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By: Gabriela Baron

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By: Maria Bernadette Romero

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

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A health expert identified climate change as one of the driving factors for the rising dengue cases in the country. Dr. Lulu Bravo, executive director of the Philippine Foundation for Vaccination, explained that the Philippines has a lot of water sources that could serve as breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

"We try to do something to get rid of the breeding sites for mosquitoes, but we can't stop climate change. It's raining non-stop [even though it's not rainy season yet]," Bravo told reporters on the sidelines of the END Dengue Coalition in Ortigas, Pasig on Tuesday, 18 February. "The problem in the Philippines is climate change. The rains are non-stop," she reiterated.

The vaccine expert further explained that *Aedes aegypti*, a mosquito that carries the dengue virus, lays eggs on and in containers holding fresh water, such as tap or rainwater.

"This is the reason why dengue has spread throughout the world. Before, only countries in the Asia Pacific countries had it and they are only 20 countries including Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam in the 1950s and 1960s," Bravo noted.

"From 20 countries, there are now 134 countries worldwide that have *Aedes aegypti* mosquito capable of transmitting the dengue virus. Why? Because it can now survive in a colder temperatures and its virus can mutate so it just doesn't stay in tropical countries," she added.

About half of the world's population is already exposed to dengue risk, a 2019 climate modeling study cited by the Yale School of Environment, projected that under a moderate warming scenario, an additional two billion people could be at risk of dengue exposure by 2080, compared to 2015.

Moreover, according to the 2020 Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change, rising global temperatures between 1950 and 2018 increased the climate sustainability for the transmission of the dengue virus by almost nine percent for *aedes aegypti*.

On Tuesday, various health leaders called on President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to approve a dengue vaccine amid the rise in mosquito-borne cases in the country.

The Quezon City government declared a dengue outbreak following the death of 10 individuals, mostly children. The Department of Health on Monday, 17 February, meanwhile, noted a "concerning rise" in dengue cases in nine other local government units, including Metro Manila, Calabarzon, and Central Luzon.

Latest data from the DOH showed a sharp increase in dengue cases, with 28,234 reported as of 1 February, a 40 percent rise from the same period last year. From January to November 2024, the Philippines has logged 881 dengue deaths, continuing to be the number one in Southeast Asia in terms of dengue cases and deaths consistently in the past years up to the present.

[MGreen powers up 19-MW N. Ecija solar](#)

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The race for domination in the renewable energy sector is on full swing. A 19.8-megawatt (MW) solar power plant in Barangay Pesa, Bongabon, Nueva Ecija, built by MGEN Renewable Energy Inc. (MGreen), the renewable energy arm of Meralco PowerGen Corp. (MGEN), is ready to add clean energy to the national grid.

MGreen said Wednesday the newly inaugurated MGreen Bongabon Solar plant is the first project under the Department of Energy's (DoE) second Green Energy Auction program to be completed ahead of schedule — at least six months earlier than planned.

“More than just a solar power plant, MGreen Bongabon Solar is about creating opportunities, reducing our carbon footprint, and setting a new standard for renewable energy initiatives in our country,” MGreen president and CEO Dennis B. Jordan said.

MGreen Bongabon Solar can power at least 20,000 households and establishments, contributing to the DoE's goal of increasing the share of renewable energy in the country's power mix to 35 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2040.

Based on the Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator, the plant is projected to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 19,000 tons of carbon dioxide annually, equivalent to the carbon sequestration of approximately 211 tree seedlings grown for 10 years.

Positive impact underscored

Bongabon Mayor Ricardo Padilla welcomed the development, highlighting its positive impact on the local community.

“We are thankful to all of you because our people in Barangay Pesa will have employment opportunities, which is important for us,” he said.

As with MGEN's other energy projects, hiring qualified and skilled residents remains a priority to ensure that economic benefits are directly felt by local communities.

The inauguration was attended by officials from the DoE, the Energy Regulatory Commission and the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines, which will facilitate the plant's integration into the grid.

Separately, Energy Assistant Secretary Mario Marasigan cited the long-term impact of the project, stating that “the local barangay will be getting most of the benefits of this project.”

“We want to make sure that the project you have installed will continue for at least the next 20 years,” Marasigan said.

Commissioning of the Bongabon solar plant supports MGEN’s target of developing up to 1,500 MW of attributable renewable energy capacity by 2030.

This year alone, the company plans to add 85.2 MWac of solar capacity to its portfolio, including a new solar plant in Cordon, Isabela and the expansion of an existing facility in Baras, Rizal.

To date, the company remains on track to complete Phase 1 of the MTerra Solar project in Nueva Ecija next year, which is set to become the world’s largest integrated solar photovoltaic and battery energy storage system.

GMA NEWS

PH eyes green energy auction in 2025, bullish on solar investments

By: Mariel Celine Serquiña

Following a successful round of the state initiative to facilitate investments in renewable energy (RE), the Philippine government is planning to conduct another Green Energy Auction (GEA) in 2025.

Speaking at a public briefing Wednesday, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said, "Ang preparation ng ating government ay magkaroon ng green energy auction for solar and renewable [energy] during this year. So ang expectation, mataas ang level ng interest sa mga solar companies."

(Our government is preparing for a green energy auction for solar and renewable [energy] this year. So our expectation is that the interest level of solar companies will be high.)

Lotilla also noted that more Filipinos are installing solar panels on their roofs, with the same trend observed at government offices.

