



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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- Plastics consumption to jump by 230%

## BUSINESS WORLD

### [\[Opinion\] Global Warming: Frontline Philippines](#)

By: Luis V. Teodoro

As this piece was being written, the number of dead, missing, and injured and the toll on agriculture and infrastructure were still rising in Oriental Mindoro, Camarines Norte, Samar, Romblon, and other provinces where almost every barangay had been devastated by days of torrential rain.

## **MANILA BULLETIN**

### **[DOST urges researchers, scientists to submit proposals for R&D funding in 2025](#)**

By: Dhel Nazario

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) is encouraging researchers and scientists to submit their proposals for 2025 via the DOST Project Management Information System (DPMIS) from May 1 to May 31, 2023.

### **[EU sees robust FDI inflows, trade with PH](#)**

By: Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat

The European Union, which is composed of 27-member countries, is confident of higher foreign direct investments inflow in the Philippines and robust trade surpassing pre-pandemic levels, but stressed the need to do more to further boost the country's competitiveness.

### **[QC LGU holds 'Cash to Trashback' program pop-up event in Barangay Tatalon](#)**

By: Aaron Homer Dioquino

The Quezon City Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Department (CCESD) led on Thursday, Jan. 26, the "Trash to Cashback" program pop-up event in a covered court in Barangay Tatalon where residents turned over their recyclable materials or wastes.

## **PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY**

### **[More Swiss Firms affirm bright investment prospects in the Philippines](#)**

MAKATI CITY -- Things are looking up for the Philippines as more Swiss firms have expressed their interest in investing in the country during the investment mission to Switzerland at the sidelines of the Philippines – European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the 5th Philippines – Switzerland Joint Economic Committee (JEC) Meetings in Switzerland on 9 – 13 January 2023.

## **PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY**

### **[Giant iceberg the size of London breaks free of Antarctica](#)**

ISTANBUL – A giant iceberg -- the size of greater London -- broke free from Antarctica, researchers said Tuesday.

## **SUNSTAR**

### **[\[Opinion\] Atmospheric rivers](#)**

By: Rox Peña

We have underground rivers, like the one in Puerto Princesa which was dubbed the 7th wonder of the world, but I did not know there are also aboveground rivers. Yes, there is water flowing like a river up there in the sky. They are called atmospheric rivers. The recent heavy rains and flooding in the state of California in the United States is caused by this weather phenomenon.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Govt, private sector not ready for an energy crisis](#)**

By: Niña Myka Pauline Arceo

THE government and the private sector need to work together to head off an energy crisis, the country's chief energy regulator said Thursday.

## **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

### **[Philippines improves in green finance, digitalization index](#)**

By: Louise Maureen Simeon

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines saw improvements in its economic readiness on green finance and digitalization, but the domestic ecosystem needs an upgrade as the country continues to lag behind in the region.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### ABS CBN

#### [Climate Change Commission, First Gen sign deal to help LGUs fight climate change](#)

MANILA - First Gen Corp said on Thursday it signed a deal with the Climate Change Commission to help communities and local government units prepare plans to adopt and fight climate change.

### BUSINESS WORLD

#### [Organics industry touts waste reduction approaches to mitigating climate change](#)

By: Sheldeen Joy Talavera

THE organics industry said it advocates minimizing waste as a response to climate change, an approach that requires food waste to be minimized and plant-based diets to be embraced.

### GMA DZBB RADYO

#### [Kakayahan ng mga LGU sa pagtugon sa climate change, paiigtingin sa tulong ng Climate Change Commission \(CCC\) at pribadong sektor.](#)

By: Tuesday Niu

Papalaksin ng Climate Change Commission ang kakayahan at kapasidad ng Local Government Unit para matugunan ang nararanasang Climate Change sa Bansa.

### MANILA STANDARD

#### [CCC-First Gen tieup](#)

Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Roque (center) and First Gen Corp. president Francis Giles Puno (fourth from right) participate in a tree-planting activity inside the Eugenio Lopez Center in Antipolo, Rizal after signing a memorandum of agreement to strengthen climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives of First Gen's partner-communities and LGUs.

## **PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY**

### **[MOU to enhance local govts' climate resilience plans inked](#)**

By: Azer Parrocha

MANILA – The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and Local Climate Change Adaptation for Development, Inc. (LCCAD) have agreed to boost their partnership to enhance the capacity of local government units (LGUs) in formulating and updating Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs).

## **RMN NEWS**

### **[Climate Change Commission, palalaksin ang suporta sa mga LGU para matugunan ang masamang epekto ng climate change sa bansa](#)**

Palalaksin ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) ang puwersa ng local government units (LGUs) nito upang matugunan ang nararanasang climate change sa bansa.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Plastics consumption to jump by 230%](#)**

By: Bella Cariaso

AN official of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) warned on Thursday that without measures in place, consumption of plastics in the Philippines would increase by 230 percent in 2040.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **[\[Opinion\] Global Warming: Frontline Philippines](#)**

By: Luis V. Teodoro

As this piece was being written, the number of dead, missing, and injured and the toll on agriculture and infrastructure were still rising in Oriental Mindoro, Camarines Norte, Samar, Romblon, and other provinces where almost every barangay had been devastated by days of torrential rain.

No super typhoon was responsible, and neither is it the rainy season. Low pressure areas (LPAs) and the clash between hot and cold air have nevertheless been bringing floods to parts of southern Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao.

No country can long endure the human and material costs of the unpredictability and intensifying violence of the weather disturbances that climate change is generating across the planet — and in the Philippines they have made even more problematic the poverty and destruction that bureaucratic bungling and corruption has inflicted on millions of Filipinos.

