developing nations, including Philippines](#)

By: Derco Rosal

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MANILA STANDARD

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By: Rio N. Araja

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MINDA NEWS

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A lot of people do not still believe in global warming and climate change. No less than the comeback US President Donald Trump dismissed it as a hoax invented by the Chinese in their bid for industrial and economic supremacy.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Zero waste in the age of consumerism](#)

By: Robert EA Borje

The world struggles with the consequences of unchecked consumerism, with waste generation being one of the most glaring outcomes. The Philippines, in particular, faces the challenges of plastic pollution. According to the World Bank, the country generates approximately 2.7 million tons of plastic waste annually, with more than 500,000 tons ending up in the ocean.

[Germany eyes selling EVs in Phi](#)

By: Kathryn Jose

Germany is keen on selling electric vehicles (EVs) in the Philippines as it explores ways to help the Southeast Asian country mitigate climate change, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in the Philippines Economic Counsellor Dr. David Klebs told DAILY TRIBUNE.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS WORLD

[\[Opinion\] Woke governance, not climate change, caused the California wildfires](#)

By: Jemy Gatdula

Trump Derangement Syndrome is such that, even before the US president-elect is sworn into office, the California wildfires was his fault. For some reason. And for some reason, that included the fact that the California wildfires is because of climate change.

So the fact-checkers, not the most intelligent people ever, all uniformly blamed Trump for politicizing the tragedy, while simultaneously urging people to believe that the fires — a regular occurrence in California — were caused by climate change. CNN in one recent broadcast even expressed disappointment that Google searches on wildfires went up 2,400% but searches on climate change went down 9%, thus — as the CNN hosts ruefully said — people are not wont to connect the wildfires to climate change.

The people are right.

Wildfires have been happening since time immemorial. And as far as the climate goes, “a study by MIT researchers in *Science Advances* confirms that the planet harbors a ‘stabilizing feedback’ mechanism that acts over hundreds of thousands of years to pull the climate back from the brink, keeping global temperatures within a steady, habitable range.”

Thus, “‘we know that today’s global warming will eventually be canceled out through this stabilizing feedback,’ says Constantin Arnscheidt, a graduate student in MIT’s Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences.” (“Earth can regulate its own temperature over millennia, new study finds,” MIT News, November 2022; see also “Scientists have captured Earth’s climate over the last 485 million years. Here’s the surprising place we stand now,” Washington Post, September 2024, which pointed out that: “Even under the worst-case scenarios, human-caused warming will not push the Earth beyond the bounds of habitability.”)

As for charges that conservatives, particularly Trump, has politicized the fires, it has to be remembered that Trump has been warning California Governor Gavin Newsom for years:

“‘The Governor of California, @GavinNewsom, has done a terrible job of forest management. I told him from the first day we met that he must ‘clean’ his forest floors regardless of what his bosses, the environmentalists, DEMAND of him. Must also do burns and cut fire stoppers’, the former and upcoming president posted to X in 2019.”

And then, “just roughly two weeks before Trump will be inaugurated as the nation’s 47th president, he again took aim at Newsom’s wildfire prevention leadership in the state, pinning blame for the LA County fires on Newsom and his environmental policies.”

(“Trump repeatedly warned Gov. Newsom about ‘terrible’ wildfire prevention in wake of deadly Palisades fire,” Fox News, January 2025).

No. It’s not climate change that caused the wildfires or what gave it its present ferocity. It’s bad governance:

“Though the cause of the current blaze has yet to be established, commentators are already making familiar claims that climate change is igniting more wildfires in California — a thesis with no basis in fact. Some state and local officials even argue that high winds themselves caused the wildfires. Not so: Wind, by itself, doesn’t create sparks that trigger wildfires, though it certainly worsens them once they’ve started, as is happening here.

“The most common causes of recent wildfires in the Golden State have been human activities (including arson) and poorly maintained power lines, such as those belonging to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, which caused the 2018 Camp Fire that killed 85 people.

“Another likely culprit: bad forest management.” (“Bad Leaders — Not Climate Change — Are the Reason the LA Fires Are Burning California,” Manhattan Institute, January 2025).

