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[Asia-Pacific SDG progress 'stagnating'](#)

By: Aubrey Rose A. Inosante

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MANILA STANDARD

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[First Lady Calls For Global Collaboration To Address Climate Change](#)

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[LAWA at BINHI: A Shield for Climate Change](#)

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The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Western Visayas (DENR-6) on Tuesday called on candidates in the May 12 midterm elections to become environmentally conscious and spare trees from their campaign materials.

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President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Tuesday called on the officials and employees of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to be consistent in fulfilling their mandate and remain vigilant against “modern” challenges such as climate change.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Rains expected across Philippines due to three weather systems](#)

By: Ian Laqui

Cloudy skies with rains are expected across the country due to three weather systems on Tuesday, February 18, state weather bureau PAGASA said.

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DAILY TRIBUNE

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By: Secretary Robert E.A. Borje

As we celebrate love in its many forms, we often forget one critical relationship — the one we share with our planet. Just like in any relationship, our connection with the Earth requires active participation, understanding, and nurturing. Drawing inspiration from Gary Chapman's five love languages, let's explore how each can guide our approach to climate change action.

DAILY GUARDIAN

[Philippines Charts Bold Path for Climate Goals](#)

By: Francis Allan L. Angelo

The Philippines has set ambitious climate goals under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), committing to a 75% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[DPWH, MLIT Japan strengthen partnership to combat urban flooding and enhance water resources management in the Philippines](#)

The Philippine government, through the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), has strengthened its collaboration with Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism (MLIT) to enhance flood control and water resources management efforts in flood-prone areas across the country.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS WORLD

Asia-Pacific SDG progress 'stagnating'

By: Aubrey Rose A. Inosante

The Asia-Pacific region is expected to miss most of its sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030, with progress stagnating and even regressing, especially for climate action, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) said.

“Overall, progress on the 17 SDGs is off track. Most targets are either stagnating or advancing too slowly, meaning we’re not moving at the pace needed to achieve our 2030 goals,” ESCAP Statistics Division Director Rachael Joanne Beaven said in a virtual forum on Tuesday.

In the 2025 Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report, ESCAP said that among the 117 specific targets for which there is sufficient data, only 16 are on track to be achieved by 2030, while 18 targets show “a negative trend in need of urgent reversal,” with most of these related to climate-related challenges and disaster risk.

Ms. Beaven said the region is lagging the global pace on climate action (SDG 13), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), life below water (SDG 14), and partnership for the goals (SDG 17).

“On climate action, goal 13, the region is not just slow, it’s regressing. Instead of moving forward, we’re seeing setbacks that threaten our collective efforts to combat climate change,” she said.

Other targets of the Asia-Pacific that regressed were the share of renewable energy in the total energy mix and sustainable tourism, the report said.

“The region is regressing on climate action, undermined by the impact of disasters and the continuing growth of greenhouse gas emissions. Fossil fuel subsidies and unsustainable production patterns hinder progress towards a sustainable economy,” ESCAP Deputy Executive Secretary Lin Yang said.

Out of the 17 SDGs, the region has made “significant progress” in industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9) and good health and well-being (SDG 3).

In the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ESCAP reported that the region has regressed on three SDGs 2015 — climate action, life below water, and responsible consumption and production.

ASEAN is likely to achieve 11 SDGs by 2030 if the pace of progress is maintained. Three SDGs cannot be evaluated due to insufficient data.

“Data gaps persist in critical areas, particularly in gender equality (SDG 5) and peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16),” Ms. Lin said.

The sufficiency SDG data in the region rose to 54% in 2024 from 47% in 2021, she added.

The report said that out of 169 targets, 50 cannot be assessed, and only 16 targets are on track to be achieved by 2030, with data on disability, migration, and rural communities remaining limited.

Japan approves new climate, energy and industry policies through 2040

Japan's government approved on Tuesday new targets to cut the country's greenhouse gas emissions through 2040, alongside a revised energy plan and an updated industrial policy for the same period.

The measures, which seek to bolster long-term policy stability for businesses, focus on promoting decarbonization, ensuring a stable energy supply and strengthening industrial capacity to drive economic growth.

Under the new climate policy, Japan aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 60% from 2013 levels by 2035 and by 73% by 2040, extending its 2030 goal of a 46% cut.

The emissions-cutting target sparked calls for deeper reductions from experts and ruling coalition members when it was first proposed, as the world's fifth-biggest carbon emitter struggles to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels.

