



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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- CCC sees more govt action on climate change
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### BBC NEWS

#### [Climate change: Invest in technology that removes CO2 - report](#)

By: Jonah Fisher

Technology to remove the planet-warming greenhouse gas CO2 from our atmosphere must be urgently ramped up, leading climate experts say in a new report.

## **BUSINESS MIRROR**

### **[Climate finance key to making agrifood systems more resilient, efficient–FAO](#)**

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The World Wide Fund for Nature Philippines (WWF-Philippines) and the BPI Foundation recently said they will continue to provide climate risk assessments and livelihood programs for vulnerable communities even as their earlier projects were recently concluded.

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### **[Ice climbers and mountain adventurers fear climate change creates new unpredictable risks](#)**

By: Yvette Brend

As a pro athlete, William Gadd has climbed the ice of Niagara Falls, Africa's Mount Kilimanjaro and Greenland glaciers. But he says now climbing routes are changing or crumbling.

## **CNN**

### **[These 3 solutions could turn the tide on the climate crisis](#)**

By: Laura Paddison

Climate change is sending the world hurtling towards a series of catastrophic tipping points, which risk setting off feedback loops that lock the world into irreversible climate change. That's the bad news.

## **DW AKADEMIE**

### **[Climate change: German Green Party supporters feel betrayed](#)**

By: Jens Thurau

There has been much dismay over the Green Party leadership's compromise with 'big coal' that led to the demolition of the village of Lützerath. Will this drive the environmentalist party to breaking point?

## **MANILA BULLETIN**

### **[Agri-infra damage caused by bad weather tops P1.02B](#)**

By: Martin Sadongdong

The damage to agriculture and infrastructure brought by the combined effects of the prevailing shear line, northeast monsoon (amihan), and previous low pressure areas (LPAs) that have affected the country since Jan. 2 already reached P1.02 billion.

### **[PH joins India's Global South summit for upcoming G20](#)**

By: Joseph Pedrajas

The Philippines has joined 124 other countries from the southern part of the globe in a two-day summit hosted by India, which aimed to give voice for the developing and least developed countries during the upcoming G20 Summit.

## **PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

### **[Experts warn anew vs reclamation, other climate impacts](#)**

By: Mariejo S. Ramos

MANILA, Philippines — With the recently concluded World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, Southeast Asian countries are racing against time to adapt to the climate crisis, as scientists point to unplanned development projects in megacities' rapidly urbanizing coastlines.

## **PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY**

### **[DENR to pursue green recovery, build sustainable communities](#)**

MANILA – The Philippines, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), will build resilient, inclusive and sustainable communities post-pandemic as it prepares its portfolio of environmental projects for consideration under the 8th funding replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-8).

## **RAPPLER**

### **[\[Opinion\] Should the Philippines develop nuclear energy?](#)**

By: John Leo Algo

Nuclear energy has emerged as one of the most controversial issues on energy security and national development in the Philippines. The most recent Presidents, Rodrigo Duterte and Ferdinand Marcos Jr., have openly supported for nuclear to have a much larger presence in the country's energy mix.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Uncertain future looms for PH, SEA 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 PHILIPPINE STAR

### [ASEAN economies urged to boost infrastructure investments](#)

By: Louella Desiderio

MANILA, Philippines — The expanded Association of Southeast Asian Nations economies should increase infrastructure investments to take advantage of opportunities and to address the climate change challenge, the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) said.

### [\[Opinion\] EU and the Philippines in 2023](#)

By: Luc Veron

As I wrote in this column last November, 2022 brought a renewed positive momentum in EU-Philippines relations. Our ambition is to keep going and build on this momentum to further develop our strong relationship. 2023 is shaping up to be a year where we will have plenty of opportunities to do so through various events, projects, initiatives, visits and engagements. Allow me to elaborate further on this.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### 24 ORAS

### [PDP 2023-2028 tutukan din ang pagpapabilis ng mga programa laban sa epekto ng climate change](#)

By: Maki Pullido

“May mga iba’t ibang polisiya na tayong sinet in place and its a function right now of really implementing, scaling up, and intensifying the efforts.”

### DZBB

### [Panayam kay Climate Change Commission Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje.](#)

By: Tuesday Niu and Benjie Liwanag

Sec. Borje: Ang Climate Change Commission ay government agency that is tasked and mandated to come up with policies and coordinate policies on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[CCC sees more govt action on climate change](#)**

By: Bella Cariaso

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) said the inclusion of an accelerated climate change agenda in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028 will further strengthen the country's commitment to deliver key action to deal with climate change.

## **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

### **[Marcos Jr. ups budget for climate change programs by 48%](#)**

By: Helen Flores

MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos has increased the funds allocated for climate change programs this year by about 48 percent, Climate Change Commission (CCC) vice chairman and executive director Robert Borje said yesterday.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **BBC NEWS**

### **[Climate change: Invest in technology that removes CO2 - report](#)**

By: Jonah Fisher

Technology to remove the planet-warming greenhouse gas CO2 from our atmosphere must be urgently ramped up, leading climate experts say in a new report.

Scientists say big cuts in CO2 emissions won't be enough to limit global warming.

And nature alone will not remove enough of it from the air.

CO2 is the most important gas warming the planet, and is emitted when fossil fuels such as gas and oil are burnt.

"To limit warming to 2C or lower, we need to accelerate emissions reductions. But the findings of this report are clear: we also need to increase carbon removal too," says lead author Dr Steve Smith from Oxford University. "Many new methods are emerging with potential."

There's consensus among scientists that the world is warming primarily because emissions of CO2 (estimated at 33 billion tonnes in 2021) far exceed the amount that is being removed (this report suggests two billion tonnes a year).

Until emissions and removals are balanced - so called "net-zero" - global temperatures are predicted to rise.

But getting there won't be easy. The latest UN climate reports say to fully achieve "net zero" there will need to be some CO2 removal, so called "negative emissions", to compensate for sectors that can't easily decarbonise.

Currently almost all of the world's CO2 removal occurs through natural processes. That's primarily plants and trees taking in CO2 from the air, and the soil absorbing and storing it.

But there are limits to how much nature can do. For example, how much more of the world can realistically be given over to forests? Some optimistic scenarios suggest that natural CO2 removal could be doubled by 2050, but that's still only about 4 billion tonnes of CO2 a year.

## **Technological solutions?**

This new report titled "The State of Carbon Dioxide Removal" says that to restrict and reduce global temperatures in the future there needs to be investment in developing technological solutions now.

The methods it cites are all fairly new, and at different stages of development and deployment. Put together they currently only make up a tiny fraction of the worlds CO2 removal.

One, known as BECCS, involves incorporating CO2 capture into biomass-based electricity-generation, in which organic matter such as crops and wood pellets are burned to produce power. Other options include: huge facilities where the carbon is extracted from the air before being stored in the ground; the use of specially treated charcoal (biochar) that locks in carbon; and "enhanced rock weathering" - loosely based on the carbon removal that occurs with natural erosion.