The increasing number of the super typhoons that have been smashing into the Philippines, the unseasonal weather, the tornados, cyclones, droughts, floods, and exceptionally cold winters in other countries are among the many indications that time is running out and the hour of what could be the end of the human race approaching.

Among the most vulnerable countries to global warming is the Philippines: it is a frontliner in the seemingly global rush to extinction. Not only is it in the path of typhoons; it also sits on the Pacific “ring of fire” that powers earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The deaths, the injuries, and the billions in property losses and livelihood from these disasters contribute to the poverty and want that already define the lives of millions of Filipinos.

Even without global warming, crafting and implementing a national disaster mitigation program has always been among the responsibilities of any Philippine administration. To the need for such a program has been added the necessity of incorporating in it provisions that will give the Philippines a fighting chance in surviving the onslaught of the weather anomalies climate change is generating.

But the National Government has been remiss in the making of such a program. Local government units (LGUs) complain not only of the lack of funds for the dredging of

creeks and rivers and for resident relocation, but also of the erratic and even non-existent reach of the food and other aid communities need during the current weather crisis.

No sense of urgency drove the previous administration to remedy the situation. Then President Rodrigo Duterte even had an excuse for his limited response to the victims of the super typhoons that ravaged the country, despite the billions of pesos budgeted for that purpose. Instead, he promised in 2021 to look for the funds needed to rehabilitate devastated communities. Hence it was mostly from foreign sources — the UN, Japan, the US and other countries — that those affected obtained some relief.

Unfortunately, neither has there been any sign that the Marcos II regime is seriously thinking of addressing the problems that climate change is aggravating, such as the decline in agricultural productivity and the losses in lives and property in the affected communities. Mr. Marcos is instead focused on regaling the rest of the world with his administration's supposedly great economic achievements, the vast investment opportunities in the Philippines, and his sudden mastery of the complex realities of the country's foreign relations.

Not all the 20 or so weather disturbances that enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) annually make landfall. But even those that do not can still bring rains, flash floods, and landslides. Depending on the power of their winds, the rain they bring, and the number of places they ravage, those that do make landfall can be even more devastating. And as recent events are demonstrating, the rains from LPAs alone can bring unprecedented disasters to the most vulnerable communities.

These phenomena are likely to intensify, and they affect the entire country and the lives of everyone in it. Social and natural scientists have described the climate crisis as a threat worse than nuclear war to the future of organized human life. But little is being done in the Philippines by either local governments or their national counterpart to protect the most vulnerable communities from flooding and storm surges. Rather than pro-active risk-reduction, which global warming has made more urgent, government response to disasters has been mostly reactive and limited to moving those affected to improvised evacuation centers, distributing instant noodles and sardines, and urging them to relocate.

But neither the incentives, the means, nor the opportunity to relocate have been provided the residents of coastal communities, who are in perennial danger from storm surges, and those who live in places below average flood levels. Some do manage to evacuate when typhoons batter their communities. But they return to the same sites to

repair or rebuild damaged or destroyed homes, and hence are in constant danger of losing their lives and property when the next typhoon comes.

Relocating can prevent the repetition of the same woes. But without access to livelihood sources, water supplies, and electric power in places they are unfamiliar with, few families are willing to risk it. And yet the millions still being spent on maintaining such frivolities as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) Dolomite Folly could be better spent on, among others, providing endangered communities the incentives that could help reduce the annual human and material costs of weather disturbances.

Together with such a program, a national plan could include the construction of a system of levees along the country's most vulnerable coastal areas. A network of permanent evacuation centers could also be constructed, and stricter engineering standards implemented in the construction of roads, bridges, buildings, homes, and other infrastructure.

Global warming has been attributed to, among others, the carbon dioxide and methane gasses that are released into the atmosphere by industries and the burning of fossil fuels of such countries as the United States, the European countries, Japan, and China. Reducing such emissions to stop the rise in global temperatures is therefore mostly those countries' responsibility. They have to forge and implement working protocols to regulate their environmentally destructive industries and reduce the amount of pollutants from other sources discharged into the atmosphere. Among the existing conventions for that purpose are the Paris Climate Agreement and the Kyoto Protocol, but their implementation is hampered by the industrialized countries' resistance to regulating the industries responsible.

Although not among those countries, the Philippines could make the use of alternative sources of power generation mandatory, together with the strict implementation of the Clean Air Act (RA 8749). It can also contribute to the global imperative of halting the threat by adopting a national plan devised by scientists, environmentalists, and other experts to ease the impact of disasters on the most endangered sectors of the population.

Ecologists and environmental activists have long been alerting the planet on the perils of climate change, but the governments of most countries, among them that of the Philippines, have not paid much attention to them. The "inconvenient truth," as former US Vice-President Al Gore noted over two decades ago, is that not only national plans are needed but also a truly global program to address climate change.

Mr. Marcos could use his new-found skills in international relations to convince the rest of the world of that need. But rather than just globe-trotting, he could also craft and implement the policies that can combat the ravages of global warming here, in frontline Philippines.

## MANILA BULLETIN

### [DOST urges researchers, scientists to submit proposals for R&D funding in 2025](#)

By: Dhel Nazario

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) is encouraging researchers and scientists to submit their proposals for 2025 via the DOST Project Management Information System (DPMIS) from May 1 to May 31, 2023.

DOST Secretary Renato Solidum, Jr. made the statement as the agency opened its call for proposals for R&D funding for the year 2025 at Mabalacat, Pampanga during the first leg of its nationwide campaign.