Despite more than 80% of 3,000 public comments supporting a more ambitious target, the environment and industry ministries finalized the goal without changes, citing prior deliberations by climate experts.

As part of global efforts to combat climate change, Japan plans to submit its new target, known as a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement, to the United Nations this month.

The revised energy policy aims for renewables to account for up to 50% of Japan's electricity mix by fiscal year 2040, with nuclear power contributing another 20% as the country pushes for clean energy while meeting rising power demand.

Japanese utilities have struggled to restart nuclear reactors since the 2011 Fukushima disaster, limiting nuclear power to just 8.5% of Japan's electricity supply in 2023.

The new energy plan removes the previous goal of minimizing reliance on nuclear and calls for building next-generation reactors.

A new national strategy integrating decarbonization and industrial policy through 2040, aligned with the emission target and energy plan, was also approved by the cabinet.

It aims to develop industrial clusters in areas rich in renewable energy, nuclear power, and other low-carbon power sources.

However, uncertainties are emerging around Japan's policies, as the domestic offshore wind market, a key driver of renewable energy growth, faces headwinds from inflation and high costs, recently prompting Mitsubishi Corp. to review three domestic projects.

Additionally, the decision by U.S. President Donald Trump to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris Agreement and its negative stance on renewable energy have further clouded global expansion efforts.

MANILA STANDARD

January hottest ever, says WMO

The world has just experienced the hottest January ever recorded, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said, citing data crunched by UN partner the Copernicus Climate Service

Last month was 1.75 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial level and 0.79°C above the 1991-2020 average, despite expectations that the La Niña weather phenomenon might bring cooler temperatures.

In 2015, the international community agreed to try to limit average global temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

The January data was “surprising” even to climate change experts at Copernicus, the European climate change service, which noted that it was the 18th month in the last 19 where the global-average surface air temperature was more than 1.5°C above the pre-industrial level.

“January 2025 is another surprising month, continuing the record temperatures observed throughout the last two years, despite the development of La Niña conditions in the tropical Pacific and their temporary cooling effect on global temperatures,” said Samantha Burgess, Copernicus Strategic Lead for Climate.

For many in the northern hemisphere, January 2025 will be remembered by “wetter-than-average conditions” over western Europe, as well as parts of Italy, Scandinavia and the Baltic countries, Copernicus said, highlighting “heavy precipitation” and flooding in some regions.

On the other hand, drier than average conditions were recorded in the northern UK and Ireland, eastern Spain and north of the Black Sea.

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First Lady Calls For Global Collaboration To Address Climate Change

First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos has called for strengthened global cooperation to mitigate the impacts of climate change, as she stressed the need to step up action to avoid serious human and economic loss.

“Climate change is not just about statistics. It has a human face, a face that belongs to millions of families suffering the consequences of a crisis that they did not create,” Araneta-Marcos said in a main address for the Climate Adaptability and Energy Forum during the World Governments Summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Thursday.

“The unfortunate truth, however, is that no country can solve this crisis alone. We need global solidarity. The time to act is now. Let’s please harness innovation and collaborate across borders to develop real lasting solutions,” she added.

Araneta-Marcos said the Philippine government, led by her husband President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., is “deeply committed” to addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

She noted that the Marcos administration is working toward a 75-percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, as part of its bid for a broader social economic transformation.

She added that a National Adaptation Plan has also been launched to strengthen the resilience of Philippine communities, particularly in infrastructure and energy.

Araneta-Marcos said the government is putting premium on addressing climate change, considering that the Philippines is the “most vulnerable nations to climate change” and “most at risk country in the world.”

She cited that 30 million Filipinos were affected by the unprecedented six tropical cyclones that hit the country in less than a month between October and November 2024.

“Let us share our best practices and technologies to ensure a just energy transition. And lastly, let us please empower future generations with the knowledge and tools to tackle climate challenges head on,” Araneta-Marcos said.

“I think we must all do our part and we must do it together. Let’s not wait for another crisis to force us into action, the time to act is now,” she added.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

LAWA at BINHI: A Shield for Climate Change

The Philippines is confronted with an urgent and critical situation owing to the global climate crisis. The nation exhibits a high degree of vulnerability to the detrimental effects of climate change, necessitating prompt and decisive interventions. Such actions are imperative to protect the Filipino people and ensure a sustainable future for subsequent generations.