## **BUSINESS MIRROR**

### **[Climate finance key to making agrifood systems more resilient, efficient–FAO](#)**

Abboost in investment is essential to transform the world’s agrifood systems to become more resilient, efficient, sustainable and inclusive, while supporting countries’ access climate finance and ensuring that appropriate financial resources reach small and medium-scale food producers.

That was the key message from United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) Deputy Director-General Maria Helena Semedo who was speaking at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) held in Berlin, Germany.

She was the keynote speaker at a FAO organized event titled “Financing sustainable transformation in the agrifood systems: Gaps and Opportunities.”

“This event comes at a critical time as the current food crisis is far from over. This is particularly concerning as the world’s most vulnerable countries and communities struggle with increasing hunger in the face of climate and biodiversity challenges,” Semedo said.

She highlighted FAO’s role in launching global initiatives to examine these issues and emphasized on the need for climate finance to transform agrifood systems by 2030. At COP 27 last year, FAO launched the Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation Initiative (FAST), along with the government of Egypt, to improve the quality and quantity of climate finance contributions to the agricultural sectors.

“While overall climate finance flows have increased over the past decade, the share targeted to agriculture has been steadily decreasing,” Semedo said.

The agriculture and land use sector received \$122 billion in financing between 2000 and 2018, representing 26 percent of the global climate finance flows to all sectors.

Wolfgang Zornbach from the Germany Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), the moderator of the event, announced that his government would contribute \$3 million to the FAST initiative, \$1 million a year for three years, to ensure “a more coherent approach in global climate change related initiatives.”

Experts at the FAO panel event included Iride Ceccacci, Associate Director, Head of Advisory—Agribusiness at the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development

(EBRD); Martina Fleckenstein, Global Policy Director Food at WWF International; and Ritsuko Yoneda, Director of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan.

They discussed concrete ways in which to promote adaptation to and mitigation of climate change whilst ensuring food security and nutrition, with a focus on FAST's three pillars, namely: access to climate finance, knowledge and capacity; policy supports; and dialogue.

Iride Ceccaci emphasized the importance of partnerships in realizing the goals of the FAST initiative, and the collaboration of the EBRD with FAO. In this regard, Martina Fleckenstein pointed out that the initiative provides an umbrella and offers several opportunities to address climate change impact.

Semedo also reiterated how climate-resilient agrifood system responses are fundamental to achieving the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

“We are faced with a double-edged challenge that requires a two-pronged approach: addressing climate change impacts on agrifood systems while reducing the carbon footprint of agrifood systems.”

The use of CO<sub>2</sub> removal technologies is not without its critics. Some campaigners doubt that they can be cost effective and fear that they can be an excuse to defer and delay the transition away from fossil fuel use.

This report stresses that removing CO<sub>2</sub> should not be seen as a "silver bullet" to tackle climate change but that meeting the UN's climate goals will require technology as well as nature to reduce greenhouse gas levels.

That all assumes that global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from burning fossil fuels will, as pledged at numerous climate summits, fall rapidly. So far yearly emissions have yet to start a downward trend.

## CREIT's ₱ 4.5-B green bond offering secures nod of SEC

By: VG Cabuag

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has approved Citicore Energy REIT Corp.'s (Creit) issuance of ASEAN Green Bonds.

In its January 19 en banc meeting, the SEC approved the registration statement of Citicore Energy REIT covering up to P4.5 billion of fixed-rate ASEAN Green Bonds.

ASEAN Green Bonds are debt papers, which comply with the ASEAN Green Bonds Standards, where the proceeds will be exclusively applied to finance or refinance, in part or in full, new and existing eligible green projects.

Eligible green projects include those for renewable energy, energy efficiency, pollution prevention and control, environmentally sustainable management of living natural resources and land use, clean transportation, climate change adaptation and green buildings.

The company expects to net up to P4.42 billion from the offer, assuming the oversubscription option is fully exercised. Proceeds will be used for the acquisition of solar rooftops system for lease, a solar power operator, as well as the acquisition of properties that will be leased to solar power developers and operators.

The bonds will be offered at face value from January 30 to February 3, in time for listing at the Philippine Dealing and Exchange Corp. by February 10, according to the timetable the company submitted to the SEC.

Citicore Energy REIT tapped PNB Capital and Investment Corp. and SB Capital Investment Corp. as the joint issue managers, joint lead underwriters, and joint bookrunners for the offer.

## WWF-PH, BPI Foundation partner for vulnerable areas

By: Rizal Raoul Reyes

The World Wide Fund for Nature Philippines (WWF-Philippines) and the BPI Foundation recently said they will continue to provide climate risk assessments and livelihood programs for vulnerable communities even as their earlier projects were recently concluded.

Under the Project Pagisibol that was created in 2020, the WWF-Philippines and BPI Foundation have been working together to build sustainable food sheds and climate-resilient food production facilities that will help low-income communities all over the country, the partnership said in a news release.

WWF-PH Project Manager Monci Hinay said the project has directly assisted a total of 499 individuals, while 2,037 were provided with access to fresh and quality food.

Financial literacy sessions were held with the creation of 10 functional Group Savings and Loan Associations in these communities with a total of P1,568,000 in savings.

“Our communities need to be able to take care of themselves. They understand this, and the pandemic has made this all the more apparent. These workshops are the first step in a long process towards helping our farming communities to stand up on their own two feet amid the current climate crisis,” Hinay said.

The partnership continues to take on the challenge of aiding food and livelihood security through community-specific programs.

The Farm-to-table-for-fisherfolks Project, a newly-launched program of the BPI Foundation, provides climate-smart facilities for fish drying and water purification to reduce fish spoilage and promote sustainable livelihood will run until 2023 to help the Halian, Siargao, community.

He said that although the island barangay of Halian is recognized as an emerging tourism spot with a marine sanctuary, it has limited access to appropriate technology to support livelihood and basic necessities like stable and safe potable water sources.

Facilities for fish drying and water purification will also be built in the area, with BPI's help, to reduce fish spoilage and increase economic and health benefits for the community.

Hinay added that trainings on fish catch documentation and financial literacy will also be conducted to increase the knowledge and capacities of the members.

The WWF-Philippines and BPI Foundation partnership pledged to continue to find solutions to #ChangeTheEnding for our environmental frontliners as the country continues to struggle from the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and as concerns such as rural hunger and livelihood insecurity remain to be addressed, the news release said.

## CBC NEWS

### [Ice climbers and mountain adventurers fear climate change creates new unpredictable risks](#)

By: Yvette Brend

As a pro athlete, William Gadd has climbed the ice of Niagara Falls, Africa's Mount Kilimanjaro and Greenland glaciers. But he says now climbing routes are changing or crumbling.

Living in Canmore, Alta., Gadd spends more than 200 days a year in the wilderness, and says glacial melt, forest fires, rock falls and wilder weather all have a visceral effect on him.

"This is where I live and work and my office is falling apart," said Gadd.

