



## **NEWS ROUNDUP**

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### **ABS CBN**

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## **PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

### **[What climate spending really costs the world](#)**

By: Bjorn Lomborg

Across the world, public finances are stretched dangerously thin. Per person growth continues dropping while costs are climbing for pensions, education, health care, and defense. These urgent priorities could easily require an additional 3-6 percent of GDP. Yet green campaigners are loudly calling for governments to spend up to 25 percent of our GDP choking growth in the name of climate change.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### [DepEd's disaster funds 'insufficient,' difficult to access — report](#)

By: Cristina Chi

Restrictive procurement processes have prevented the Department of Education from swiftly accessing its quick response fund before disasters strike, while overall disaster preparedness funding meets only up to 15% of actual needs in high-risk regions like Bicol.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **ABS CBN**

### **[Climate change increased likelihood of Los Angeles wildfires, study finds](#)**

Climate change increased the likelihood of the deadly fires that ravaged Los Angeles this month, killing at least 28 people and damaging or destroying nearly 16,000 structures, according to a study published Tuesday by a group of scientists from the U.S. and Europe.

The study by World Weather Attribution - a coalition of scientists from different institutions that researches the impact human-induced climate change has on extreme weather events - found that climate change made the fires 35% more likely.

The scientists also said the low rainfall experienced by the Los Angeles area during October to December, which is traditionally the start of the rainy season in California, is now 2.4 times more likely.

Combined with the annual dry, hot Santa Ana winds that blow from the desert throughout southern California, and it made for the "perfect storm," said John Abatzoglou, a professor of climatology at the University of California, Merced.

"These are very, very fast-moving fires. The wind speeds were incredibly, incredibly strong. And we had an incredibly dry and contiguous fuel bed. So realistically, this was a perfect storm when it comes to conditions for fire disasters, the ingredients in terms of climate enabling and weather driving the fires, and the huge built environment right downwind from where these ignitions occurred," he said.

The scientists also found that drought conditions "now last about 23 more days each year on average than in the preindustrial climate," the researchers said.

Dr. Friederike Otto, co-lead of the World Weather Attribution, said their study had not yet been peer reviewed but use peer reviewed methods and will be submitted for peer review.

## DAILY TRIBUNE

### [ADB lends \\$500M for multi-year disaster resilience program](#)

By: Kathryn Jose

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$500 million loan for the Philippines to support the implementation of disaster resilience and health emergency programs.

In a statement on Wednesday, ADB said the loan is part of the Second Disaster Resilience Improvement Program for the country.

"The Philippines is one of the fastest-growing economies in Southeast Asia but is at high risk for earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, typhoons, rising sea levels, and flooding," ADB country director for the Philippines Pavit Ramachandran said.

The Philippines ranked highest in disaster risk among 193 countries in the World Risk Report 2024.

ADB noted that Filipinos experience an average of 20 typhoons per year and up to 150 earthquakes of varying magnitudes within the same period.

The new loan is consumable within five years and is renewable after that period as long as some of the funds remain unused.

With the additional funding, ADB expects the government to effectively implement the Philippines' Public Financial Management Roadmap. This includes strategies for the efficient distribution of national and local funds for disaster resilience and health emergencies.

"With this program, we aim to strengthen policies and frameworks and attain long-term resilience to lessen the impact of disasters, especially on the most vulnerable sectors," Ramachandran said.

Beyond its archipelagic nature and location within the Ring of Fire, the Philippines is also facing the impacts of climate change, which intensify typhoons and droughts.

According to the 2023 Sustainability Report of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, natural disasters caused P24.4 billion worth of damage to agricultural goods and infrastructure.

## **GMA NEWS**

### **[ADB OKs \\$500-M loan for PH disaster resilience](#)**

By: Jon Viktor D. Cabuenas

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved another loan for the Philippines, this time a \$500-million policy-based agreement for financing in case of disasters caused by natural hazards and health-related emergencies.

According to the ADB, the financing will assist reforms to raise resilience and enable the country to respond to disasters and recover in a timely manner as well as minimize the impact on the economy and lives and livelihoods of Filipinos.