Several initiatives of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr are underway to combat the ill effects of climate change. One is a program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) called Project Local Adaptation to Water Access (LAWA) and Breaking Insufficiency through Nutritious Harvest for the Impoverished (BINHI). A sustainable solution to combat hunger, and decrease economic vulnerability of the communities by addressing water scarcity and food insecurity exacerbated by climate change and disasters.

In line with President Marcos' efforts to address the effects of the El Niño phenomenon and to mitigate the effects of erratic climate through Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation-Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR) of the Cabinet Cluster, the DSWD recalibrated their Program, Activities and Projects (PAPs) of Risk Resiliency Program through Cash for Training and Work in the Government's vision for effective prevention, adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk reduction measures in priority target areas exposed to the effects of El Niño and La Niña based on the Climate outlook of the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (DOST-PAGASA).

The program, launched last year in nine (9) municipalities across Regions CAR, VI, and XI, has already made progress. Out of its target of 310 municipalities, it has reached 61 provinces and 306 municipalities and towns, serving 140,906 partner beneficiaries.

Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Rex Gatchalian was delighted when President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. recognized their agency's Project LAWA at BINHI in his State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 22.

"Our small idea is now a SONA program. This means Project LAWA at BINHI will have an upgrade, including internal measurement outcomes," Secretary Gatchalian said after the SONA of President Marcos.

"Mainam na rin na nailunsad nang maaga ang mga modernong paraan ng pagtatanim. Sa ating nasimulan na Proyektong LAWA at BINHI, isinasagawa na ang mga modernong imbakan ng tubig upang lalong maging handa at protektado ang ating mga magsasaka sa banta ng tagtuyot," the President said in his speech.

The program addresses social protection issues while strengthening community and family resilience, adaptive capacity, and response capabilities of poor, vulnerable and marginalized especially the indigenous peoples, farmers, fisherfolks and women from the impact of climate-related hazards and disaster risks anchored in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028, Chapter 15- Climate Resiliency as well as the administration's priority agenda- "Walang Gutom 2027".

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and President Marcos lauded Project LAWA and BINHI " for its invaluable contribution to climate resilience initiatives." The citation was posted by UN Assistant Secretary-General Reena Ghelani last October 8, 2024. She mentioned that the Project LAWA and BINHI is "one of the best practices in response to the prevalent issues related to climate crisis and El Niño".

Enhancing Capacity Towards Resiliency

The core components of the project LAWA at BINHI are Cash-for-Training and Cash-for-Work (CFTW), which empower communities and help them build resilience.

The Cash-for-Training (CFT) helps the beneficiaries build their capacity by giving them the knowledge, skills, and attitude to respond appropriately to the effects of climate change.

Some of the training includes drought-resistant farming techniques, flood mitigation, and other critical skills for adapting to the new climate. The Cash-for-Work (CFW) program allows beneficiaries to earn money while working on community-based disaster mitigation and prevention projects.

These projects as per President Marcos' foresight involve the construction of small-farm reservoirs (SFRs), organic planting of disaster-resilient crops, planting climate-resilient fruit-bearing trees, rehabilitating watersheds and waterways, or repairing infrastructure to cushion the impacts of climate change.

To date, 139,335 partner-beneficiaries have completed their training and work assignments under the program. There are 1,842 SFRs constructed across 61 provinces and 306 municipalities and cities, with an average of 30 SFRs per province.

These reservoirs, with a combined storage capacity of 1,959,524 cubic meters of water, have irrigated 7,238,690 square meters of agricultural land, significantly increasing agricultural productivity.

These water infrastructure programs are complemented by 4,332 BINHI sites or food security communal vegetable farms throughout the country.

These communal farms cover 10,953 hectares and have harvested 16,771,767 diverse vegetables, disaster-resilient crops, and fruit-bearing trees. The total yield of produce

has reached 21,024,187 kilograms of vegetables and root crops. The partner beneficiaries and their families harvest, consume, and enjoy these.

The program also contributes to a sense of community ownership and collective action in combating climate change, and it helps increase agricultural production.

Commitment to supporting communities

The DSWD has targeted 140,906 partner-beneficiaries in 310 cities and municipalities with a budget of P1.421 billion in 2024.