“Our role here would be to support innovation and provide a nurturing environment for researchers in the country. Ultimately, all our efforts are geared towards attaining higher productivity for industry, boosting our economy and attaining a better quality of life for every Filipino through technological and innovative solutions,” Solidum said. The Call for proposals has set priority areas from the four R&D councils of DOST.

For Industry, Energy, and Emerging Technology, project proposals should focus on the following priority areas: energy; construction; utilities; transportation; food; process; mining and minerals; metals and engineering; advanced materials and nanotechnology; optics and photonics; information and communication technologies; electronics; artificial intelligence (AI); space technology application; convergence of emerging technologies/industry 4.0 and smarter cities; environment; disaster risk reduction-climate change adaptation (DRR-CCA); unmanned vehicle systems; creative industries (games, animation, and film); creative industries; capability development; and science communication.

For Health Research and Development, priority areas are Drug Discovery & Development (Tuklas Lunas®), functional foods, nutrition, and safety, reemerging and emerging diseases, OMIC technologies for health, diagnostics, biomedical engineering for health, digital and frontier technologies for health, disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation in health, and mental health.

For agriculture, priority crop research areas include mango, coffee, and sugarcane. DOST is also looking for R&D projects in managing economically important emerging pests and animal feeds resource enhancement.

In basic research, priority areas are: Those that generate discoveries and new scientific knowledge/information; Those that forge linkages between the government mainly local government units (LGUs), academe, industry sector, and civil society; Those that serve as the basis for evidence-based policymaking and program development, through the fusion of science and the arts, technology, and innovation and 4) Those that ensure translation and transfer of social technologies to the people and various publics. Through effective management of funds in key sectors, DOST investment in high-impact and sustainable programs that are significant in addressing national concerns.

This aligns with the research priorities along four major areas: human well-being promotion, wealth creation, wealth protection, and sustainability.

DOST encourages the early submission of quality research proposals. Interested parties may visit the DOST Project Management Information System (DPMIS) at this website <https://dpmis.dost.gov.ph/>

## EU sees robust FDI inflows, trade with PH

By: Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat

The European Union, which is composed of 27-member countries, is confident of higher foreign direct investments inflow in the Philippines and robust trade surpassing pre-pandemic levels, but stressed the need to do more to further boost the country's competitiveness.

During the launch of The Doing Business in the Philippines 2023 Publication, a guidebook for foreign investors in the country by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), EU ambassadors and ECCP officials cited the country's timely economic reforms – the Foreign Investments Act, Retail Trade Liberalization, Public Service Act, and amendment to the implementing rules and regulations allowing full foreign ownership in renewable energy – in the economic recovery after the pandemic.

EU Ambassador to the Philippines Luc Veron projected that robust bilateral trade will continue this year, surpassing the pre-pandemic level. "Indeed, open trade and investment are crucial to generate the growth and jobs," Veron added.

In terms of FDI, Veron said that the developments in the Southeast Asia region, particularly the Philippines, are seen with increasing interest in Brussels, the seat of the EU government and European businesses.

Veron noted that EU is "doing very well" in terms of FDI in the Philippines. He noted that investors would look at the positive factors in the Philippines such as being part of a fast-growing region and even growing than its peers, and a very young and growing workforce with a good level of education.

"So, if I'm an investor, I'm going to look at these," he said adding that most of the EU enterprises and even those in the European Free Trade Associations (EFTA) are composed of small and medium but which constitute very good potential for investments in the Philippines.

But Veron also emphasized saying, "I will not hide the fact that in our view, even more can be done for the competitiveness of the Philippines."

There are critical issues that are not addressed in the doing business, like the reliability of power supply, and the reliability of connectivity.

In addition, he cited the issue of justice or redress for investors when disputes occur citing the modernization of the delivery of Justice in the country as contained under Chapter 12 of the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028. He said that delivery of justice has direct link between the economy and the government.

This is important as the Philippines is engaging the world with the President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s visit to Davos for the World Economic Forum stressing its "It is very important to put the Philippines on the map."

Thus, the need to address other factors such as environment, climate change, energy and production.

Furthermore, the impact of the pandemic on global supply chain and the economic consequences of the crisis of the Russian war against Ukraine. He further noted that EU has recognized the need to better balance the risks of its supply chains and reduce dependencies on specific providers and markets to create more quality jobs.

He also cited the critical role of an open rule-based trade and investment environment and the role that these rules play in upholding the common economic model and ensuring well being

"And this is why the EU, its trade policy puts a strong emphasis on sustainable development," he pointed out adding that this is a central pillar in EU's bilateral relationships.

ECCP President Lars Wittig also said they are expecting "billions worth" of FDIs to come to the Philippines's way, driving global competitiveness and economic development further.

Alongside the economic reforms, Wittig further stressed that "step-up efforts" such as creating green and resilient infrastructure as well as further prioritizing the wellness and education of the Filipino workforce, be also prioritized.

ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein said "We are very bullish on the Philippines" as he cited the landmark legislations that opened up the economy further.

Gottein further cited the implementation of the Ease of Doing Business law, which is implemented by the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA). He urged to further strengthen the implementation of the law and enforcement, pointing out that "efforts not always trickle down to the frontliners in different government agencies."

“So, we still up until now experience or getting feedback from some of our members that you know, some permits take longer than they actually should,” he said. Instead of coming up with other pieces of legislation, he urged the government to focus on the EODB law implementation to basically “roll out the red carpet instead of red taping.”

For his part, Norway Ambassador Christian Halaas Lyster also cited the important legal and policy reforms that have been brought in the Philippines.