That would include Gavin Newsom’s utter incompetence, diverting water flows to support endangered delta smelt (a species of small fish), thus lowering water supply for fire hydrants and others needed for firefighting.¹ Terminating the jobs of hundreds of firefighters for refusing to take the COVID vaccines obviously didn’t help as well.²

The prioritization by Kristin Crowley, LA’s fire chief, of DIE (diversity, inclusion, and equity) rather than competent firefighting hiring, training, and policies, plus the incompetence of Karen Bass, LA’s Democrat mayor, who was on a trip to Ghana while the fires raged, all fueled the tragedy (“Trump blames Democrats for protecting ‘useless fish’ over water for LA fires,” The Telegraph, January 2025).

A Daily Caller report even found that LA spent money on “trans cafes and social justice art” while substantially slashing its firefighting budget.³

Ultimately, it’s incompetence and woke progressive hubris that did California in. Comedian Nikki Glaser noted that the recent the Golden Globes acceptance speeches were “on fire” and then declared that almost everybody got thanked but “God, Creator of the universe” had “zero mentions.” She joked that the absence of God from acceptance speeches is “no surprise in this Godless town.”

Which leads then to the liberal or progressive complaint that finger-pointing at this time is inappropriate. But such is not true. If the problem cannot be identified, then how can an effective solution be reached so as to prevent a similar tragedy in the future?

To point out therefore that the California fires were caused by DEI hires' incompetence, environmentalist's prioritizing small fishes, the job termination of hundreds of competent firefighters due to their valid refusal to be vaccinated, is not inappropriate gloating.

It is expressing the fact that actions have consequences, that good intentions are nothing if not hinged on reality and rooted in competence, all the foregoing so as to hopefully avoid similar mistakes being made in the future.

Finally, to NOT point out that blasphemy could be connected to the California fires is actually irresponsible. Blasphemy accepted by a population signals hubris, which in turn leads to bad governance, and bad governance is simply what California has by the buttload.

So yes, we should, we must, continue to point out the disastrous effect of woke policies. Because what else is there to do? Emergency powers are with the elected and appointed officials of California. Nobody competent — Trump, Musk, DeSantis, etc. — has the power to intervene.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Marcos orders DHSUD to explore climate-resilient housing designs](#)

By: Lade Jean Kabagani

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. ordered the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) and the National Housing Authority (NHA) to explore housing designs that are adaptable and responsive to climate change.

During the ceremonial turnover of the “Yolanda” Permanent Housing Program on Friday, the President handed over the symbolic keys to the local chief executives of the eight municipalities in Eastern Visayas and three selected beneficiaries of the housing units at the Cool Spring Residences in Barangay Arado, Burauen, Leyte.

“Sa DHSUD at sa NHA, inaasahan ko na palalawigin pa ninyo ang pagtuklas at paggamit ng mga disenyo ng pabahay na mas matibay pa, at mas angkop sa pagbabago ng klima at hamon ng panahon (To the DHSUD and NHA, I hope you will continue to explore and use housing designs that are more durable, and better suited to climate change and weather challenges),” Marcos said.

Steadfast commitment

He emphasized the government’s steadfast commitment to implementing measures to minimize the effects of natural disasters, such as flood mitigation through the Leyte Tide Embankment Project.

He urged the beneficiaries to take care of the housing units handed over to them. The housing units are located in Cool Spring Residences, Riverside Community Residences, Mont Eagle Ville Subdivision, Coconut Grove Village, Dagami Town Ville, and Pastrana Ville, all in Leyte; Marabut Ville Sites 1 and 2 in Samar; and the Culaba Housing Project in Biliran.

He also instructed the Department of Public Works and Highways to ensure the timely completion of the housing projects and all related initiatives.

During his visit to Leyte, Marcos also inspected the Cool Spring Residences in Burauen, which consists of 600 bungalow-type units, each with a lot area of 40 square meters and a floor area of 28.60 square meters.

These housing units were awarded as a grant to qualified beneficiaries identified as Yolanda family survivors.

DHSUD Secretary Jerry Acuzar said the department had allocated a budget to repair, rehabilitate, and complete the units in Tacloban, Leyte within the year.

Over 58,000 units completed

Acuzar noted that more than 58,000 units, or 88 out of 118 “Yolanda” housing projects, have already been completed within the Eastern Visayas region.

Of the total, more than 53,000 units have already been completed, with 45,000 now occupied.

Acuzar also said there is continuous processing and awarding of units to beneficiaries.

According to Presidential Communications Office acting Secretary Cesar Chavez, about P176 million was downloaded to the local government of Tacloban, while P167 million was allocated.