Up to date, January 18, 2024, the DSWD has reported that they have already distributed cash-for-training and cash-for-work that helped 140,906 partner-beneficiaries (1,571 Partner-beneficiaries scheduled for payout in the same month). Of this number, 139,335 partner-beneficiaries underwent training and work assignments and completed the pay-outs.

As of December 2024, some Project LAWA at BINHI fisherfolk partner-beneficiaries have reaped 96 kilograms of tilapia worth P19,200.00 in their community farm reservoir.

The fisherfolk sold the harvested tilapia at P200 per kilo to local resorts and restaurants in San Juan, Siquijor.

“The earnings from the tilapia farm can now support the needs of my family,” said Mercy Ogoc, one of the fisherfolk from Barangay Tag-Ibo, Siquijor.

“Ang akong nabahin akong napalit ug pagkaon sa among binuhi na baboy ug nakapamalit mi ug grocery para sa among pangunahanglan sa balay.” (My share was used to buy food for the pigs I was raising and we also bought groceries for our household needs.)

In October 2024 alone, partner-beneficiary Enrique Villanueva raised P61,506.00 worth of food crops from the community gardens in Barangay Olave and Barangay Parian.

The project produced 683 kilos of high-value food crops in Barangay Olave, worth P34,393.00, and 476 kilos in Barangay Parian, worth P29,113.00.

Okra, eggplant, ampalaya, string beans and squash are among the crops sold by the partner beneficiaries to neighboring communities and barangays.

The beneficiaries of Project LAWA in Mandaue City gained valuable experience during the 20-day implementation of the project at BINHI under the DSWD’s Risk Resilience Program. Around 60 kg of different vegetable varieties were harvested on a 1,500 sq m land area. All the harvests were sold in the Kadiwa stall near Mandaue City Hall for P15,200.00. Some of the partner-beneficiaries also sold their vegetables at the Mandaue City Public Market, which is also near Mandaue City Hall.

According to Lorena Soco, a partner-beneficiary from Barangay Casili, they don't only consume from the harvest, but they also earn money by selling it. Soco added, "That way, they increase their income and can meet their daily basic needs."

The good news is that the DSWD has announced that Project LAWA at BINHI will expand its reach from 310 cities and municipalities in 61 provinces for 2024 to 405 cities and municipalities in 72 provinces by 2025.

Incorporating Innovation and Technology towards Sustainability

To ensure project sustainability, the project uses innovative farming methods, applies indigenous knowledge and technology, and incorporates research-based BINHI products and agricultural inputs that can easily adapt to climate change conditions.

Future developments will be establishing market linkages and promoting agri-tourism as a potential income-generating activity that will further support the economic sustainability of the project, – in line with President Marcos' perspective. In addition, institutionalizing LAWA at BINHI project through the passage of local resolutions and ordinances that guarantee its sustainability beyond the initial implementation.

The whole of society approach, in line with President Marcos' effort and vision, will strengthen collaborative efforts where LGUs and communities play a vital role in its success while enabling the replication of effective practices in other regions, ensuring the project model's consistency and scalability nationwide.

The success of LAWA at BINHI shows the commitment of the DSWD, aligns with President Marcos' achievement, in engaging communities to adapt to climate change challenges and achieve food security. Its immediate relief program helps vulnerable populations grow roots for a better, climate resilient and more food-secure and sustainable future.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Spare trees from campaign posters, DENR urges poll bets](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Western Visayas (DENR-6) on Tuesday called on candidates in the May 12 midterm elections to become environmentally conscious and spare trees from their campaign materials.

“We ask all the candidates to utilize designated posting areas for their materials and spare the trees; protect our trees from harm,” said DENR-6 Executive Director Raul Lorilla in a statement.

He said hanging or nailing campaign materials to trees can cause significant damage to the bark, which serves as the protective layer.

“This creates entry points for diseases and pests and can also harm the cambium layer, a crucial tissue that transports water and nutrients throughout the tree. Such injuries may stress the tree, making it more vulnerable to health issues,” Lorilla explained.

The DENR-6 said Presidential Decree 953 prohibits the cutting, destroying, or injuring of planted growing trees, flowering plants and shrubs, or plants of scenic values along public roads, in plazas, parks, school premises or in any other public ground except when necessary for public safety or to enhance its beauty and only upon the approval of a duly authorized representative.

Violators will face imprisonment of six months to two years and/or fines ranging from PHP500 to PHP5,000.

Lorilla also encouraged candidates to reuse or repurpose their campaign materials so these would not end up in a landfill.