“These reforms opened key economic sectors to foreign investment, modernize customs, and could have the potential to improve the ease of doing business,” he said. In particular, Norway welcomed the revision of the IRR on RE that if fully implemented and without restrictions can be beneficial to businesses and investors also from Europe.

He reported positive results of the recently concluded Joint Committee meeting between the Philippines and EFTA (European Free Trade Association) composed of the four small but rich states – Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland. The Joint Committee discussed economic issues relating to the bilateral free trade agreement implementation.

In particular, he noted issues on reimbursements of customs duties, recent developments in the Philippines regarding fertilizers, implementation of licensing requirements related to fish and maritime marine products, particularly exports of Norwegian salmon.

He raised that the new rules and regulations should be in accordance with the EFTA agreement.

Also discussed are issues under the trade and sustainability chapter, and the implementation or ratification of international labor convention as well as the Philippines domestic policies on freedom of association, child labor and climate change.

And from the Philippine side, reference was made to find this finalization of the tripartite approach roadmap under the ILO organization. Both parties also discussed sustainable development, which is a top priority of EFTA countries.

“Such an agreement with the joint committee will also help pave the way forward in ensuring that the Philippines as such will become also an even more competitive country in the future,” he said.

## [QC LGU holds ‘Cash to Trashback’ program pop-up event in Barangay Tatalon](#)

By: Aaron Homer Dioquino

The Quezon City Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Department (CCESD) led on Thursday, Jan. 26, the “Trash to Cashback” program pop-up event in a covered court in Barangay Tatalon where residents turned over their recyclable materials or wastes.

The program is in line with the local government’s goal to make the city clean and livable.

Under the program, which was launched in March 2021, various recyclable, clean, and dry plastics, paper, and metal materials turned over by residents can be converted into “environmental points” which they can use to pay for utilities (water and electricity) or buy groceries and other necessities.

The city government said that the program allows the citizens to actively participate in the city’s waste diversion initiative or the recovery of recyclables and single-use plastics. It is also open for non-residents who want to help in saving the environment.

They have already diverted over 120,000 kilograms of recyclable materials from waste streams while around 320,000 points were redeemed by the residents.

In a Facebook post in February 2022, the city government said that individuals should turnover three kilograms of single-use plastics or one kilogram of other recyclables to get environmental points

Citizens and non-residents can visit around 10 drop-off and exchange booths at the QC Hall Park and Lagoon, Meralco Business Centers and in the city’s six districts to turnover their wastes and get points. The booths are open Mondays to Fridays, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

They can visit the QC CCESD Facebook page for more details regarding the program: [https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=pfbid024wLa5hCbLePx1MYSTSEWSHENThVaghg3Hcsq25u5VWeH8e9y3EmE8zNRF9Qdh1Mvl&id=100066537197967&mibextid=Nif5oz](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid024wLa5hCbLePx1MYSTSEWSHENThVaghg3Hcsq25u5VWeH8e9y3EmE8zNRF9Qdh1Mvl&id=100066537197967&mibextid=Nif5oz)

## PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

### [More Swiss Firms affirm bright investment prospects in the Philippines](#)

MAKATI CITY -- Things are looking up for the Philippines as more Swiss firms have expressed their interest in investing in the country during the investment mission to Switzerland at the sidelines of the Philippines – European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the 5th Philippines – Switzerland Joint Economic Committee (JEC) Meetings in Switzerland on 9 – 13 January 2023.

“With no less than the President as the country’s number one salesperson in pitching the Philippines, the country’s improved business climate continues to soar high as several multinational companies ramp up their interests in setting up businesses in the country along with existing firms expanding their investment portfolios,” Trade Undersecretary and Board of Investments (BOI) Managing Head Ceferino Rodolfo said as he led the first investment post-pandemic mission in Switzerland.

An initial US\$24.7 million worth of Swiss investment commitments with a potential job generation of 475 were generated in the business meetings arranged by the BOI and Philippine Trade Investment Center (PTIC) in Geneva in Bern and Zug, Switzerland.

Undersecretary Rodolfo and the Philippine Team met with SATECO AG, a manufacturer of high-precision silicone keypads and silicone sensors, supplying big automotive players with a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in the Philippines. The company has committed to infuse US\$9.7 million (Php530.5 million) for a state-of-the-art, high-performance production facility at the TECO Industrial Park, comprised of two stages with full implementation eyed for 2024.

The Philippine Team also met with Swiss startup company NaturLoop which has plans to launch a US\$15 million Cocoboard factory in the Philippines by 2026. The company is currently developing a supply chain for coconut husks in Quezon province with local partners including ProSource International Inc. and Quezon Federation and Union of Cooperatives (QFUC).

During the 5th Philippines-Switzerland JEC Meeting, the BOI along with the private sector-led movement Digital Pilipinas pitched opportunities for priority sectors, which include IT-BPM, electronics, fintech, and contract research organization (CRO), in line with the country’s digital transformation efforts as part of the administration’s goal in keeping up with global innovations and boosting more economic activities.

“These initial investment commitments are promising as we look forward to the growing interest of Swiss firms in the Philippines and benefits from the game-changing reforms pursued by the Marcos administration such as the amendments to the Public Service Act (PSA), Retail Trade Liberalization Law (RTL), Foreign Investment Act (FIA) and the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the Renewable Act of 2008, the latter also allowing full foreign ownership in renewable energy, particularly in solar, wind and tidal RE” Undersecretary Rodolfo added. “There is now a greater demand for sustainability solutions in order to address impact of climate change; hence it is in the country’s interest to pursue investments in renewable energy and green projects,” he said.