"Imagine if you showed up in downtown Calgary, Vancouver, Toronto, and your office building either wasn't there or was on fire."

Climate change has already begun to change high elevation areas of the world. Researchers say that's expected to continue and at times be dramatic, as mountain faces and riverways are redrawn by the geological forces at play — at times creating sudden unexpected hazards for the people who adventure in remote mountain zones.

Extreme weather, floods, fires and landslides linked to climate change are shifting the way Canadian adventure sports enthusiasts approach the back country — as risks get harder to predict.

"The hard part for me now is figuring out what the new risks are," said Gadd.

The 'glue' holding rock walls together is melting

Geomorphologist Dan Shugar from the University of Calgary confirms Gadd's observations. He says that as glaciers along steep rock walls thaw, the stuff that cements much of the high mountain areas together turns to liquid.

"Frozen water or ice that's contained in the rock permanently, begins to melt," explained Shugar.

"The glue that's holding the cracked rock together is then liquid water. So those rocks can fall apart."

Glaciated rock has already been under excruciating pressures from the grinding and weight of ice over time. As that ice retreats — releasing its grip on the rock — the pressure release creates cracks, layering the rock with fault lines parallel to the surface like the layers of an onion.

### **How the freeze-thaw cycle causes rock slides**

When this rock is then subsequently frozen, thawed, flooded or hit with summer heat, this spreads cracks which then join, causing chunks to sometimes shear off.

Climate change researchers say this is just one of the processes beginning to cause massive change in mountain areas.

A study published this month by Shugar and John Clague of Simon Fraser University forecasts a reshaping of mountain faces and river routes in more dramatic shifts than have been seen in 11,700 years, since woolly mammoths roamed the earth.

They outline change already occurring in the Yukon and British Columbia. Their paper was inspired after observing how the Kaskawulsh Glacier, one of the largest in the St. Elias Range, began to divert the Ä'äy Chú (formerly known as Slims River), the Asek and Yukon Rivers.

They also show similar shifts happening near the Bering, Grand Pacific and Melbern glaciers along the Alaska/Yukon border. They say large river systems will continue to reorganize as glaciers vanish and allow them to flow in more direct routes to the sea — changing water paths, altering ecosystems and even creating more coastal fjords.

Shugar, 43, says he's expecting a lot of change to iconic spots in his life. He says even the signature turquoise colour of Alberta's lakes — like Peyto and Moraine — may change.

"I expect I'll still see glaciated mountains as an old man. But they'll be different."

### **Uptick of fatal slides worldwide**

Internationally, studies show rock-slope failures already accelerating.

Slumping slopes have killed people in Europe and Asia, where slides have been triggered by monsoons and cyclones. In July 2022, seven people were killed when an

Alpine glacier collapsed in the northern Italian Alps. Video showed a cascade of snow, ice and rock down the slopes of Marmolada, the highest Dolomite peak.

The Himalayan expedition gateway town of Joshimath is sinking where two valleys meet. More than 670 buildings in the 20,000-person community in northern India have formed cracks, according to the BBC.

Back in Canada, slides have also been on the rise. But, for the most part, they have happened in remote areas with few people. "It's still not a huge risk when you consider the total area of landscape is still pretty low," said Shugar.

Paul Adam, manager of citizen science for the Centre for Natural Hazards Research at Simon Fraser University, says climate change is playing a role in recent slide events.

"It's getting wetter, getting drier, it's getting hotter, it's getting colder. It definitely plays a role," said Adam, a 40-year climber who says he will avoid certain areas, but won't stop climbing.

"[Slides] are occurring more often. You require a bit more care. But I wouldn't say it's making any riskier on a day-to-day basis."

Climbing community rocked by recent rock falls

But recent slides that erased popular climbs have shaken the climbing community.

In late December, guide James Madden noticed a cloud of dust as he was scoping weather conditions in the Purcell Mountains near Snowpatch Spire, a 3,000-metre-high rock tower in Bugaboo Provincial Park in southeast B.C.

The slide sheered off a mass of rock and turned one of the world's hardest alpine climbs into a 50-thousand-cubic-metre rubble pile.

"This really has changed the face, literally the rock face, of that spot," said Shugar.

While this event was relatively small, and hurt nobody, other slides have been fatal, like one that hit a highway during the November floods of 2021 when a debris slide swept across Highway 99, killing five people southwest of Lillooet.

A year before that a catastrophic slide on the central coast of B.C. in November 2020 touched off a tsunami in a glacial lake that devastated Elliot Creek and Southgate River with a slide of timber, mud and rock.

Researchers determined that the slide hit a glacial lake with such force it triggered a 100-metre-high wave that devastated a 10-kilometre stretch of river and touched off a massive underwater avalanche.

In 2019, east of Pemberton, B.C., a large chunk of Joffre Peak split off, spreading a debris pile over five kilometres.

Mountaineer Drew Brayshaw, a hydrologist and geoscientist with Statlu Environmental Consulting, fears forest fires more than rockfall.

He's spent years studying the changing climate, watching glaciers retreat and worked as an undergraduate with geohazard researcher Matthias Jakob, assessing the massive Mount Meager slide in 2010. Brayshaw lost his mentor in a paragliding accident.

Brayshaw says it's important to gauge risks, but not let them paralyze you; perhaps don't pose for selfies beneath a large rock that could fall. But he points out that driving a car is also dangerous.

"I don't want to scare people away. I love the outdoors."

## **CNN**

### **[These 3 solutions could turn the tide on the climate crisis](#)**

By: Laura Paddison

Climate change is sending the world hurtling towards a series of catastrophic tipping points, which risk setting off feedback loops that lock the world into irreversible climate change. That's the bad news.

The good news, however, is that there is also a series of "positive tipping points," according to an analysis published Thursday by researchers from an international group of institutions including the University of Exeter and the World Resources Institute's Systems Change Lab, with support from the Bezos Earth Fund.

These are defined as small climate actions that could have a snowball effect, prompting emissions cuts across some of most polluting sectors of the global economy.

The theory goes like this: As new technologies start to outpace older, more polluting versions, reinforcing feedback loops kick in that help a technology to improve, get cheaper and become more accessible.

The idea is to create "self-propelling change," Tim Lenton, Chair in Climate Change and Earth System Science at the University of Exeter and a report author, told CNN.

The report authors acknowledge that triggering these tipping points alone will not be enough to meet global climate objectives. But as time runs out to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, targeted action can be a powerful lever, they say.

"In the face of an otherwise enormous climate and ecological crisis... maybe we can be part of change that will happen faster than we think," Lenton said.

The report identifies three "super-leverage points": Relatively low-cost or low-difficulty interventions that could have the biggest impacts in decarbonizing the global economy.

### **Electric vehicles**

A tipping point is already "very close" for electric vehicles, the report says. EVs made up 10% of all cars sold last year, driven by sales in China and Europe.