Further, Marcos said the Philippines has been tasked with hosting the Loss and Damage Fund Board in 2024, which will allow the country to secure sufficient funding for important projects and programs.

He also touted the government’s efforts to strengthen the country’s disaster risk and reduction management, improving information gathering and response efforts during disasters.

GMA NEWS

[5M may lose jobs in 2025 due to AI, climate change — FFW](#)

By: Joahna Lei Casilao

Around 5 million Filipino workers are in danger of losing their jobs this year due to artificial intelligence (AI) and climate change, the Federation of Free Workers (FFW) said Thursday.

According to FFW, this is based on the projection of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that 14% of the total workforce in the Philippines is at risk of being replaced by AI as well as job losses of 2.3 million due to the effects of typhoons in 2024.

“We assume that the job losses from AI would not happen in one go,” the FFW said in a statement.

The IMF report, dated December 2024, found that an estimated 36% of the jobs in the country are “highly exposed” to AI. It said more than half are “highly complementary,” where AI can support rather than replace the tasks performed by the worker.

However, it said that for “low-complementarity jobs,” 14% of the total workforce is at risk of being replaced by AI.

“AI exposure varies by gender, with approximately half of all jobs held by women highly exposed, compared to a quarter by men,” the report stated.

Meanwhile, Julius Cainglet, FFW Vice President For Research, Advocacy, and Partnerships, said that individuals who were affected by the typhoons may become affected again.

“Talagang nangangailangan po ng maraming paghahanda kasi ‘yun pong nawalan ng trabaho sa agrikultura, dala pa lang po ‘yan ng mga super typhoon,” Cainglet said in a press conference.

(It really requires a lot of preparation because those who lost their jobs in agriculture were primarily affected by the super typhoons.)

“Pagdating po natin ng end of February and March, expect po natin ulit ‘yung heat stress na na-experience natin last year,” he added.

(When we reach the end of February and March, we can expect the heat stress we experienced last year to return.)

To prepare, he said they must intensify efforts and engage employers through social dialogue.

Marcos to DHSUD, NHA: Explore climate change-responsive housing designs

By: Anna Felicia Bajo

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Friday tasked the Department of Human Settlement and Urban Development (DHSUD) and the National Housing Authority (NHA) to explore housing designs that are responsive to climate change.

Marcos said this during the ceremonial turnover of the Yolanda Permanent Housing Program wherein he handed over the symbolic keys to the local chief executives of the eight municipalities in Eastern Visayas and three selected beneficiaries of the housing units.

"Sa DHSUD at sa NHA, inaasahan ko na palalawigin pa ninyo ang pagtuklas at paggamit ng mga disenyo ng pabahay na mas matibay pa, at mas angkop sa pagbabago ng klima at hamon ng panahon," Marcos said in his speech.

(To the DHSUD and NHA, I am hoping that you will explore the use of housing designs that are responsive to climate change.)

Marcos also urged the beneficiaries to take care of the housing units that are given to them.

The housing units are located in Cool Spring Residences, Riverside Community Residences, Mont Eagle Ville Subdivision, Coconut Grove Village, Dagami Town Ville and Pastrana Ville, all in Leyte; Marabut Ville Sites 1 and 2 in Samar; and the Culaba Housing Project in Biliran.

Marcos also conducted an inspection of the Cool Spring Residences in Burauen, which consists of 600 bungalow-type units, each with a lot area of 40 square meters and a floor area of 28.60 square meters.

The housing units were awarded as a grant, at no cost, to qualified beneficiaries identified as Yolanda family survivors.

Typhoon Yolanda (international name: Haiyan) left more than 7,000 people dead or missing. It also affected more than 16 million people or 3 million families across the country.

Department of Secretary Jerry Acuzar said the agency has allocated a budget to repair, rehabilitate, and complete the units in Tacloban, Leyte within the year.

He said that more than 58,000 units or 88 out of 118 Yolanda housing projects are already completed within Region VIII.

Out of the said number, more than 53,000 are already completed while 45,000 have been occupied.

Asked how much was allotted, Presidential Communications Office acting Secretary Cesar Chavez said P176 million was downloaded to the local government of Tacloban while P167 was allocated.