It seeks to harmonize disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) planning processes at the national, provincial, and city levels and integrate these into national public financial management reforms.

It also aims to boost gender equality, disability, and social inclusion in DRRM plans and improve the services delivered by state-owned and controlled corporations when it comes to disaster response. It will also provide an additional stream of risk financing that offers faster payouts for damages.

The loan will be under the Second Disaster Resilience Improvement Program, which will be a multiyear financing program with an option to replenish the facility twice upon approval of the multilateral lender. Renewals will also be allowed should there be unused funds in the initial five-year period.

“The Philippines is one of the fastest-growing economies in Southeast Asia but is at high risk for earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, typhoons, rising sea levels, and flooding,” ADB country director for the Philippines Pavit Ramachandran said in a statement.

“With this program, we aim to help boost the country’s capacity for disaster risk reduction and management nationally and locally, including state-owned and controlled corporations; strengthen DRRM policies and frameworks; and attain long-term resilience to lessen the impact of disasters, especially to the most vulnerable sectors,” he added.

The ADB last November approved a \$500-million policy-based loan under the Climate Change Action Program Subprogram 2, which seeks to support the Philippines’ implementation efforts to stabilize the world’s climate under the Paris Agreement.

## GREENPEACE

### [Would the world change if we taxed the super-rich?](#)

By: Camilo Sanchez

You're probably paying more taxes than the richest people on Earth. Why? Because, unlike you, the super-rich can evade paying their fair share.

The tax money that billionaires are not paying could tackle the climate and environmental crises and ensure access to health and education that millions need and have the right to. This unreasonable concentration of wealth and power is putting ecosystems, democracies, economies, and millions of lives at serious risk.

"You could have paid your rent if these extremely rich people had paid their taxes" said Carl Schlyter, the co-host of Greenpeace's SystemShift, the podcast that explores how we can move from a world that serves the economy to an economy that works for people and the planet.

This week, starting SystemShift season 3 with the first episode *Would the World Change If We Taxed the Super Rich?*, we talked with Chenai Mukumba, Executive Director of the Tax Justice Network Africa.

"There's no money" or so they say

There is a widespread narrative that there are not enough public funds to pay for people's welfare and even less for climate and environmental action – as recently happened at the COPs, where negotiations for public funding stalled. However, several reports have shown that funds are available, they are just in the wrong place.

The Tax Justice Network estimates that USD 492 billion is lost every year to tax abuse – from multinational corporations and the super-rich. "Within the African continent, we're losing close to US\$ 90 billion annually," Chenai said.

If everyone paid their fair share of taxes

Those billions raised through taxes could provide substantial funding for universal basic services like healthcare, education, housing, community-owned renewable energy projects, and affordable public transportation, as well as creating jobs and fostering ecological resilience.

If implemented under a good and transparent governance system, a wealth tax can help reduce income inequality by redistributing wealth (and power) and even repair historical injustices.

That is what Chenai describes as the 5 R's of taxation: besides revenue-raising, taxes also contribute to redistribution, repricing, representation and reparations, making wealth tax such a powerful solution. "Tax is our superpower," she stated.

She also explained how wealth taxes work and how to ensure that resources raised from wealth taxes in rich nations reach the most vulnerable countries and communities.

Could this system shift any soon? Yes!

It's time for governments to #TaxTheSuperRich – who are right now mingling with world leaders at the World Economic Forum.

Today, global tax rules are being discussed in many multilateral forums and in countries around the world. Argentina, Belgium, Colombia, France, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, and the Netherlands are some of the countries that have already adopted or proposed different types of wealth taxes. If all countries followed Spain's example, USD 2 trillion could be raised per year, globally.

The growing momentum around this issue is focused on the UN Tax Convention process and among the G20, made up of countries where more than 68% of citizens agree with taxing the rich.

“This conversation about a global tax system needs to happen at the UN, where every single country has a seat at the table,” Chennai added.

What's our role as an individual? What can we do?