The Philippine Team also visited the facility of OVD Kinegram, based in Zug, which specializes in the design, production, and supply of the KINEGRAM optical security feature to protect government documents and banknotes. Rodolfo stressed that the Philippines is one of the largest markets of the OVD Kinegram, particularly in the development of the National IDs that cover over 100 million people. The company is also working closely with the Bangko Sentral nang Pilipinas (BSP), Land Transportation Office (LTO), Social Security System (SSS), and Department of Education (DepEd) for securitized documents/ permits and licenses.

They also met with Glencore, a Swiss multinational mining company that owns 78 percent of the Philippine Associated and Refining Corp. (PASAR) which operates a copper smelting facility in Leyte.

“The combination of vast resources of critical green metals such as nickel, cobalt, and copper, the presence of suitable locations such as the Leyte Ecological Industrial (LEIZ), along with the government’s strong commitment and efforts on sustainability and rich human capital makes the Philippines a vital and reliable chain partner that enables investors to profitably serve customers regionally and globally,” Rodolfo pointed out.

From 2017 to the 3rd quarter of 2022, Swiss investment approval by the country’s investment promotion agencies (IPAs) reached Php1.4 billion. Notable BOI-approved Swiss investments include projects of Nestle, Avaloq, and CPW. As of 2021, Switzerland ranked as the Philippines’ 26th biggest trading partner (out of 224), 17th largest export market (out of 206), and 29th biggest import supplier (out of 211). Philippine exports to Switzerland grew by 17.3 percent in 2021 as it shipped US\$528.2 million, up from US\$450.4 million in 2020. (PEZA).

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### [Giant iceberg the size of London breaks free of Antarctica](#)

ISTANBUL – A giant iceberg -- the size of greater London -- broke free from Antarctica, researchers said Tuesday.

“A huge iceberg (1550 km<sup>2</sup>), almost the size of Greater London, has broken off the 150m (meter) thick Brunt Ice Shelf,” the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), the UK’s national polar research institute, said on its website.

“It calved after cracks that have been developing naturally over the last few years extended across the entire ice shelf, causing the new iceberg to break free,” it added.

The iceberg broke free on Sunday.

“The iceberg calved when the crack known as Chasm-1 fully extended through the ice shelf,” it added.

The break-off occurred a decade after the BAS scientists first noticed the expansion of sizable cracks in the ice, the statement said, adding that it is the second significant calving from this area in the past two years.

Quoting BAS Director Dame Jane Francis, the statement said: “Our glaciologists and operations teams have been anticipating this event.”

The scientists measured the ice shelf multiple times and “how the ice shelf is deforming and moving, and are compared to satellite images from ESA, NASA and the German satellite TerraSAR-X,” Francis added.

“All data are sent back to Cambridge for analysis,” he said. “So we know what is happening even in the Antarctic winter – when there is no staff on the station, it is dark for 24 hours and the temperature falls below minus 50 degrees C (or -58F).”

‘Calving event has been expected’

For his part, a BAS glaciologist Dominic Hodgson said: “This calving event has been expected and is part of the natural behavior of the Brunt Ice Shelf. It is not linked to climate change.”

“Our science and operational teams continue to monitor the ice shelf in real-time to ensure it is safe, and to maintain the delivery of the science we undertake at Halley,” Hodgson added.

The BAS Halley Research Station is situated on Antarctica’s Brunt Ice Shelf. The area of the ice shelf where the research station is located, according to BAS glaciologists who have been observing the ice shelf’s behavior, is now “unaffected” by the recent calving occurrences.

According to the statement, the Brunt Ice Shelf’s glaciological structure is complex, and the effects of calving episodes are unpredictable. After Chasm-1 started to expand in 2016, BAS scientists moved the station 23 kilometers (14 miles) inland as a precaution.

Since 2017, employees have been deployed to the station only during the Antarctic summer between November to March.

There are currently 21 employees working on the station to maintain the power supplies and facilities that allow scientific studies to continue remotely throughout the winter.

According to satellite monitoring, in 2012 a chasm (Chasm-1) that had been dormant for at least 35 years began to show the first indications of alteration. Since 2015, Chasm-1 has been expanding, and by December 2022, it has spread across the entire ice shelf, signaling the start of the calving event.

## SUNSTAR

### [\[Opinion\] Atmospheric rivers](#)

By: Rox Peña

We have underground rivers, like the one in Puerto Princesa which was dubbed the 7th wonder of the world, but I did not know there are also aboveground rivers. Yes, there is water flowing like a river up there in the sky. They are called atmospheric rivers. The recent heavy rains and flooding in the state of California in the United States is caused by this weather phenomenon.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the US, atmospheric rivers are relatively long, narrow regions in the atmosphere that transport most of the water vapor outside of the tropics. These columns of vapor move with the weather, carrying an amount of water vapor roughly equivalent to the average flow of water at the mouth of the Mississippi River in the U.S. When the atmospheric rivers make landfall, they often release this water vapor in the form of rain or snow.

Another agency, the United States Geological Survey (USGS), said that the formation of an atmospheric river starts near the equator. The sun heats the earth most directly at the equator, and these warm temperatures cause water to evaporate and rise into the atmosphere. Some of that water vapor is pulled away from the equator by atmospheric circulation, forming a narrow band that transports the water vapor to other regions like a conveyer belt.

Did you know that the Philippines, being near the equator, is one of the sources of atmospheric rivers? I read an article written in March 2016 by former U.S. Vice President and climate activist Al Gore where he said that the rapidly warming ocean water surrounding the Philippines is the origin of the “atmospheric river” which fueled the record downpours that flooded the American South that year. Al Gore mentioned two atmospheric rivers that affected the U.S.- the Pineapple Express which hit California and the Mayan Express which struck the South-Central U.S.