To be on track for a net-zero fleet by 2050, EVs must account for around 60% of new passenger car sales by 2060, according to the report, which says mandates for EV sales could be a “particularly powerful policy” to bring forward a tipping point.

As demand ramps up, costs of production go down, including for lithium batteries, which have seen costs fall by 90% over the last 10 years, according to the report.

EVs overtaking gas-powered cars could also have positive spillover benefits for other sectors requiring battery storage, such as wind and solar.

“Electrifying cars means a tipping point for ever cheaper batteries, and cheaper batteries could be a really valuable, cheap source of storage of electricity to enable the transition to renewable power,” said Lenton.

### **Plant-based proteins**

Meat has a huge climate impact. Livestock farming accounts for 14.5% of human-caused, planet-warming emissions.

Plant-based proteins – things like beans, lentils, peas and nuts – produce up to 90% fewer emissions than meat. They are also catching up with meat in terms of cost, as well as flavor. But they currently have a low market share.

If public institutions such as schools, hospitals and governments used their purchasing power to buy plant-based proteins instead of meat, this could be a “powerful lever to increase uptake of these products,” the report authors said.

This policy change could also help shift social norms around plant-based products and increase their appeal, Lenton said.

Moving away from animal products would have the added advantages of cutting farming emissions, freeing up land to support wildlife and carbon storage, and reducing incentives for deforestation.

### **Green fertilizer**

Ramping up the production of “green fertilizer” could not only slash emissions from the production of agricultural fertilizer, but also help kickstart a green hydrogen economy, according to the report.

Ammonia, a key ingredient in commercial fertilizer, is currently produced using fossil fuels and accounts for about 1.8% of global carbon emissions. But it could be replaced by green ammonia, which is produced with green hydrogen using renewable energy.

While currently more expensive than conventional ammonia, green ammonia is projected to be economically viable within the decade, according to the report, which suggests mandates for 25% of ammonia to be green would help reduce food system emissions as well as speed up the growth of the green hydrogen sector.

Green hydrogen is a much-hyped climate solution because of its potential to replace fossil fuels in incredibly energy-intensive industries, such as shipping, steelmaking and aviation.

## DW AKADEMIE

### [Climate change: German Green Party supporters feel betrayed](#)

By: Jens Thurau

There has been much dismay over the Green Party leadership's compromise with 'big coal' that led to the demolition of the village of Lützerath. Will this drive the environmentalist party to breaking point?

After losing the battle for the little village of Lützerath, many Green Party supporters are feeling betrayed. Climate activists fought hard to prevent the demolition of the village in the lignite mining area in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), but despite international support, police evacuated them by force and the expansion of the opencast lignite mine is going ahead.

Among those disappointed is Luisa Neubauer, leader of the "Fridays for Future" climate movement in Germany. "I don't know if the Green Party leadership is aware of what it has done," she told public broadcaster ARD. Neubauer is herself a member of the Greens and now she fears that many members may turn away.

#### **Between a rock and a hard place**

The Green Party is part of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's center-left coalition but is also in government with the center-right Christian Democrats (CDU) in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's most populous state. At both the federal level and in NRW, the Greens control the economy ministry.

In October 2022, federal Economy Minister Robert Habeck (Greens) and the North Rhine-Westphalian Economy Minister Mona Neubaur (Greens) struck a deal with energy giant RWE to phase out coal by 2030, eight years earlier than planned, sparing five villages from demolition — but in return to allow the Garzweiler open-cast mine to expand and mine the coal below Lützerath. Climate activists argue that the deal simply means that the emissions have been brought forward.

Within days, this compromise was given the stamp of approval at a Green party conference in Bonn, leaving many rubbing their eyes in disbelief: The party of climate protection voting for coal mining?

The youth wing of the party is feeling disenchanted. In the run-up to the 2021 general election, the Green Party's chancellor candidate Annalena Baerbock stressed the

significance of climate protection. "She repeatedly said during the election campaign: this is the last government that can still influence the climate crisis. She set the bar high," Green Youth chairman Timon Dzienus told the weekly Die Zeit. "So yes: If the government fails to meet the climate targets and limit emissions in all sectors, the Green Party, in particular, can suffer great damage."

Election promises broken?

The "deal negotiated with the energy company RWE threatens to break with the principles of our party," 2,000 Green Party members wrote in an open letter to Habeck and Neubaur. "We are also breaking with the Paris climate agreement, the government's coalition agreement and are losing the last bit of trust from the climate justice movement."

This dramatic appeal led Green Party leader Ricarda Lang to defend the RWE deal once again: "If we don't make compromises, then nothing at all would happen in climate protection," she claimed. "Very few other parties have a serious interest in this."

Political scientist Gero Neugebauer agrees. Even after painful decisions like the one on Lützerath, the Greens remain the party with the highest reputation for climate and environmental protection in Germany, he told DW. "The very fact that this is the Greens' unique selling point, shows the weakness of the other parties, which fail to embrace climate policy as an important issue," he says.

Neugebauer doesn't believe that the controversy surrounding Lützerath is hurting the Greens as much as it would appear. There has not been a major row within the party, he says, and the critics lack prominent support.

## **Shadows of the past**

The Greens have painful memories of a fundamental policy shift in the late 1990s, when the Greens' foreign minister at the time, Joschka Fischer, forced the pacifist party to support German military involvement in Kosovo. Within days, hundreds of members left the Greens.

Some political observers also compare the Green Party's Lützerath compromise to the Social Democrats' watershed moment of 2003: The center-left SPD implemented "Hartz IV" a business-friendly labor market reform that cut back on welfare. Many members and voters saw this as the party's perceived betrayal of working-class interests and turned away. Hartz IV, to many in the SPD, was "the fall from grace."

But even after events in Lützerath, the Greens have not seen a marked drop in support: They still get between 18% and 20% in opinion polls — neck-and-neck with the SPD and four times as strong as the smallest coalition partner in Scholz's government, the neoliberal FDP.

Political scientist Neugebauer says the party still seems very much united, not only in the Lützerath case but also on other issues such as further arms deliveries to Ukraine. He argues that the many new, young members of the party, Neugebauer says, "experience the Greens as a pragmatic party in government that takes responsibility, while being the only party that represents the goals of the climate movement."

Between 2015 and the end of 2021, Green Party membership more than doubled from about 60,000 to 125,000 now, and most of the new members are young. And even if radical environmental activists like those in Lützerath turn their back on the Greens, political scientist Neugebauer believes they would not join any other party instead.

Pragmatism may even pay off for the Greens, says political scientist Marc Debus, arguing that the ability to compromise shows a willingness to take responsibility. "In this way, they can become attractive to moderate voters and possibly win votes they have lost elsewhere," Debus told public broadcaster WDR.

## MANILA BULLETIN

### [Agri-infra damage caused by bad weather tops P1.02B](#)

By: Martin Sadongdong

The damage to agriculture and infrastructure brought by the combined effects of the prevailing shear line, northeast monsoon (amihan), and previous low pressure areas (LPAs) that have affected the country since Jan. 2 already reached P1.02 billion.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) reported on Sunday, Jan. 22, that the bad weather has dealt P751,967,912.63 worth of damage to agriculture while damage to infrastructure was pegged at P276,797,224.68.