These are some concrete steps we can take to support the #TaxTheSuperRich demand:

1. Listen or watch the first episode of the new season of the SystemShift podcast – which inspired this blog post.
2. Sign the petition and urge governments to #TaxTheSuperRich now and to use those funds to support people and protect the planet.
3. Learn more about global tax rules. You can start by reading this: [We need global tax rules that work for people like me \(not multinational corporations and the ultra rich\)](#)



## MANILA STANDARD

### [Eliasch promises climate for change if elected IOC president](#)

Johan Eliasch says he was as surprised as anyone that he threw his hat into the ring to succeed Thomas Bach as IOC president but he told AFP he is the right person to meet the disparate challenges that lie ahead, especially the pivotal issue of the environment.

Eliasch is a highly successful businessman and renowned environmentalist—making him a pertinent candidate in light of the recent wildfires in 2028 Games host city Los Angeles—and has been president of the International Ski Federation since 2021.

He hopes such a CV will dazzle his electorate, the International Olympic Committee members, when they choose one of the seven candidates to be Bach's successor in March this year, even if he has only been a member since July.

Eliasch may lack the profile of athletics icon Sebastian Coe and the inside knowledge of the IOC that Juan Antonio Samaranch Junior possesses after two decades as a member, but he believes he has the skillset required to run the most powerful body in sport.

"I have been an adviser to governments on protecting the environment and taking action on climate change," he told AFP in an interview this month.

"I have been very involved in technology, I have run a major company. I run the biggest winter sports federation, which provides 55 percent of all events in the Winter Games.

"The bottom line is if they are looking for somebody with a lot of experience and expertise I am your man."

Eliasch, who refers to himself as Anglo-Swedish as he has spent more time in Britain than his country of birth, said the new president arrives at a crucial moment.

"We are at a crossroads where expectations are very high and if you get things wrong it will not be a soft landing, it will be a crash landing," he said.

"So it is important to have the right person steering us into the future and there are going to be some very big decisions coming up in sport."

Eliasch, who says as he will be 63 come the election, it will be "his last hurrah".

'Slippery slope'

On key issues such as the environment and sustainability he has a proven track record—for example, he founded Cool Earth, a charity dedicated to rainforest conservation in 2006.

“I was always passionate about nature,” he said.

“There is an existential threat, though, centring round food, water and climate security.

“If you cut down rainforests in one part of the world rain falls in different places, then agricultural land becomes non-productive and people start moving round, which provokes conflicts.”

The art-loving Eliasch, a keen sportsman himself who has tried his hand at skiing, curling, tennis, golf and motor sports, said the LA fires were a taste of what is to come.

“We can’t afford to take our eye off the ball for even just a second, as far as climate change is concerned,” he said.

“The LA fires — the destruction and heartbreak they’ve caused, and how close they’ve come to LA28 venues — it shows us the urgency, and how vigilant and prepared and well-resourced we must be to avoid, manage and contain these extreme weather events.

“Because the sad fact is we’re going to see more of them in the future, not less.”

On the thorny issue of Russia and the Olympics, he admires the work done by Bach.

Russia as a nation state has been out in the sporting cold since President Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Eliasch, though, believes it was right to allow Russians and Belarusians to compete as neutral athletes at the Paris Olympics last year.

“This goes to the very core of the Olympic movement, our ability to unite,” he said.

“Here we can be part of the solution to facilitate a faster peace.

Yes we have to be sensitive to countries who have very strong opinions, but we must never compromise our neutrality.

“We must not tread in political waters as that is a slippery slope.”

## **MINDANAO TIMES**

### **[Applications now open for 2025 Climate Reality Training in Bacolod City](#)**

The Climate Reality Project, founded by former US Vice President Al Gore, invites Filipinos to apply for the Climate Reality Leadership Corps Training in Bacolod City on 29 March 2025.

This free training program is part of Mr. Gore's the REALITY® Tour—a global initiative aimed at building momentum for bold climate action to phase out fossil fuels and combat rising temperatures.

The training is designed to empower youth leaders, professionals, government officials, and representatives of vulnerable communities as changemakers in solving the climate crisis.

“As we witness delays in climate progress in key regions like the United States, it is essential for the Global South to lead with courage and conviction. The Philippines has a vital role to play, given its vulnerability to climate impacts and its storied history in climate diplomacy,” said Nazrin Camille Castro, branch manager of Climate Reality Philippines.