MANILA BULLETIN

[\[Opinion\] New era in climate change](#)

By: Rey Ilagan

It's official: In 2024, the world breached the 1.5 degree Celsius threshold for global warming, a limit established by the 2015 Paris Agreement. This alarming development was confirmed by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), drawing from analyses by scientists in the US, UK, and EU. Further validation came from the European Commission's Copernicus Climate Service, the UK Met Office, and Japan's weather agency.

Adopted by 196 parties during the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris on Dec. 12, 2015, the Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. Its overarching goal, as stated by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is to "hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels."

The recent breach underscores a grim reality: The past decade has been the hottest in recorded history, with 2024 marking the peak. This year is likely to be the first with a global mean temperature exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Samantha Burgess of the European Commission's Copernicus Climate Service noted, "The last 10 years are the 10 hottest on record and are likely the hottest in 125,000 years." Adding to this, Copernicus identified July 10, 2024, as the hottest day ever recorded.

Burgess added: "The primary reason for these record temperatures is the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. As greenhouse gases continue to accumulate in the atmosphere, temperatures continue to increase, including in the ocean, sea levels continue to rise, and glaciers and ice sheets continue to melt."

In the Philippines, extreme temperatures mirrored global trends. Metro Manila experienced its hottest day in history on April 27, 2024, with the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) recording an air temperature of 38.8 degrees Celsius at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA). The heat index soared to 45 degrees Celsius at NAIA and 42 degrees Celsius at the Quezon City Science Garden.

The provinces also saw all-time high records. Zambales province recorded 53 degrees Celsius on April 28, 2024. Subic Bay in Olongapo, Munoz in Nueva Ecija, and Dagupan in Pangasinan recorded 47 degrees, according to PAGASA.

While individual years exceeding the 1.5-degree limit don't spell the end of the Paris Agreement's goals, they signal an urgent need for action. "It means we need to fight even harder to get on track," said UN Secretary-General António Guterres in a

statement confirming the breach. “There’s still time to avoid the worst of climate catastrophe. But leaders must act—now.”

Guterres underscored that the recorded heat of 2024 demands unprecedented climate action in 2025. Governments must deliver updated national climate action plans to curb global temperature rise and prioritize support for vulnerable communities facing the brunt of climate impacts.

The question remains: Will leaders heed this warning and act decisively, or will the world continue its trajectory toward irreversible climate catastrophe?

[World Bank warns of slow growth for developing nations, including Philippines](#)

By: Derco Rosal

Developing economies, including the Philippines, are projected to have the weakest average growth in the first 25 years (2001–2025) of the century, and these countries will continue to grapple with growth setbacks in the next quarter, the World Bank said.

According to the multilateral lender's latest Global Economic Prospects report, published on Jan. 16, developing economies are projected "to finish the first quarter of the 21st century with the weakest long-term growth outlook since 2000."

"Even as the global economy stabilizes in the next two years, developing economies are expected to make slower progress in catching up with the income levels of advanced economies," World Bank said.

The World Bank expects developing economies—which fuel 60 percent of global growth—to expand at a steady rate of about 4 percent for 2025 and 2026.

However, the World Bank noted that this rate "would be a weaker performance than before the pandemic," adding that this would be "insufficient" to reduce poverty or drive further growth.

Slower economic growth was seen after the 2008–2009 global financial crisis, with foreign direct investment (FDI) halving the pre-crisis level and trade restrictions surging in 2024.

These headwinds resulted in overall economic growth declining from 5.9 percent in the 2000s to 5.1 percent in the 2010s to 3.5 percent in the 2020s. The Philippine economy, in particular, shrank by 9.5 percent during the pandemic (2020).

It rebounded in 2021 with a full-year growth rate of 5.6 percent, further accelerated to 7.6 percent in 2022, and settled to 5.6 percent in 2023.

Despite the gradual recovery of the Philippines from the pandemic, the incomes of Filipinos and people from developing countries (excluding China and India) have grown at a slower pace than those in rich countries, further widening the rich-poor gap since 2014.

Tougher 25 years ahead

"The next 25 years will be a tougher slog for developing economies than the last 25," said Indermit Gill, World Bank Group's chief economist and senior vice president for development economics.

Gill argued that the factors that previously contributed to the development of poor countries have already disappeared.

“In their place have come daunting headwinds: high debt burdens, weak investment and productivity growth, and the rising costs of climate change,” Gill noted.

He advised the emerging economies to come up with a fresh strategy focused on domestic reforms to boost private investment, strengthen trade ties, and use capital, talent, and energy more efficiently.