“After the long days of campaigning and posting, candidates should also consider the long-term effects of their posters in our environment. We encourage them to repurpose or dispose of it properly, especially the one made out of plastics,” he said.

In Iloilo City, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) identified common poster areas in plazas, including the area fronting the Caltex gasoline station and Molo Mansion on Locsin Street in Molo, JM Basa Street facing Coffee Break and Masonic Temple in Plaza Libertad, Huervana Street from corner Burgos Street to corner Jereos Street facing La Paz Police Station and La Paz Elementary School in La Paz, Rizal Street corner Iloilo East Coast Road facing Land Bank Jaro to Ledi Supermart for Jaro, Rizal Street corner Osmeña Street to Arevalo Church facing Avanceña/Rizal Street in Arevalo, Dahlia Street facing Bo. Obrero Catholic Church in Bo. Obrero, and Oñate de Leon Street facing 7/11 store to corner of Iloilo City-Aleos Road in Mandurriao.

PBBM to DSWD: Be consistent, stay vigilant vs. modern challenges

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Tuesday called on the officials and employees of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to be consistent in fulfilling their mandate and remain vigilant against “modern” challenges such as climate change.

This, as he heaped praises on the DSWD during its 74th anniversary celebration at the SMX Convention Center in Pasay City for its steadfast commitment to serving the Filipino people, especially those belonging to the vulnerable and marginalized sectors.

“Your vision is simple and profound: to build a resilient, inclusive society where no one is left behind. Time and again, we have seen how that vision translates into action—whether in the swift distribution of aid after a typhoon, the consistent support for struggling families, or the enduring commitment to sectors often overlooked by society,” Marcos told the DSWD audience.

“Our mission does not end here. It has really just begun. Lasting change is not built overnight—it takes consistent, and honest, and dedicated effort. Every single centavo spent, every program that is implemented, every decision that has been made must serve a very clear purpose: to create opportunities that endure, that uplift, and reach far beyond just today,” he added.

Marcos lauded the DSWD for launching new initiatives such as the Harmonized Electronic License and Permit System (HELPS), Minors Traveling Abroad (MTA) System, and the Pamilya sa Bagong Pilipinas Program, saying these reflect a “government that listens, responds, [and] evolves to meet the needs of its people.”

HELPS serves as the platform that streamlines the application processes for licenses and permits, making it faster for stakeholders to access DSWD services.

As part of HELPS, the MTA system modernizes travel clearance processing for Filipino minors.

During the event, the DSWD also formally launched a new rights-based, family-oriented and inclusive development model for Filipino families dubbed “Pamilya sa Bagong Pilipinas.”

The model features various transitions of family life across different life stages and integrates economic, social and cultural support to help Filipino families grow and thrive while meeting their diverse needs and goals, all anchored in the administration's priority to enhance the well-being and strengthen the resilience of Filipino families.

Marcos also emphasized the importance of proper utilization of the Quick Response Fund to ensure “swift and effective” disaster response, considering that the “more frequent [and] more severe” natural disasters leave communities at greater risk.

“At this juncture, let me recognize the steadfast efforts of the DSWD. Your courage, particularly during the recent spate of calamities, has been nothing short of extraordinary. ‘Ika nga (As they say), you are the first to respond but the last to sleep. While others sought shelter from the storm, you walked into the chaos to deliver relief,” he said.

“You have saved lives, brought hope, and demonstrated the true power of compassion. For that, the country is grateful. For that, your President is grateful.

Marcos also praised the DSWD for being a “better” organization, offering programs that have helped improve the Filipinos’ lives, including the 4Ps, the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP), and the Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens.

He noted that in 2024, an estimated 678,000 families of over four million 4Ps beneficiaries already achieved “self-sufficiency”, nearly 271,000 households benefited from SLP, and some 4.3 million senior citizens received social pensions.

“Since your establishment, this institution has been a steady, reassuring presence for many, many, many Filipinos through countless generations. You have provided not just assistance – but behind that assistance, you have also provided hope—to families rising from hardships, to communities devastated by calamities, to individuals who need to feel that their government is there by their side ready to assist,” Marcos said.

“To my fellow Filipinos: The success of these programs does not rest on the shoulders of the DSWD alone. It requires our collective determination, support, and our effort. Let us build a Bagong Pilipinas (New Philippines), a nation where every citizen has a chance to dream, to strive, to succeed. A country where compassion is not merely a value, but a way of life. A Philippines where no one gets left behind.”