In the agriculture sector, the most affected region was Caraga (Region 13) which had a loss of P126 million, followed by Cagayan Valley (Region 2) with P99.86 million; Western Visayas (Region 6) with P74.87 million; Northern Mindanao (Region 10) with P67.40 million; and Davao Region (Region 11) with P25.1 million.

Meanwhile, infrastructure loss was highest at P201 million in Mimaropa which covers the provinces of Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan. It was followed by Northern Mindanao with P44.63 million loss; Davao Region with P25.36 million; and Soccsksargen (Region 12) with P5.1 million.

The death toll also increased to 35 but the NDRRMC has only validated 19 of them so far.

The number of reported fatalities was highest at 12 in Zamboanga Peninsula (Region 9); eight in Northern Mindanao; seven in Eastern Visayas (Region 8); six in Bicol Region (Region 5); and one each in Davao Region and Soccsksargen.

More than 1.9 million individuals were affected by the bad weather and 92,118 of them were still staying in 358 evacuation centers in 14 affected regions.

The NDRRMC said its member-agencies have already distributed P98 million worth of assistance to the affected Filipinos including family food packs, water, family and hygiene kits, sleeping kits, financial assistance, and other non-food items.

As of Saturday, the effect of shear line had already weakened but it was forecasted to bring cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Bicol Region and Eastern Visayas.

## [PH joins India's Global South summit for upcoming G20](#)

By: Joseph Pedrajas

The Philippines has joined 124 other countries from the southern part of the globe in a two-day summit hosted by India, which aimed to give voice for the developing and least developed countries during the upcoming G20 Summit.

Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Enrique Manalo participated in the summit's "Foreign Ministers' Session on G20," where 14 other countries gave their suggestions for India's presidency during this year's gathering of 20 world leaders from economic superpowers.

The event, entitled Voice of Global South Summit, was held from Jan. 12 to 13, 2023 to focus the "international attention on priorities, perspectives and concerns of the developing world," Indian Ministry of External Affairs said in its statement. This was the first time India held such a gathering, which was conducted online, as it wanted to hear and represent the concerns of the developing and least developed countries during the G20.

"This is particularly relevant as the world passes through a difficult period marked by challenges to health, food security, affordable access to energy, climate finance and technologies, and economic growth," it added.

Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi presided over the Inaugural Leaders' session, which was followed by eight ministerial-level thematic segments dedicated to addressing the most pressing concerns of the developing world.

There, Modi cited the key issues at stake for the developing world.

He highlighted the opportunity for uplifting societies and economies of the Global South through a shared vision and agenda for change. He then offered India's experiences through simple, scalable and sustainable solutions by noting its achievements in vaccine development, biometric based identification, digital public goods, financial inclusion, satellite technology, digital governance, last mile connectivity, etc.

Modi also spoke about the need for the developing world to have access to technology, knowledge and critical resources.

During the conclusion of the summit, the participating countries expressed hope the gathering would serve as a catalyst for building a prosperous and inclusive future for the world that takes into account the needs of the Global South.

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

### [Experts warn anew vs reclamation, other climate impacts](#)

By: Mariejo S. Ramos

MANILA, Philippines — With the recently concluded World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, Southeast Asian countries are racing against time to adapt to the climate crisis, as scientists point to unplanned development projects in megacities' rapidly urbanizing coastlines.

Joo-Ok Lee, head of the Asia-Pacific agenda of the WEF executive committee, noted that Asean member states “are suffering other climate-related changes, typically in the form of unseasonably heavy rains causing flooding, and this situation can only deteriorate.”

“For Indonesia and the Philippines, with their large archipelagos and many island dwellers, the prospect of rising sea levels is devastating,” wrote Lee in a WEF article on Jan. 16.

Just last year, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report warned that the region “will witness increased losses in coastal settlements and infrastructure due to flooding caused by unavoidable sea-level rise.”

Significant barriers to climate adaptation in Asia include fragmented, reactive governance, inadequate evidence on which actions to prioritize and how to sequence them, and lack of finances, said the IPCC.

#### Massive reclamation

In the Philippines and Thailand, scientists warned that massive reclamation could worsen the impacts of extreme sea level rise (ESLR) in vulnerable communities.

Metro Manila is in a low-lying area facing the sea and is embracing two river systems, making it prone to flooding and disasters.

Some of the coastal areas of Manila are extremely low-lying, particularly Camanava, a populous subregion of component cities Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, and Valenzuela.

Massive reclamation projects cannot only uproot mangrove forests and destroy the marine ecosystem, it can also worsen the rising sea levels in Bulacan and Metro Manila, scientists believe.

In a report published last year, Greenpeace East Asia outlined the projected economic impact of ESLR in seven Asian cities by 2030.

The projection for Manila is damning: Almost 87 percent of the megacity's land area is below the level to which sea water could rise should a 10-year floor occur in 2030, impacting \$39.24 billion of the country's gross domestic product and putting 1.54 million people at risk.

Manila is not alone in this plight.

In Jakarta, almost 17 percent of communities are below the level to which sea water could rise should a 10-year flood occur in 2030, according to Greenpeace.

### **'Slow onset disaster'**

Bangkok, meanwhile, stands to lose around \$12 billion of its GDP and 10.45 million lives due to ESLR by 2030, as the "city's vulnerability to flooding is exacerbated by the fact that the city is sinking due to soft soils, heavy urbanization and land subsidence," according to Greenpeace.

When the sea rises, it results in more in-land coastal flooding and tidal flooding that exposes communities, especially Camanava in Metro Manila, to more hazards, noted geologist Narod Eco, a former researcher for the University of the Philippines' National Institute of Geological Sciences and a member of Agham.

For scientists, sea level rise and land subsidence due to the overextraction of groundwater can form a dangerous combo for at-risk communities.

"Sea level rise's order of magnitude is in millimeters per year. It's a slow onset disaster that is difficult to see in real-time, same with strong typhoons that are low frequency but high impact events," said Eco.

But he said land subsidence is "more pronounced" and "more urgent," as it is measured in centimeters per year.

"Previous study that we did showed that coastal communities in Camanava and Bulacan are the most severely affected by land subsidence. Coupled with reclamation in these areas, you're putting up development directly on those areas where it is dangerous to do so, with all those hazards and possible disasters," he added.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### [DENR to pursue green recovery, build sustainable communities](#)

MANILA – The Philippines, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), will build resilient, inclusive and sustainable communities post-pandemic as it prepares its portfolio of environmental projects for consideration under the 8th funding replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-8).

The Philippines is allocated over USD52 million in funding support, the country's largest allocation so far.