Such was his recommendation because “developing economies are more important for the global economy than they were at the start of the century.” Economies of developing countries now make up around 45 percent of the world’s gross domestic product (GDP), up from its 25 percent share in 2000.

M. Ayhan Kose, World Bank’s deputy chief economist and director of the prospects group, also suggested that developing nations should focus on trade and investment partnerships, improve infrastructure, streamline customs, and implement strong economic policies to better handle global uncertainties.

On risks, the report also noted some “serious headwinds” that the developing countries could face over the next two years.

“High global policy uncertainty could undercut investor confidence and constrain financing flows. Rising trade tensions could reduce global growth. Persistent inflation could delay expected cuts in interest rates,” it said.

Despite this, it also asserted that developing economies “have many options to improve their growth prospects, despite the headwinds. With the right policies, these economies can even transform some challenges into significant opportunities.”

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MANILA STANDARD

[Resilient and proud! Quezon City joins 'R-Cities' network](#)

By: Rio N. Araja

Quezon City is now part of the Resilient Cities Network (R-Cities), a global initiative that supports projects and solutions aimed at building climate resilient urban spaces, Mayor Joy Belmonte announced on Thursday.

This development aims to improve the living conditions of over 3.2 million QCitizens in the Philippines' most populous city, as Belmonte acknowledged the challenges faced by many local government units (LGUs) in dealing with extreme weather events.

“Quezon City, like many other cities in the Philippines, is vulnerable to extreme heat, tropical cyclones and flooding. Unfortunately, these weather conditions are mostly felt by low-income and vulnerable communities,” she said.

“Since the worsening climate crisis gravely affects lives, health, livelihood and community, the local government must be at the forefront of efforts to mitigate these impacts and create a sustainable, liveable and resilient city for everyone,” Belmonte added.

Its participation in the R-Cities network reflects Quezon City's commitment to enhancing its resilience and adaptation amid an anticipated increase in climate-induced shocks and stresses in the coming years.

The LGU under Belmonte's leadership had advocated for better response to global ecological challenges by implementing its Enhanced Local Climate Change Action Plan and establishing the country's first dedicated Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Department.

R-Cities is currently working with the city government of Quezon City on the OASIS Schoolyards program to transform schoolyards into green, multi-use community spaces that are resilient to both heatwaves and flooding.

“After over a year of partnership to transform schoolyards for children and their communities in Quezon City, I am thrilled to be welcoming them to the Resilient Cities Network,” R-Cities Global Director of City Engagement & Practice Lina Liakou said in a press statement.

“We are eager to support them in their resilience journey and connect Quezon City to the Network's knowledge and members regionally and globally,” she added.

The R-Cities network includes cities such as Paris, France; Cape Town, South Africa; New York City, USA; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Sydney, Australia; and Singapore—all of which are also collaborating with Quezon City on the OASIS Schoolyards program.

MINDA NEWS

TURNING POINT: Climate Change: Of Wildfires and Freezing Winter

By: William R. Adan

A lot of people do not still believe in global warming and climate change. No less than the comeback US President Donald Trump dismissed it as a hoax invented by the Chinese in their bid for industrial and economic supremacy.

Some rabid Trump followers believe that the devastating wildfires that continue to rage in California are the handiwork of arsonists and do not result from climate change. The moronic perception persists despite the reality of forests and grass that have gone so dry to a kindling temperature level simply waiting for a trigger to start an inferno. A spontaneous spark ignites from a dew at the tip of a dry grass that acts as a lens when hit by sunlight or from an overheated broken glass. A warm ocean blows dry air to the coast to add fuel to a raging fire resulting therefrom.

Wildfires and freezing winters are disasters waiting to happen arising from climate change.

You may accept it or not, but global warming and the accompanying climate change are real. They impact everything on the planet; they are ferociously felt everywhere.

The Earth is a living planet endlessly warmed by the sun and kept alive by the natural process or cycle of radiation, evaporation, condensation, and precipitation. All living plants and animals on the planet are sustained and replenished by this cycle through the ages.

We have this phenomenon called Global Warming when the cycle is infringed or adversely aggravated by human-induced emission of greenhouse gases, primarily water vapor, carbon dioxide, and methane. These gases are produced from the uncontrolled burning of fossil fuel, expansive clearing of forestlands, and massive crop production to meet the needs of an ever-increasing world population.