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Rains expected across Philippines due to three weather systems

By: Ian Laqui

Cloudy skies with rains are expected across the country due to three weather systems on Tuesday, February 18, state weather bureau PAGASA said.

In its weather forecast, PAGASA said the shear line may affect the eastern section of Northern Luzon while the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) may affect Southern Mindanao.

Meanwhile, the northeast monsoon, locally known as “amihan,” may affect the extreme Northern Luzon, according to the state weather bureau.

Batanes, Cagayan and Apayao may expect cloudy skies with rains due to the amihan.

Isabela and Aurora may anticipate cloudy skies with scattered rains and isolated thunderstorms due to the shear line.

The state weather bureau warned residents of Isabela and Aurora of possible flash floods or landslides due to moderate to at times heavy rains.

Meanwhile, the ITCZ may bring cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms to Zamboanga Peninsula, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

PAGASA also warned residents in these areas about the risk of flash floods or landslides due to moderate to heavy rainfall.

For Metro Manila and the rest of the country, partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms are expected due to the easterlies.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Climate action: Speaking the five love languages for our planet](#)

By: Secretary Robert E.A. Borje

As we celebrate love in its many forms, we often forget one critical relationship — the one we share with our planet. Just like in any relationship, our connection with the Earth requires active participation, understanding, and nurturing. Drawing inspiration from Gary Chapman's five love languages, let's explore how each can guide our approach to climate change action.

First, words of affirmation uplift and motivate us in personal relationships, and the same principle applies to climate action. Public support for climate actions and policies, either through in-person forums or in social media, shows our commitment to a sustainable future. By voicing approval and encouraging others, we inspire action and affirm the need to address climate change.

Second, love grows through acts of service. In the same way, serving our communities by participating in climate programs such as tree planting, solid waste management and disaster preparedness activities contributes to resilience. The Philippines, one of the most at risk countries to climate change, benefits from communities that work together. Every small act contributes to the bigger goal of protecting lives, livelihoods and our future.

Third, gifts, when thoughtfully given, convey care and appreciation. When it comes to our planet, the best gift we can give is the protection of its natural ecosystems. By investing in nature-based solutions, such as mangrove rehabilitation, reforestation and sustainable agriculture, we enhance our natural defenses against climate impacts. These actions are lasting gifts to future generations as we preserve a balanced ecosystem.

In our daily lives, we can also promote sustainability by choosing eco-friendly gifts. Opting for products made from recycled materials and sustainable sources, or supporting businesses that practice ethical production reduces our carbon footprint. Using eco-friendly packaging, such as reusable cloth wraps or biodegradable materials, shows extra care not just for the recipient, but for the planet.

Fourth, quality time is essential in nurturing relationships. Likewise, dedicating time to climate dialogues — whether through consultations, public forums or global events such as the United Nations Climate Change Conferences — allows us to be fully engaged in crafting effective climate solutions. The Climate Change Commission encourages everyone to take part in national and local consultations to help develop risk-informed policies, ensuring that our actions are inclusive and timely.

Spending quality time in nature through eco-friendly travel is another way to show love for the planet. Whether hiking in the mountains, visiting nature reserves, or exploring coral reefs, nature travel deepens our connection with the environment and reminds us why protecting it is so important. Practicing low-impact, sustainable tourism and supporting local ecotourism and minimizing waste, ensure that we enjoy nature responsibly.

Lastly, physical touch expresses love and care in relationships, and we can translate this into our daily lives by embracing eco-friendly practices. Simple acts such as reducing single-use plastics, conserving water, and opting for renewable energy sources make a tangible impact on reducing our carbon footprint. Every touchpoint with nature, whether conserving resources or restoring ecosystems, strengthens our bond with the Earth.

In the same way that understanding love languages enhances personal relationships with our loved ones, understanding these equivalent actions will strengthen our commitment to climate resilience. By actively speaking these “languages” in the context of climate change, we show love for the planet that sustains us.

As we reflect on how we express love in our lives, let’s remember that our collective action is the greatest gift we can give to the Earth. Let’s speak these love languages for the planet — because every action counts in the fight against climate change.

DAILY GUARDIAN

[Philippines Charts Bold Path for Climate Goals](#)

By: Francis Allan L. Angelo

The Philippines has set ambitious climate goals under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), committing to a 75% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030.