DENR Secretary Antonia Loyzaga, in her welcome remarks during the kick-off ceremony of the two-day GEF National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue in Taguig City on Jan. 18-19, said the Philippines continues to face more complex challenges toward achieving ecosystem integrity and enhancing climate and disaster resilience.

Loyzaga considers the holding of the GEF National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue as an opportunity to develop projects that respond to the country's environmental challenges and priorities.

“The healthy planet, healthy people framework, as the heart of the overall global GEF-8 architecture, emphasizes the critical connection between humanity and the environment – thus the importance of urgent environmental threats reduction and protection of our natural resources to improve human well-being (cannot be overemphasized),” said Loyzaga, a climate and disaster resilience advocate.

Before the dialogue, the GEF Secretariat paid a courtesy visit on the DENR Secretary on Jan. 17.

Loyzaga said the Philippines deeply values the consultative process in designing integrated approaches necessary to address the intersectionality of development, climate change, biodiversity, and disaster resilience and adopt a comprehensive risk management approach that integrates a system lens and optimizes the resources available to improve quality of life, which the DENR chief said “will ensure that no community and ecosystem is left behind.”

She said the Philippines shall work with the GEF in strengthening national commitments and institutionalizing capacities to translate these commitments into meaningful actions to support sustainable development since the GEF-8 calls for a systematic and

transformational strategy that responds to the urgency of raising global climate ambition.

In GEF-8, member countries are encouraged to move more their programming through 11 Integrated Programs, including food systems, landscape restoration, clean and healthy ocean, circular solutions to plastic pollution, elimination of hazardous chemicals from supply chains, net-zero, nature-positive accelerator, sustainable cities, greening infrastructure development and wildlife conservation for development.

The multi-stakeholder dialogue was designed to stir discussions toward finalizing the Philippines GEF-8 portfolio in accordance with the GEF-8 strategic positioning and programming directions.

Following a whole-of-society approach, the projects under GEF-8 will be implemented by national government agencies, local government units, development partners, non-government and people's organizations, scientific institutions and academe and other stakeholders during the four-year cycle covering 2023 to 2026.

The implementation shall be in coordination with the DENR's Foreign Assisted and Special Projects Service and the Office of the Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change, the country's national focal point for the GEF.

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

The GEF-funded projects are expected to realign private sector capital to achieve a wider scale and impact empowering local communities to harness their resources and capacities to protect livelihoods, uplift socio-economic conditions and enhance resilience.

Since 1992, the GEF has become one of the major driving forces supporting the country to achieve global environmental benefits embodied in various international environmental agreements.

In the Philippines, a total of 128 GEF-funded projects across the five focal areas of biodiversity, climate change mitigation, land degradation, chemicals and waste and

international waters have been approved since the pilot phase up until its Seventh Replenishment Cycle (GEF-7).

## RAPPLER

### [\[Opinion\] Should the Philippines develop nuclear energy?](#)

By: John Leo Algo

Nuclear energy has emerged as one of the most controversial issues on energy security and national development in the Philippines. The most recent Presidents, Rodrigo Duterte and Ferdinand Marcos Jr., have openly supported for nuclear to have a much larger presence in the country's energy mix.

With these pronouncements come renewed debates on whether to revive the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP), whose construction began under the rule of the current President's father. The power plant was never operationalized due to strong opposition over issues of corruption, high costs, safety, and sustainability, with attempts for its recommissioning successfully blocked in the past few decades.

However, with stronger political support, advocates for nuclear have been bolder on their claims for this energy source, citing its fewer greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions than fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas) that makes it a potential mitigation option against the climate crisis. They also emphasize its capacity to match the nation's baseload energy requirements.

At the moment, the nation is still in the stage of considering options for sites, technologies, and proposals for installing facilities. However, the Philippines has a chance to change its course and avoid making the same mistake again.

Nuclear energy should not become a major part of the future Philippine energy system. Here are reasons why.

#### **Safety and security threat**

The Philippines is exposed to different types of hazards, including climate-related threats such as typhoons and extreme rainfall. Without drastic reductions in GHG emissions, these threats can potentially become even more destructive in the coming years, around the time nuclear plants would start being operational. This is not to mention other natural hazards to which the country is exposed, especially earthquakes as it is situated right along the Pacific Ring of Fire.

It must be remembered that the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan occurred largely because of an earthquake and tsunami. Lessons must also be learned from the

case of the BNPP, which was ridiculously overpriced yet was filled with so many technical and financial issues that made it unideal to be operationalized.

With its high vulnerability to worsening climate change impacts and other natural risks, making the Philippines dependent on nuclear power puts many communities at high risk to the impacts of a potential disaster.

Supporters of nuclear energy have still not presented a clear-cut solution to the problem of safely disposing radioactive waste; not even developed nations have truly figured this out. Despite the frequent suggestion for disposing of used nuclear fuel deep underground, there is currently no such licensed geological repository. This means that the radioactive waste currently awaiting disposal presents a high risk of leaking radiation and other harmful impacts that can pose serious risks to human health and the environment.

Do not take the seemingly-high public support for nuclear at face value, either. Surveys may have shown that a majority of Filipinos are in favor of nuclear energy in the country, but they also reveal that many would not want a nuclear power plant or waste storage facility near their respective communities. Even former Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi recognized this, saying that “the only problem is, ang sinasabi ay not in my own backyard”. This proves that public support for nuclear power in the Philippines is more polarizing than what it seems.

Incidents like the Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters already show undeniable proof that nuclear poses higher levels of safety and security risks than other energy sources considered as alternatives to fossil fuels. This is why the Philippine government must exercise the precautionary principle, a vital part of the country’s environmental management framework, and protect the rights of its citizens to a healthy environment, as recognized under global and national policies.

### **Too costly**

As mentioned, the BNPP is extremely expensive. It was built based on a \$500-million proposal of Westinghouse Electric, but with its construction being littered with technical issues (i.e. location at high risk to earthquakes) and financial controversies, the project ended up costing \$2.3 billion. This has resulted in a tremendous debt that had to be repaid by generations of Filipinos, whether they support nuclear power, its proponent politicians, or otherwise.

Yet this is not a unique case, as a nuclear plant is known to be the most expensive plant type to build. Long project cycles and high capital costs make it a risky investment, which has been amplified during times of crises much like the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

There has also been many instances of construction delays, funding issues, project cancellations, and safety concerns associated with nuclear in many developed countries. These occurred despite strong government support, including through subsidies financed through shifting construction costs and the burden of risks to taxpayers.

Something similar is currently seen in the Philippines, where the current energy policy framework allows operators to pass on losses and costs incurred to consumers. Should nuclear plants be built, there is a likely possibility that the already-expensive electricity costs would even be higher.

It should be noted that the costs of electricity from renewable energy (RE) are projected to decrease in the coming years, while the cost from nuclear would increase instead. By 2030, RE-produced electricity will have a lower average levelized cost of electricity (LCOE) in the Asia-Pacific than that produced from either nuclear or coal.