These greenhouse gases in the atmosphere block and deflect the unused heat energy from the sun and the heat waste from human activities back to the surface of the earth, which otherwise would have dissipated to outer space, melting the polar ice, heating unusually the oceans, causing massive evaporation and consequent heavy precipitation.

Global warming impacts the amount of water in the atmosphere and triggers violent downpours instead of steady showers or seasonal rains. The temperature disturbances in the oceans increase the power and frequency of typhoons and hurricanes, and flooding and tidal surges have recently become more common in land masses near the oceans. Moreover, the melting of polar ice raises the sea level and has already

submerged some islands in the Pacific and is now threatening the safety of many coastal cities.

Indeed, the unprecedented heating of the earth's surface due to the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the lower atmosphere has changed the climates of the planet, making them wayward. It has brought downpours, terrifying floods even in unlikely places like deserts, devastating hurricanes in some places, and droughts and prolonged heat waves in others. The rising temperatures scorch some areas of the planet while some parts are simultaneously devastated by cold temperatures and terrible winter storms.

For instance, the eastern coast of the US is trapped by a killing winter storm while wildfires burn its west coast to ashes.

Climate change threatens food security.

Different crops grow best at specific temperatures and when those temperatures change, their productivity changes significantly. Accordingly, the rising temperatures at the equator have pushed such staple crops as rice north into once cooler areas, endangering production in the rice-consuming tropics.

Moreover, rising temperatures favor agricultural pests and diseases that could bring havoc to crop production.

The recurring El Niño and La Niña phenomena are disastrous to crop production.

The productivity of rice, the staple food of more than one-third of the world's population, accordingly declines 10% with every 1° C increase in temperature.

Furthermore, the rising temperatures have pushed many fish species to migrate long distances to stay in waters that are the proper temperature for their survival and reproduction. This may increase the catches of fishers in colder regimes but may eventually eliminate fishing in warm waters.

How are we to address climate change?

Climate change is a global issue that demands global action. The following are imperative:

To limit and control population growth to reduce consumption of anything from food to material wants. This is a necessity that requires decision and compliance at the state, individual, or family level. Any measure to counter climate change problems will be offset by a runaway global population;

To tap and develop the oceans and other bodies of water as cheap sources of protein-rich foods such as chlorella, phytoplankton, and zooplanktons and the like to replace energy-demanding and methane gas-producing plantation crops;

To develop the vast oceans, their currents, and changing temperatures, as another clean and renewable source of energy in addition to the sun and the wind;

To effectively manage the disposal of domestic and industrial wastes to curb their impact on urban flooding, ocean pollution, and gas emissions;

To restore the cover and the health of the forests of the planet; and

To encourage and develop in the world populace a way of life that is closer to nature.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Zero waste in the age of consumerism](#)

By: Robert EA Borje

The world struggles with the consequences of unchecked consumerism, with waste generation being one of the most glaring outcomes. The Philippines, in particular, faces the challenges of plastic pollution. According to the World Bank, the country generates approximately 2.7 million tons of plastic waste annually, with more than 500,000 tons ending up in the ocean.

Zero waste is a lifestyle that calls us to reconsider and reexamine how we produce, consume, and dispose of goods and products. At its core are the 5Rs: refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle and repurpose. These actions provide a roadmap for minimizing waste and, more importantly, for fostering a more mindful relationship with the planet.

Refusing unnecessary items is the first and most impactful step in waste reduction. In today's world of convenience, single-use plastics and disposable items are ubiquitous. From plastic straws to takeaway containers, waste is embedded in many daily transactions. Saying no to these items sends a clear message to businesses and manufacturers about the growing demand for sustainable alternatives. On a personal note, I make it a point to carry reusable water bottles. This simple practice significantly reduces the waste I generate and reinforces mindful decision-making in my daily life.

Reducing consumption goes hand in hand with refusing. The goal is to limit the number of products we bring into our homes, especially those with short lifespans or excessive packaging. For example, buy items in bulk or choose products with minimal packaging. Reducing waste starts at the point of purchase. By being intentional about what we buy, we can minimize waste before it even enters our homes. Moreover, reduced consumption means less demand for resource extraction, which has direct implications for our climate.

Reusing what we already have is another key tenet of the zero waste lifestyle. Instead of buying new containers, repurpose them for food storage or upcycle old clothing into reusable bags. The concept is simple: extend the life of every item as much as possible. This practice addresses and counters the disposable culture that dominates consumerism today. Reusing offers both ecological and economic benefits by reducing the need to purchase new items. Personally, I also take the time to educate and share these practices with those around me, encouraging a shift in their mindset toward sustainability.