The Philippines, along with the Global South, was pivotal in championing the 1.5°C threshold at the 2015 Paris Agreement, a target critical to safeguarding the planet's most vulnerable populations.

“Filipino voices must resonate in global climate discussions. This training amplifies our collective voice, enabling us to drive solutions rooted in our unique experiences,” added Castro.

A unique opportunity for climate advocates

Participants will engage in sessions on energy transitions and grassroots action facilitated by international and local climate experts. The program also provides opportunities to connect with like-minded advocates and build a robust network for impactful climate initiatives.

Graduates of the one-day training will join the Climate Reality Leadership Corps, a global community of over 47,000 advocates from more than 191 countries working toward a low-carbon, climate-resilient, and sustainable future. In the Philippines, nearly 2,000 Climate Reality Leaders are already driving change across various sectors.

“While we have a strong network of Climate Reality Leaders in the Philippines, the worsening climate crisis calls for further expansion and growth. We hope this training inspires deeper commitments to solve the climate crisis—one Filipino at a time,” added Castro.

## Participation Details

**Cost:** Participation is free and includes meals during the training.

**Travel & Accommodation:** Participants are responsible for their own arrangements.

**Eligibility:** Open to individuals aged 18 years and above who are passionate about climate action and community leadership.

**Registration:** Interested applicants must apply at [bit.ly/climaterealitybacolod](https://bit.ly/climaterealitybacolod). Deadline for registration is on 20 February 2025. Only 100 slots are available.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/climaterealitybacolodinfo](https://bit.ly/climaterealitybacolodinfo). For inquiries, contact The Climate Reality Project Philippines at [philippines@climatereality.com](mailto:philippines@climatereality.com).

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

### [What climate spending really costs the world](#)

By: Bjorn Lomborg

Across the world, public finances are stretched dangerously thin. Per person growth continues dropping while costs are climbing for pensions, education, health care, and defense. These urgent priorities could easily require an additional 3-6 percent of GDP. Yet green campaigners are loudly calling for governments to spend up to 25 percent of our GDP choking growth in the name of climate change.

If climate Armageddon were imminent, they would have a point. The truth is far more prosaic. Two major scientific estimates of the total global cost of climate change have been published recently. These are not individual studies which can vary (with the costliest studies getting copious press coverage). Instead, they are meta studies based on the entirety of the peer reviewed literature. One is authored by one of the most cited climate economists, Richard Tol; the other is by the only climate economist to win the Nobel prize, William Nordhaus.

The studies suggest that a 3 degrees Celsius temperature increase by the end of the century—slightly pessimistic based on current trends—will have a global cost equivalent to between 1.9 percent and 3.1 percent of global GDP. To put this into context, the United Nations estimates that by the end of the century, the average person will be 450 percent as rich as he or she is today. Because of climate change, it will feel like “only” 435-440 percent as rich as today.

Why is this so different from the impression we have been given in the media? Alarmist campaigners and credulous journalists fail to account for the simple fact that people are remarkably adaptable and tackle most climate problems at low cost. Take food: climate campaigners warn we'll starve, but research shows that instead of a 51 percent increase in food availability by 2100 if there were no climate change, we are on track for “only” a 49 percent increase. Or weather disasters: they killed half a million people annually in the 1920s, whereas the last decade saw fewer than 9,000 fatalities each year. The 97.5 percent reduction in mortality is because people are more resilient when they're richer and can access better technology.

Extremist climate campaigners and far-left politicians reveal their true colors when they push for “degrowth” to cut emissions. Making people worse off and reversing gains against extreme poverty would be a tragic mistake, making it harder to address all our other problems. Moreover, it is laughable to envision that the West's strategic adversaries like Vladimir Putin will embrace a similar approach.

More responsible politicians “only” want to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. But this approach still means slowing growth in the name of climate change, by forcing businesses and individuals to use less-efficient green energy instead of fossil fuels. The

total costs would be enormous, between \$15-\$37 trillion each year throughout the century, equivalent to 15-37 percent of global GDP today.