For instance, the LCOE for solar photovoltaic will decrease from 2021 to 2030 for utility, commercial, and residential purposes. The LCOE for onshore wind will also be cheaper during this period. These types of RE are either cost-competitive or already cheaper than nuclear, which is likely to become more expensive by 2030, and much cheaper than coal or gas, the latter of which is another energy source being pushed for by the current administration.

Instead of yet another round of “band-aid” solutions, Philippine policymakers must instead commit to further develop RE instead of nuclear, coal, or any other fuel source.

## THE MANILA TIMES

### Uncertain future looms for PH, SEA 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 percent decline between 1990 and 2010, according to independent studies included in the survey. It is surpassed only by Myanmar, which suffered a 27.6 percent loss between 2000 and 2014.

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 3rd 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. Titled "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.

Five priority topics were suggested by the study: 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.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### [ASEAN economies urged to boost infrastructure investments](#)

By: Louella Desiderio

MANILA, Philippines — The expanded Association of Southeast Asian Nations economies should increase infrastructure investments to take advantage of opportunities and to address the climate change challenge, the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) said.

“As the global economy emerges from the pandemic crisis, member economies should strengthen infrastructure investments to seize a growing opportunity in the post-pandemic era and address rising policy issues such as climate change,” the AMRO said in a note.

It said a large infrastructure gap still exists in economies given the need for both traditional and new infrastructure.

AMRO said investments in digital infrastructure have become more important in addressing the health crisis amid the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

It said investments are also needed for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

While some ASEAN+3 member economies that rolled out fiscal stimulus measures included infrastructure projects to push for recovery during the pandemic, it said some had to reallocate resources to other programs, delaying some infrastructure projects.

In countries like the Philippines, Singapore and Brunei, the AMRO said the government reduced capital outlays in 2020 to reallocate resources on healthcare and to provide support to businesses hit hard by the pandemic.

While public capital expenditure decreased in these economies in 2020, it rebounded in 2021.

“Given economic slack and high uncertainties, public infrastructure investments can contribute to boosting the economic recovery and enhancing the growth potential, while maintaining debt sustainability,” AMRO said.

For better economic outcomes, the AMRO said there is a need to improve investment efficiency and enhance revenue collection.

As the macroeconomic impact of public infrastructure investment is based largely on the investment efficiency, AMRO said governments need to focus on strengthening the design and management of infrastructure projects by choosing projects based on rigorous cost-benefit analysis; monitoring and reviewing the implementation of projects to address the potential risks and issues preemptively; and improving the coordination and cooperation among public and private stakeholders.

It said the same measures should be considered in the design and management of public-private partnership projects.

In terms of revenue collections, the AMRO said there is a need to improve the efficiency of tax administration by maximizing the collection capacity and strengthening tax compliance.

“Introducing new taxes (such as carbon tax) and increasing tax rates could also be considered,” the AMRO said.

## [\[Opinion\] EU and the Philippines in 2023](#)

By: Luc Veron

As I wrote in this column last November, 2022 brought a renewed positive momentum in EU-Philippines relations. Our ambition is to keep going and build on this momentum to further develop our strong relationship. 2023 is shaping up to be a year where we will have plenty of opportunities to do so through various events, projects, initiatives, visits and engagements. Allow me to elaborate further on this.

Since the signing of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the Philippines in 2018, we have held annual meetings in which we discuss many topics and build further on new areas of cooperation. During these joint committee meetings, high-level officials from Brussels and the Philippines discuss all aspects of our extensive relationship. Topics range from the overall political situation and the environment, climate change, security and foreign policy to human rights, development cooperation and trade relations. For these last three matters, we delve further into the details in separate sub-committees to ensure that we deeply understand each other's interests and priorities. These meetings are an excellent opportunity to share best practices and truly learn from each other. My delegation has already started the preparations to ensure that we will have fruitful discussions again this year.

On EU partnerships with the Philippines, two primary programs are in the offing in 2023. On the one hand, we will see the launch of the Philippines' partnership with the EU Copernicus Earth Observation Program. Once the partnership is signed, the Philippines will have access to Copernicus's extensive database, which government agencies can use to streamline disaster response, monitor environmental efforts and update the country's forest and coastal resources maps.

On the other hand, we will see the launch of the Green Economy Program to support the Philippines in its inclusive and green recovery. Combating climate change and the transition to a green economy are top priorities in the EU's policy agenda internally and in our external relations. The Philippines also sees these as central to its future, so naturally, we cooperate in this area. And, of course, we will continue supporting the Philippines in reforming the justice sector and contributing to peace and development in Mindanao and the BARMM.

In 2023, we will also increase our cooperation in the maritime area. This is crucial for both the Philippines and the EU. Our cooperation aims to build capacity in partners' maritime law enforcement authorities to protect marine resources, counter illegal activities at sea and uphold the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Thus,

this year, we will continue to partner with the Philippine Navy, the Coast Guard, the National Coast Watch Center and other relevant authorities on maritime security through the EU's Crimario project. With Crimario, the EU aims to improve the region's law enforcement capacity and increase knowledge about the maritime domain through a regional coordination and communications tool. Cooperation in this area is crucial for the EU as approximately 50 percent of our maritime trade passes through this region.

In this context, we hope that our discussions can be deepened with the set up of an additional annual sub-committee focusing on maritime issues. In this forum, we will discuss, among others, the possibility of expanding cooperation on maritime jurisdictions, security, ocean governance and shipping. We will also work constructively on the training standards of Filipino seafarers.

2023 will be another important year for EU-Philippine trade relations. The EU is the Philippines' fourth largest trading partner, accounting for 7.9 percent of the country's total trade in 2021. Since December 2014, the Philippines has enjoyed enhanced trade preferences with the EU under the EU's Generalized Scheme of Preferences plus (GSP+). This special arrangement grants the removal of tariffs for Philippine exports to the EU on two thirds of all product categories.

In return, the Philippines commits to effectively implement 27 core international conventions on human and labor rights, environmental protection and good governance. As the current GSP+ scheme ends on Dec. 31, 2023, we will work closely with the Philippines on issues like the environment, climate change and human rights to ensure that the Philippines can continue to benefit from these trade preferences as the new scheme begins in 2024.

Respect for human rights is a top priority in the foreign policy of the EU and another area in which we will cooperate closely in the coming year. In this context, we strongly welcome the commitments made by the Marcos administration in various international fora to continue its work in this area. The EU will continue to be the Philippines' partner in this never-ending effort.

In this context, a delegation from the European Parliament and possibly the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Eamon Gilmore, will visit the country to discuss this important topic with all relevant stakeholders. Such visits ensure that policymakers in the EU have a thorough understanding of the country's situation and the various challenges and opportunities that exist to make progress.

As you can see, my colleagues at the EU Delegation to the Philippines and I will have plenty of work this year. We are all very excited that we can contribute to strong EU-Philippine relations and look forward to a very productive 2023!