Atmospheric rivers flow in the lowest part of the atmosphere, only about half a mile (800 meters) to a mile (1600 meters) above the ground. When they reach the coasts and flow inland over mountains, the atmospheric river is pushed upwards, causing much of that water vapor to condense and fall to the ground as rain or snow, creating an atmospheric river-driven storm.

On average, Atmospheric rivers are 400-600 kilometers wide. They move with the weather and are present somewhere on the Earth at any given time. They can be hundreds to thousands of kilometers long, and though they are narrow in the context of weather systems, "narrow" can mean up to 483 kilometers across.

Atmospheric rivers come in many shapes and sizes, those that contain the largest amounts of water vapor and the strongest winds can create extreme rainfall and floods. Most of them however are weak systems that often provide beneficial rain or snow that is crucial to the water supply. Atmospheric rivers are a key feature in the global water cycle and are closely tied to both water supply and flood risks.

Since Atmospheric rivers are fueled by heat, climate change will most likely make them worst in the future.

## THE MANILA TIMES

### [Govt, private sector not ready for an energy crisis](#)

By: Niña Myka Pauline Arceo

THE government and the private sector need to work together to head off an energy crisis, the country's chief energy regulator said Thursday.

Guesting at a forum organized by The Manila Times in partnership with Aboitiz Power, Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) Chairman and CEO Monalisa Dimalanta said the government and private sector are not doing enough to avert such a crisis.

Dimalanta admitted there is not enough collaboration between the two sectors in looking for immediate solutions for high electricity costs and soaring fuel prices. "But, definitely something in the midterm and long term, we are doing everything that we can," she said.

"We are forced to look for innovative techniques, innovative ways of doing things. Maybe now, energy efficiency is no longer just nice to have. Maybe finally we will realize that it should be part of our energy planning and energy system," Dimalanta said.

Another forum participant, Aboitiz Chief Investment Officer Joseph Lacson, said the government and private corporations are working hard to address the issue.

"We see from our viewpoint a lot of hard work being put in by good people, to address the needs. We are in talks with the stakeholders, Meralco, and with the government," Aboitiz said.

Other energy experts provided insights into the prevailing energy situation in the country.

Charlie Ayco, chairman and CEO of WeGen Laudato SI' Inc., believes the technology for achieving energy security is already available, and it is just a matter of how best it would be put to use.

Ayco recommended harnessing solar energy for entire communities, not just individual homes. "Solar is the most affordable [form of energy]," he said.

Rolando Paulino, president of the Philippine Energy Independence Council explored issues related to climate change, energy transition and energy security.

Paulino suggested using solar panels to energize farmlands, "Putting in the solar panels, thinking how to use the land more effectively and efficiently, actually contribute to both the security and affordability of electricity," he said.

Green Tiger Markets Chief Executive Officer John Knorring identified three areas that need priority in preparing for an energy crisis: affordability, volatility and reliability.

Knorring said the Philippines has the highest electricity rates in Southeast Asia, with a kilowatt-hour costing P10.180.

The country will be left far behind by its neighbors if the cost of electricity is not brought down, he said.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### [Philippines improves in green finance, digitalization index](#)

By: Louise Maureen Simeon

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines saw improvements in its economic readiness on green finance and digitalization, but the domestic ecosystem needs an upgrade as the country continues to lag behind in the region.

Based on the Asia House Annual Outlook 2023 released by the independent think tank and advisory service, the Philippines improved seven notches in the economic readiness index for both green finance and digitalization.

The index covered Asia 8, namely the Philippines, China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Thailand.

For green finance, the Philippines scored 48 out of the perfect score of 100, an improvement from 41 in 2022. It saw a boost across all factors of financial resilience, financial development, ease of capital measure, and equitable ecosystem.

Despite the increase, the Philippines still lagged in the eight countries, ranking second to the last before India, which scored 47.

In terms of digitalization, the country's score also went up seven notches to 47 from 40, with improvements in digital facilitation of trade, domestic digital depth, and digital knowledge transfer.

However, its score on expanding industrialization slipped six notches to 26. Still, the Philippines ranked fourth in Asia 8 in digitalization.

“The Philippines will continue to see economic growth, surpassing many of its regional neighbors. Policymakers should use the resilience of the economy to improve the domestic ecosystem for green finance and digitalization, given the lagging readings in our indices for both,” Asia House said.

“Prioritizing economic readiness to tackle both climate change and digitalization will be crucial for the growth transition in 2023 and beyond,” it said.

Asia House noted that the Philippines needs to grow its local green bonds and encourage banks to extend green loans or finance sustainable investments.

It should be noted that the majority of the sustainable bonds issued by Philippine companies are in foreign currencies, with the local currency sustainable bonds accounting for only 4.5 percent of the corporate bond market.

As to digitalization, Asia House maintained that e-commerce is slated to play an important role in the country's economic development.

The country's internet economy is growing and expected to reach \$35 billion by 2025, with e-commerce taking the lion's share.

The Department of Trade and Industry already launched an e-commerce roadmap to improve the digital infrastructure and the contribution of e-commerce to the Philippine economy.

But Asia House warned that the country faces several barriers to digital transformation, including low adoption by medium-sized and smaller businesses, a lack of awareness of existing digital policies, and gaps in digital access and digital skills.

## IN THE NEWS:

### ABS CBN

#### [Climate Change Commission, First Gen sign deal to help LGUs fight climate change](#)

MANILA - First Gen Corp said on Thursday it signed a deal with the Climate Change Commission to help communities and local government units prepare plans to adopt and fight climate change.