The bold move was the focal point of an online forum organized by Climate Tracker Asia and the Oscar M. Lopez Center on January 22, 2025, which brought together experts to discuss challenges and opportunities in achieving these targets.

The forum emphasized the importance of a multi-sectoral approach to reducing emissions and building resilience against climate change.

Key insights from the Philippine Climate Change Assessment (PhilCCA) were presented, with discussions centering on mitigation pathways, sectoral emissions, and international cooperation.

Arnold Grant Belver, Deputy Chief of the Policy Research and Development Division at the Climate Change Commission (CCC), reiterated the Philippines' ambitious framework for achieving its NDC targets.

"Despite contributing minimally to global emissions, our NDC reflects a strong commitment to the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C target," Belver said.

The Philippines' NDC seeks to achieve a 75% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030, with 2.71% being unconditional and the remaining 72.29% reliant on international support, including climate finance, technology transfer, and capacity building.

Achieving these goals requires substantial investment. The NDC Implementation Plan estimates a total cost of \$72 billion (approximately PHP 4 trillion), with energy and transport sectors accounting for 97% of funding needs.

Key measures include boosting energy efficiency, expanding wastewater treatment facilities, and greening public utility vehicles.

Belver highlighted the importance of just transitions, gender inclusion, and local government engagement. He also mentioned the establishment of a Development Partners Coordination Group (DPCG), co-led by the CCC and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), to mobilize international support.

Sectoral Contributions to Emissions

Leandro Buendia, an international climate change consultant and a member of the CCC's National Panel of Technical Experts, shared a breakdown of the Philippines' GHG inventory.

In 2020, the energy sector was the largest emitter, accounting for 57% of total emissions, driven largely by coal-dependent power generation.

Transport emerged as the second-largest contributor, with road vehicles and inefficient public transit systems exacerbating emissions.

Agriculture ranked third, with methane emissions from rice cultivation and livestock representing a significant portion.

Methane from irrigated rice fields accounted for 50% of agricultural emissions, underscoring the need for improved water management practices.

The waste sector contributed 13% of emissions, mainly from landfills and wastewater treatment facilities.

Decarbonization Strategies and Nature-Based Solutions

Agnes De Jesus, Chief Sustainability Officer of First Philippine Holdings Corporation, outlined a roadmap for decarbonization, focusing on energy transition, agricultural reforms, and nature-based solutions.

"Coal will be replaced by solar, but natural gas will remain essential as a transition fuel," she explained.

De Jesus highlighted the need for renewable energy to account for 35% of the energy mix by 2030.

She emphasized the role of innovations like energy-efficient technologies, smart grids, and battery storage in driving the transition.

Nature-based solutions, particularly blue carbon projects, emerged as a key focus. Blue carbon refers to carbon stored in marine ecosystems such as mangroves and seagrasses.

"A mangrove tree absorbs four to seven times more carbon than terrestrial forests," De Jesus noted.

These ecosystems not only sequester significant amounts of carbon but also provide critical protection for coastal communities against storm surges and erosion.

Efforts to quantify blue carbon's contributions to GHG reductions are underway.

The Role of Local Governments

Local government units (LGUs) play a pivotal role in achieving NDC targets. Buendia stressed the importance of localized GHG inventories to guide climate action plans.

Pilot projects, such as those in Ormoc, have shown the potential of community-led initiatives in identifying emission hotspots and implementing targeted mitigation measures.

“The challenge lies in capacity and funding,” Buendia admitted. Partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations (CSOs) are essential to overcoming these barriers.

The Akong Bukas movement, a CSO-led initiative, is training communities to calculate their carbon footprints and integrate these insights into local development plans.

Funding, Policy, Behavior

Despite significant policy advancements, funding remains a major hurdle for NDC implementation.

Belver revealed that the \$72 billion estimate is only part of the total cost, noting that the country requires an additional \$21.57 trillion to fully meet its targets.

Innovative financing mechanisms, such as green investments, carbon trading, and emissions pricing, are being explored.

The private sector’s role in scaling climate-friendly technologies, such as electric vehicles and renewable energy systems, is critical to achieving the NDC goals.

Behavioral change is also essential for reducing emissions.

De Jesus noted that individual and community actions, supported by effective policies, could contribute to emission reductions of up to 70%.

Encouraging responsible energy consumption, waste management, and climate-smart agricultural practices are key components of this strategy.