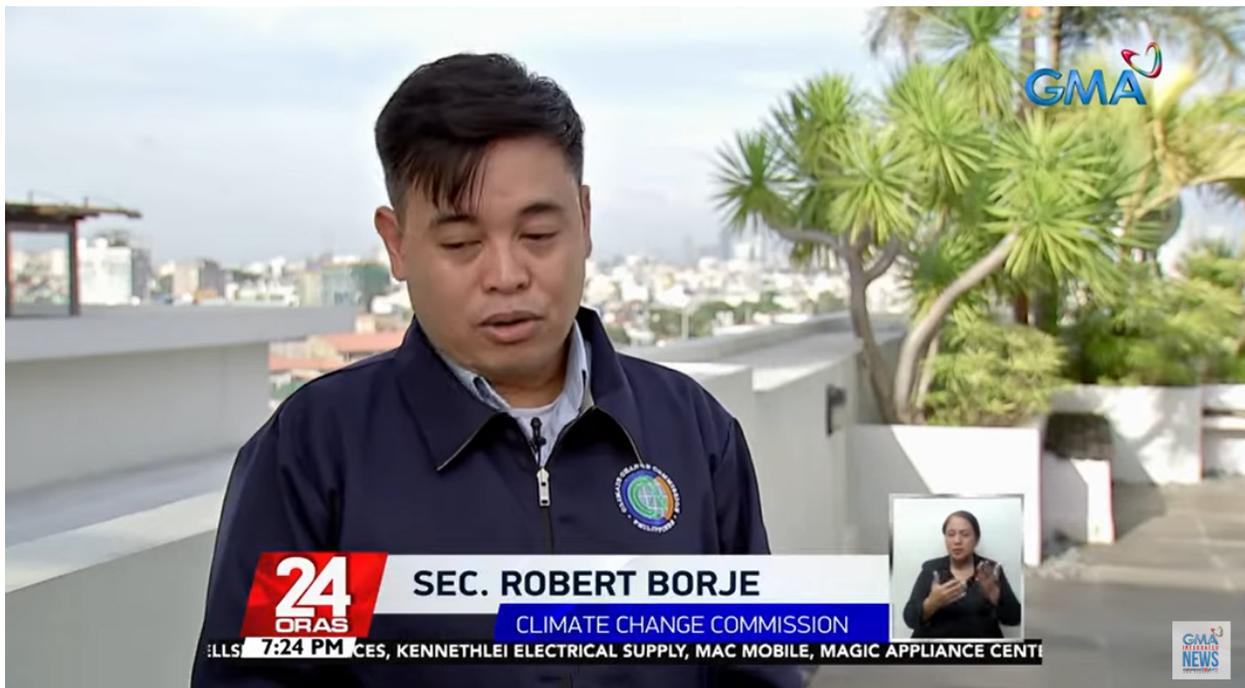
## CCC IN THE NEWS:

24 ORAS

### [PDP 2023-2028 tututukan din ang pagpapabilis ng mga programa laban sa epekto ng climate change](#)

By: Maki Pullido

“May mga iba’t ibang polisiya na tayong sinet in place and its a function right now of really implementing, scaling up, and intensifying the efforts.”



## DZBB

### [Panayam kay Climate Change Commission Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje.](#)

By: Tuesday Niu and Benjie Liwanag

Sec. Borje: Ang Climate Change Commission ay government agency that is tasked and mandated to come up with policies and coordinate policies on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

 **DZBB Super Radyo**   
@dzbb

LIVE sa DZBB: Sec. Robert Borje, executive director & vice chairman, Climate Change Commission

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## THE MANILA TIMES

### [CCC sees more govt action on climate change](#)

By: Bella Cariaso

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) said the inclusion of an accelerated climate change agenda in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028 will further strengthen the country's commitment to deliver key action to deal with climate change.

CCC Vice Chairman and Executive Director Robert Borje said the Philippines' plans to boost campaign against climate change was included in Chapter 15 of the PDP 2023-2028.

"The PDP Chapter 15 reflects the Philippine government's commitment and dedication to enhance the nation's overall resilience to climate change and its impacts, putting a premium on the need for integrated and comprehensive climate action between and among government, partners and all stakeholders," Borje said.

Borje added the PDP identified the goal for communities, institutions, and the natural and built environment to be more resilient to the impacts of natural hazards and climate change by 2028.

He added that among those to be undertaken include increasing climate and disaster risk resilience of communities and enabling transition to a low-carbon economy.

Borje said the CCC is updating its various programs, including the National Climate Change Action Plan, to support the PDP.

"These plans and frameworks provide convergence points for CCC to work with relevant government agencies on enhancing ecosystem resilience and enabling low carbon economy transition," he said.

Borje added that these plans and framework will allow the country to assess the required climate finance and investments on top of public resources for needed climate change actions.

"Toward this end, P453.1 billion has already been tagged for fiscal year 2023 for climate change expenditure to be used for adaptation and mitigation programs," he added.

Borje noted that the figure represents a significant 56-percent increase from the P289.7-billion budget in 2022, with 83 percent for adaptation and 17 percent for mitigation.

"This is an indication of the priority of the administration given to the transformative climate change agenda, as laid out by President Ferdinand Marcos [Jr.]," Borje noted.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### [Marcos Jr. ups budget for climate change programs by 48%](#)

By: Helen Flores

MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos has increased the funds allocated for climate change programs this year by about 48 percent, Climate Change Commission (CCC) vice chairman and executive director Robert Borje said yesterday.

Marcos has said climate action is particularly important to the Philippines, especially since the country is regarded as “one of the most, if not the most, vulnerable countries in the world to the effects of climate change.”

The President chairs the CCC.

Under Republic Act 9729, or the Climate Change Act of 2009, government agencies are mandated to allot funds for climate change-related activities, according to Borje.

“We call that climate change expenditure tagging and under this government, that increased by around 48 percent,” he said in an interview with radio station dzBB

“We have to ensure that various government agencies and various government institutions not just plan, but actually implement these climate change programs,” he added.

The CCC official earlier said a total of P453.1 billion has been allotted this year by national government institutions (NGIs) for climate change expenditure to be used for adaptation and mitigation programs.

He said the figure represents a 56-percent increase from the climate change expenditure tagged for Fiscal Year 2022 of P289.7 billion, with 83 percent for adaptation and 17 percent for mitigation.

He added that NGIs’ adaptation and mitigation projects must be anchored on the following National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) thematic priorities: food security, water sufficiency, human security, environmental and ecological stability, sustainable energy, climate smart industries and services, and knowledge and capacity development.

The NCCAP, developed by the CCC in consultation with relevant government agencies, outlines the country's strategic direction from 2011 to 2028 as a response to the current situation and projected impacts of climate change.

Borje also welcomed the inclusion of an accelerated climate change agenda in the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, saying this will further strengthen the commitment of the Philippine government to deliver on key climate actions.

The PDP presents the five-year vision of the Marcos administration toward an upper middle-income and low-carbon development, and a climate-smart and climate-resilient Philippines.

**=END=**