Given wealthier Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries will foot most of this bill, the price tag will be the equivalent to each person in the rich world paying north of \$10,000 every year. Not only will this be politically impossible, but the benefit will be a far smaller 1 percent of GDP across the century.

The real cost of inefficient climate policy is that it distracts resources and attention from other priorities. Europe offers an abject lesson. Twenty-five years ago, the European Union proclaimed that with massive investments in research and development throughout the economy, it would become “the most competitive and the most dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world.” It abjectly failed: innovation spending hardly budged and the EU is now far behind the US, South Korea, and even China.

Instead, the EU switched focus and with a near-myopic climate obsession opted for a “sustainable” economy over a sound one. The EU’s decision to increase its 2030 emission reduction targets was pure virtue signaling. The cost is likely to top several trillion Euros, yet the entire effort will merely reduce temperatures by the end of the century by a trivial 0.004 degrees Celsius.

Not focusing on innovation has stunted Europe. The Euro area has seen anemic annual growth over the past decade of just over 1 percent per person. For the two trillion euros it has spent on symbolic climate policy, the EU could have lived up to its own innovation spending targets for two decades.

Investment in innovation could have made the EU and the world 60 trillion euros richer in the long run, generating 500-times more benefits than its symbolic climate policy benefits. Crucially, it would have allowed the EU more leeway to tackle other key challenges like pensions, education, health care, and defense.

The rest of the world needs to pay heed to Europe’s example and stop wasting money on bad climate policies.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### [DepEd's disaster funds 'insufficient,' difficult to access — report](#)

By: Cristina Chi

Restrictive procurement processes have prevented the Department of Education from swiftly accessing its quick response fund before disasters strike, while overall disaster preparedness funding meets only up to 15% of actual needs in high-risk regions like Bicol.

The DepEd Quick Response Fund is a standby emergency fund provided by the Department of Budget and Management for post-disaster reconstruction, repairs and rehabilitation of school buildings.

"DepEd's disaster funds are insufficient and constrained by procedural limitations, hampering proactive disaster preparedness and effective response efforts," according to a report by the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM 2) released Tuesday, January 28.

The commission cited DepEd Undersecretary Annalyn Sevilla, who said in a November hearing that the department struggles to utilize the quick response fund "proactively before disasters occur due to restrictive procurement processes."

This limitation, EDCOM 2 noted, hampers the department's ability to prepare and respond effectively.

Schools are also currently limited to P20,000 for cleanup activities and P50,000 for minor classroom repairs under their maintenance and operating expenses (MOOE).

These constraints have led to appeals to the Commission on Audit to exempt clean-up funds from strict audits to facilitate quicker response times.

In Bicol (Region V) — which saw a record number of typhoons devastate its residents last year — the Disaster Preparedness and Response Program funds for both 2023 and 2024 have been depleted, according to DepEd Undersecretary Revsee Escobedo as cited in the report. The pooled funds covered only 10-15% of the region's needs.

To address these challenges, EDCOM 2 recommended building weather-resistant schools designed for local climate risks, implementing real-time disaster monitoring systems using data from UPRI, PAGASA, and PHIVOLCS, and investing in solar power for off-grid schools.

"As extreme weather conditions are expected to worsen in the coming years due to climate change, the educational sector in the Philippines will continue to face significant challenges in maintaining consistent and effective learning environments for its students," the commission said.

EDCOM 2 said the commission and DepEd will study mechanisms to improve the quick response fund's accessibility as Philippine schools face increasing challenges from extreme weather events.

Last December, DepEd directed schools to create detailed "Learning and Service Continuity Plans" for all types of educational disruptions. The order also expanded school heads' power to suspend classes based on local conditions and required schools to have ready plans for distance learning when disasters strike.

Under the guidelines, schools must identify alternative delivery modes for different types of disasters, plan for learning resource distribution, and submit quarterly reports on class suspensions. The order also officially recognized extreme heat and poor air quality as grounds for class suspensions, alongside traditional threats like typhoons and floods.

Schools struggled with class disruptions throughout 2024, from six typhoons that struck Luzon in rapid succession between October and November, to dangerous heat levels that reached up to 43 degrees Celsius in April, forcing hundreds of campuses to suspend in-person classes.

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