First Gen President Francis Giles B. Puno and CCC Secretary Robert E.A. Borja on Jan. 24 signed a memorandum of agreement which aims to strengthen climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives of First Gen's partner communities and LGUs and promote their science- and evidenced-based risk assessments, the Lopez-led firm said.

"Our mission of forging collaborative pathways simply means that we cannot do it alone. Signing an agreement with [the CCC] is completely aligned with what our company is trying to do, in addressing an important challenge that's ahead of us – climate change," Puno said during the MOA signing.

Under the MOA, both parties agreed to several commitments including training of key stakeholders using CCC's Communities for Resilience (CORE) modules, among others.

They also committed to enhancing the scope of First Gen's climate change information education and communication (IEC) program called Create for the Climate (CFTC), the company said.

First Gen's host municipalities will be provided with guidance and technical assistance in the formulation and enhancement of the Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP), it said. The CCC also committed to organize training related to LCCAP development and People's Survival Fund (PSF) development for selected officials and personnel of First Gen's partner communities.

"We are very much encouraged that First Gen has taken upon itself to collaborate with the [CCC] and the other government agencies... What also struck me was the fact that we were one in our desire... to really move the development agenda forward for the Philippines," said Borje, who is also the Vice Chairperson and Executive Director of the Climate Change Office.

The CCC is the policy-making body of the government tasked to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the programs and action plans of the government relating to climate change.

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **[Organics industry touts waste reduction approaches to mitigating climate change](#)**

By: Sheldeen Joy Talavera

THE organics industry said it advocates minimizing waste as a response to climate change, an approach that requires food waste to be minimized and plant-based diets to be embraced.

At the Organics Fair on Thursday staged by the Mother Earth Foundation (MEF), MEF said it aims to promote “positive ripple effects in catalyzing action for food waste reduction, sustainable food consumption, healthy plant-based diets, and organic agriculture.”

“This is to mainstream organics management here in the Philippines and also promoting the repair-refill-reuse program of Mother Earth Foundation. Also, to collaborate with fellow advocates — to show to the public that we can manage our organic waste,” Rannie M. Lebria, MEF program officer, told BusinessWorld.

Over 22 micro, small, and medium enterprises exhibited their organic products at the fair, including food and bamboo-based hygiene supplies.

The fair also featured demonstrations of composting techniques.

Senator Loren B. Lagarda, who heads her chamber’s committee on the environment, said in a statement: “We need to correct our behavior and mindset when it comes to single-use plastics by adopting more sustainable practices to mitigate their detrimental effects on our environment, health, and climate.”

The event was staged in collaboration with the Environmental Management Bureau office in the National Capital Region, the Climate Change Commission, community engagement group Alagang Ayala Land, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives Asia-Pacific and UMI Fund.

The Organics Fair runs until Jan. 27 at the Ayala Malls Trinoma Activity Center. Hours are between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.

## **GMA DZBB RADYO**

### **Kakayahan ng mga LGU sa pagtugon sa climate change, paiigtingin sa tulong ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) at pribadong sektor.**

By: Tuesday Niu

Papalaksin ng Climate Change Commission ang kakayahan at kapasidad ng Local Government Unit para matugunan ang nararanasang Climate Change sa Bansa.

Sinabi ni Climate Change Commission Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert Borje na nilagdaan na ng kanilang hanay at ni First Gen Corporation President at Chief Operating Officer Francis Giles Puno ang isang Memorandum of Agreement na susuporta sa lokal na pamahalaan para pagandahin ang kanilang Local Climate Change Action Plan o LCCAP at kung papaano magkakaroon ng access sa Pepole Survival Fund o PSF.

Ang First Gen Corporation ay ang nangungunang kompanya na nagbibigay ng malinis renewable energy sa bansa.

## MANILA STANDARD

### [CCC-First Gen tieup](#)

Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Roque (center) and First Gen Corp. president Francis Giles Puno (fourth from right) participate in a tree-planting activity inside the Eugenio Lopez Center in Antipolo, Rizal after signing a memorandum of agreement to strengthen climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives of First Gen's partner-communities and LGUs.

With them are (from left) First Gen senior manager for corporate social responsibility Janice Dugan, CCC chief of strategic partnerships division Alexis Lapiz, First Gen vice president and CSR head Shirley Cruz, First Gen vice president for external affairs and security Ramon Araneta, CCC chief of staff Carol Kay Paquera, First Gen vice president and head of corporate communications Ricky Carandang and CCC executive assistant Sheilla Ducay.

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## CCC-First Gen tieup

**ms** by **Manila Standard** — January 26, 2023, 9:27 pm in **Gallery, Photos** AA

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Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Roque (center) and First Gen Corp. president Francis Giles Puno (fourth from right) participate in a tree-planting activity inside the Eugenio Lopez Center in Antipolo, Rizal after signing a memorandum of agreement to strengthen climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives of First Gen's partner-communities and LGUs. With them are (from left) First Gen senior manager for corporate social responsibility Janice Dugan, CCC chief of strategic partnerships division Alexis Lapiz, First Gen vice president and CSR head Shirley Cruz, First Gen vice president for external affairs and security Ramon Araneta, CCC chief of staff Carol Kay Paquera, First Gen vice president and head of corporate communications Ricky Carandang and CCC executive assistant Sheilla Ducay.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### [MOU to enhance local govts' climate resilience plans inked](#)

By: Azer Parrocha

MANILA – The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and Local Climate Change Adaptation for Development, Inc. (LCCAD) have agreed to boost their partnership to enhance the capacity of local government units (LGUs) in formulating and updating Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs).