While recycling is often championed as a solution to waste, it should be considered a last resort after refusing, reducing and reusing. Not all materials are recyclable, and even when they are, the process consumes energy and resources. That said, recycling

remains crucial for diverting waste from landfills. Let's be diligent in segregating waste and ensuring that recyclable items, such as paper and certain plastics, reach proper recycling facilities.

Repurposing or upcycling involves finding new uses for old items, giving them a second life. For example, old glass bottles can be repurposed into flower vases and wooden crates into storage boxes. Repurposing is both a creative and practical way to extend the life of items that would otherwise be discarded. It encourages us to see value in objects beyond their original purpose.

Senator Loren Legarda has long been an advocate for sustainable practices, particularly in the legislation. She championed laws such as the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (Republic Act 9003), which established frameworks for solid waste management. She continuously pushes for policies that promote zero waste, plastic bans and ecological awareness. Yet, while these policies set the foundation, individual action must follow.

Observed every January, National Zero Waste Month serves as a reminder that the path toward sustainability starts at home. By incorporating the 5Rs into our daily routines, we contribute to larger ecological and climate goals, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from waste decomposition and the preservation of our ecosystems.

Some local government units are adopting zero waste targets while some businesses are reducing plastic use. However, the success of these initiatives depends on collective action. We, at the Climate Change Commission, emphasize that the 5Rs are more than individual responsibilities. These practices require the collaboration of governments, businesses, and communities.

This month, and throughout the year, let us remember that we hold the power to shape the future. Adopting zero waste practices, inspired by the 5Rs, can help reduce waste, conserve resources, and build resilience against climate change. Senator Loren Legarda's leadership in environmental advocacy shows that systemic change is within reach, but it begins with personal accountability.

Now more than ever, we must take this moment to act. Consumerism may dominate today's culture, but a zero waste lifestyle offers a pathway toward a cleaner, more sustainable world. Each of us has a role to play. By refusing, reducing, reusing, recycling and repurposing, we can collectively turn the tide against waste and make meaningful strides toward transformative climate action.

Germany eyes selling EVs in Phi

By: Kathryn Jose

Germany is keen on selling electric vehicles (EVs) in the Philippines as it explores ways to help the Southeast Asian country mitigate climate change, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in the Philippines Economic Counsellor Dr. David Klebs told DAILY TRIBUNE.

“German cars are available in the Philippines. In the end, we want electric cars available in all price ranges,” he said.

China’s aggressive marketing

Klebs said Germany is intensifying research on EVs to reduce carbon emissions from the entire energy industry amid China’s aggressive marketing and production of EVs for the Filipino and the global markets.

“We see the proximity of China here and its strong footprint in electric vehicles but Germany and other European companies are developing research,” he said.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, EVs’ overall carbon emissions are reduced as these vehicles can use renewable energy sources and consume 87 to 91 percent of energy from a car battery.

On the other hand, the agency said gasoline cars use only 16 to 25 percent of the gas energy to keep the vehicle in motion.

Greener ecosystem

To build a greener ecosystem in the Philippines, Klebs said German companies are looking to enhance and maximize efforts by the Philippine government for the energy sector.

“We need to make sure German companies are ready to set up devices for offshore and onshore wind and other infrastructure and green jobs,” he said.

“Germany has been helping the Philippines to develop strategies, to think about those that emit less carbon dioxide,” Klebs continued.

The Department of Energy aims to expand the use of EVs to 2.5 million units by 2028, while increasing the share of renewable energy to 35 percent of the country’s entire power mix by 2030 and to 50 percent by 2040.

China’s BYD emerged in 2023 as the world’s leading manufacturer of EVs, with 1.8 million units sold.

Last year's data from Standard Insights also showed 50.8 percent of Filipinos, especially the youth, preferring EVs as their top transport mode.

2025 Sustainability Forum

Klebs' statements came ahead of the 2025 Sustainability Forum: The Green Economies of Tomorrow to be held on 31 January at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel, Makati City.

Twenty speakers and discussion facilitators will participate in the forum, including officials from the Asian Development Bank, the Philippine Climate Change Commission, and internationally-awarded architecture firm, Palafox Associates.

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