Global Implications and Partnerships

The Philippines’ climate commitment comes at a time of shifting global dynamics.

The potential withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement was discussed as a challenge to international climate financing. Despite this, panelists expressed optimism.

“The U.S. withdrawal is a setback, but it highlights the importance of self-reliance and regional partnerships,” De Jesus remarked.

She cited Europe’s leadership in renewable energy and sustainable development as a counterbalance to global policy shifts.

Panelists emphasized the crucial role of the media in bridging the gap between climate policies and public engagement.

“Every one of us should be a climate reporter now,” De Jesus said.

Journalists were encouraged to amplify success stories, hold stakeholders accountable, and inspire action through their reporting.

By amplifying success stories and holding stakeholders accountable, media can catalyze broader societal change.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[DPWH, MLIT Japan strengthen partnership to combat urban flooding and enhance water resources management in the Philippines](#)

The Philippine government, through the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), has strengthened its collaboration with Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism (MLIT) to enhance flood control and water resources management efforts in flood-prone areas across the country.

A pivotal moment in this partnership occurred during the 5th Seminar on Disaster Management Operations, Urban Flood Control and Dam Development held on February 13, 2025, at the Bayleaf Hotel in Intramuros, Manila.

DPWH Senior Undersecretary Emil K. Sadain together with MLIT Assistant Vice Minister Ishikawa Shin, Embassy of Japan Minister for Economic Affairs Nihei Daisuke, and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Philippines Office Senior Representative Yanagiuchi Masanari spearheaded the seminar aimed to push forward integrated flood control solutions and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) through Japan's cutting-edge technology and engineering expertise.

Organized by the DPWH Unified Project Management Office – Flood Control Management Cluster (UPMO-FCMC) headed by Project Director Ramon A. Arriola III, the forum sought to enhance cooperation among key national agencies, focusing on vulnerable areas like Metro Manila, and strengthening disaster management capabilities.

Senior Undersecretary Sadain emphasized the importance of the seminar in fostering collaboration and enhancing technical knowledge and expertise fundamental to achieving resilient and sustainable disaster risk management operations especially in National Capital Region, including areas like Marikina, Pasig, San Juan, Parañaque, and Taguig.

“Our longstanding partnership and collaboration with Japan remains instrumental and pivotal to the government's efforts in strengthening our flood control and integrated water resources system management, which are key players in improving the urban planning in Metro Manila,” added Senior Undersecretary Sadain.

Currently, DPWH, together with the Metropolitan Development Authority (MMDA), is expediting the completion of the Metro Manila Flood Management Project (MMFMP) Phase 1, which aims to improve drainage systems and solid waste management practices, benefiting approximately two (2)-million beneficiaries in priority flood-prone areas in Metro Manila in 2026.

The forum also explored the status of Flood Risk Information in the Philippines, demonstrating the shared efforts of relevant agencies to develop comprehensive and informed disaster risk reduction planning despite prevalent challenges, primarily the worsening impact of climate change in the country.

In response to the devastation caused by recent typhoons, including Typhoons Carina and Kristine, which severely affected parts of Luzon, the DPWH, in cooperation with JICA, is fast-tracking updates to the master plans for key river basins. These include the Pasig-Marikina River Basin and the Cagayan River Basin.

Moderated by UPMO-FCMC Project Manager Jerry Fano, the forum featured key experts including Engineer Rosalita M. Barde from MMDA; Project Manager Michael T. Alpasan and Engineer Lydia C. Aguilar from UPMO-FCMC; Director Kondo Osamu of Japan's Department of Water Resources & Disaster Prevention Research, Infrastructure Development Institute of Japan; Assistant Director Tsuda Morimasa of Japan Water Agency; Department of Science and Technology (DOST-PAGASA) Hydrologist Ailene R. Abelardo; and MLIT Director for International Coordination of River Engineering Maruyama Kazuki.

The event was also attended by DPWH Regional Director Khadaffy Tanggol of Cordillera Administrative Region; Director Randy R. Del Rosario of Stakeholders Relations Service; UPMO FCMC Project Managers and staff; and representatives from relevant national government agencies such as the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA), National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), National Irrigation Administration (NIA), National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), National Power Corporation (NPC), Climate Change Commission (CCC), Philippine Space Agency (PSA), and local government units of Caloocan, Makati, Mandaluyong, Muntinlupa, Navotas, Taguig, and Quezon City.

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