In a news release on Thursday, the CCC announced that its Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert Borje and LCCAD Executive Director Manuel Rangasa signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that aims to upgrade LGUs' capacity in drafting climate resilience plans.

“The MOU enables the CCC and LCCAD to work together in enhancing LGUs’ LCCAPs and integrating these into other local plans, such as the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the Comprehensive Development Plan and Contingency Plans,” the CCC said.

Among the key outcomes of the partnership are the recommendation of appropriate climate and disaster database development and modeling technology to support the LCCAPs, and establish enabling mechanisms for LGUs to implement their climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

Borje said the MOU was necessary to further build the capacities of LGUs as “front-liners of climate action.”

“Transformative climate action can be achieved through partnerships – partnerships based on principles of cooperation, good governance, and shared advocacy in building the nation’s overall climate resilience,” Borje said.

Rangasa, meanwhile, said enhancing the capacities of key players, including agencies, LGUs, and other stakeholders, would allow the LCCAD to develop and share best practices between regions, particularly communities with common vulnerabilities.

Likewise, CCC Commissioner Albert dela Cruz Sr. assured that the CCC would constantly support the LGUs in the formulation, planning, and implementation of climate change action plans in their respective areas by collaborating with key stakeholders and launching capacity-building activities.

"The key to a climate-resilient Filipino nation is to strengthen the cooperation between and among our stakeholders, including the LCCAD, on mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation in local development and investment planning across the country," dela Cruz said.

Data from the CCC showed that LCCAP submissions increased by 95 percent from 715 submissions in 2021 to 1,397 as of Dec. 31 last year.

The CCC's target is to have 100 percent compliance from 1,715 LGUs by Fiscal Year 2024.

The LCCAP, which serves as the LGU's plan for enhancing local climate resilience, includes information on fit-for-purpose climate actions anchored on the LGU's site-specific risks and vulnerabilities.

The CCC is the lead policy-making body of the government tasked to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate government programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local, and sectoral development plans toward a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

## RMN NEWS

### [Climate Change Commission, palalakasin ang suporta sa mga LGU para matugunan ang masamang epekto ng climate change sa bansa](#)

Palalakasin ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) ang puwersa ng local government units (LGUs) nito upang matugunan ang nararanasang climate change sa bansa.

Ayon kay CCC Vice-Chairperson at Executive Director Robert Borje, pinirmahan ng kanilang hanay at ni First Gen. President at Chief Operating Officer Francis Giles Puno ang Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) na susuporta sa LGUs para pagandahin ang kanilang local climate change action plans o LCCAPS at kung papaaano magkakaroon ng access sa people's survival funds.

Layunin din ng MOA na i-update ang climate and disaster risk assessments at greenhouse gas inventory ng mga LGUs.

Batay sa talaan ng CCC, as of January 19, 2023, nasa 1,715 LGUs mula sa 1,399 ang nakapagsumite ng kanilang LCCAPS kung saan inaasahan ng komisyon na maabot ang isang daang porsyentong compliance sa taong 2024.

Binigyang-diin ni Borje na target din ng MOA na mas patatagin pa ang mga lokal na komunidad sa mga negatibong epekto ng climate change.

Sinabi pa ng opisyal na buhay, kabuhayan, at kinabukasan ang nakataya kaya kailangang magtrabaho ang pamahalaan kasama ang lahat ng stakeholders para maging matagumpay ang bansa sa epekto ng climate change.

Ang MOA signing ay sinundan ng pagtatanim ng seedlings ng narra, ipil, banuyo at supa trees sa binhi arboretum sa Antipolo City.

## THE MANILA TIMES

### [Plastics consumption to jump by 230%](#)

By: Bella Cariaso

AN official of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) warned on Thursday that without measures in place, consumption of plastics in the Philippines would increase by 230 percent in 2040.

"With more evidence showing that the planet is increasingly being polluted, the CCC is one with the urgent calls to adopt more sustainable consumption and approaches," said CCC Commissioner and lawyer Rachel Ann Herrera during the International Zero Waste Cities Conference in Quezon City.

Citing a World Bank study, Herrera said the amount of unrecycled plastics might also increase to three million metric tons by 2030 without government intervention.

She reported that based on Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) data, at least 133 truckloads of plastics or equivalent to two cubic meters were collected from different pumping stations in Metro Manila alone during the last six months of 2022.

"It is an indication that not all our LGUs (local government units) are completely enforcing the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act which is a 22-year-old law and also the recycling rate of plastic packaging is relatively low in our cities, our municipalities," Herrera said.

She said that a big portion of the solid waste being generated in the country comes from plastics.

Herrera expressed confidence that the implementation of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act of 2022 will boost the country's campaign against plastics.

The law aims to reduce the volume of plastic waste generation and extend the life of plastics by adding value or purpose through upcycling or recycling.

Environment Secretary Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga has signed the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 11890 or "EPR Law."

The law mandates large-scale companies to establish a mechanism for recovery, treatment and recycling of the plastic packaging of their products.

Corporations with total assets of over P100 million will be required to recover a certain percentage of their plastic packaging waste, or else pay a fine.

The EPR Law sets incremental targets that should be fulfilled yearly until 2030.

For 2023, companies were obligated to recover 20 percent of their plastic waste.

Producers, distributors and retailers implementing initiatives under the EPR Law will be eligible for tax incentives.

Fines ranging from P5 million to P20 million will be imposed for failure to comply with the provisions and meet the target recovery rates of the EPR Law.

**=END=**