Last week, the DOE announced that the third Green Energy Auction (GEA-3) secured a total of 7,500 megawatts (MW) of committed renewable energy (RE) installation capacity, exceeding the target of 4,650 MW.

According to the Energy Department, the GEA-3 is part of the government's strategy to entice market-driven investments to achieve the target of 35% renewable share in the power generation mix by 2030 and 50% by 2040.

The program seeks to ensure competitive selection of firms to obtain rights to develop renewable energy capacity.

MANILA STANDARD

[Back bets with green agenda—group](#)

An advocacy group on Monday called on the electorate to vote for candidates who support environmental policies.

The group, calling themselves the Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST), made the call during a roundtable discussions organized in collaboration with the Climate Reality Project (CRP) Philippines.

The forum gathered together environment experts and other key stakeholders to tackle environmental accountability and transparent governance in the national climate agenda.

In a statement, Stratbase president and PBEST lead convenor Dindo Manhit cited the 2025 midterm elections as an “opportunity to drive transformative change in environmental issues through wise public voting.”

“We, the Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship, urge our fellow Filipinos to support proactive leaders with green policies to drive a national climate agenda that could build a climate-resilient, sustainable Philippines,” the statement read.

It said Filipinos consider environment as a national priority, noting the recent survey commissioned by Stratbase, where 87 percent of the responders will support candidates with advocacies addressing climate change impacts and enhancing disaster resilience.

“By choosing leaders who advocate strategic climate action, decarbonization, and the circular economy, we can foster environmental resilience and national sustainability necessary to drive long-term socio-economic stability,” Manhit said.

“Effective climate action requires strategic collaboration with all sectors of society, and these actions should be anchored on transparent and accountable governance,” he added.

Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones also emphasized the importance of supporting green policies. He cited the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act as beneficial in encouraging public-private partnerships to ensure a comprehensive approach to waste management and resource recovery.

Leones said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is coordinating with the Departments of Finance, Labor and Employment, and Social Welfare and Development to create incentives for the circular economy efforts of enterprises.

They expected to provide these incentives by the end of the current quarter.

“Investing in infrastructure, strengthening enforcement mechanisms, and simplifying administrative processes are also essential in creating a more supportive environment for circular economy,” said Leones.

Echoing the same sentiments, CRP branch manager Nazrin Castro highlighted that EPR compliance is an opportunity to innovate, cut costs, and meet the growing demand for responsible business and sustainability.

“Climate action isn’t a one-time discussion; it requires ongoing inclusive and solutions-driven dialogue across all sectors. The only way forward is through this sustained collaboration,” Castro said.

DENR Climate Change Service director Elenida Basug explained that community participation helps in developing green solutions, citing public consultations, reporting, and citizen oversight mechanisms as key to ensure national efforts reflect the public’s needs.

“Our ongoing partnerships with government agencies, academic institutions, civil society, and international organizations exemplify the power of collective action in enhancing environmental and climate governance,” Basug said.

European Union Technical Assistance Support to the Philippines Community Resilience, Climate Change, and Disaster Risk Management expert Rustico Binas said strategic collaboration empowers local entities to serve as central coordination points in national initiatives.

“Community involvement in government decision-making is crucial for effective disaster risk reduction and emergency response,” said Binas.

“The community organizing tradition in the Philippines fosters collective action, sustainable solutions, and risk-informed planning, ultimately risk reduction, to avert natural disasters,” he added.

PANAY NEWS

[Environment summit focuses on net zero carbon emissions](#)

In a bid to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, Green Convergence – a coalition of advocates for a sustainable environment and economy – in collaboration with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), opened the 5th Philippine Environment Summit on Wednesday, February 19, here.

The event, which runs until February 21, highlights the theme “Ako Ang Bukas” (I am the Future): Quantum Leap to Climate Neutrality.”

The “Ako Ang Bukas” movement, launched by Green Convergence in 2020, centers on the campaign “Quantum Leap Now: Climate Neutrality 2050,” developed through consultations with various non-government organizations in response to escalating climate change effects.

The summit’s main objective is to encourage individuals, businesses, schools, and other entities to take an active role in reducing carbon emissions by tracking and managing their carbon footprints.

Green Convergence president Victoria Segovia emphasized the importance of addressing pressing climate issues, including “heatflation” affecting crop production, wildfires in Los Angeles, California due to extreme heat, and the severe winter storms disrupting millions in the mid-Atlantic regions.

Segovia challenged participants to consider the climate mitigation measures being implemented in their communities, as well as what actions governments and individuals can take to reduce carbon footprints and move towards net-zero carbon emissions.

Dr. Angelina Galang, trustee and gonvenor of Green Convergence, shared that this is the fifth summit organized since the launch of the campaign in 2020. Despite the many environmental conferences and workshops already conducted, she stressed the growing urgency of addressing climate change, citing the effects of rising temperatures, destructive typhoons, and droughts.

Galang highlighted the need for greater self-awareness, urging everyone to assess their individual contributions to climate change by measuring their carbon footprints. She explained that Green Convergence has developed a calculator tool to help track

emissions, allowing individuals and entities to monitor their progress in reducing their carbon footprints.

“We developed this calculator so that we can measure the carbon we are emitting. If we do this regularly, we can track if we’re making progress and lowering our emissions,” Galang said.

She urged households, businesses, and even religious groups to adopt this practice for a collective effort in addressing global warming.

Galang also pointed out simple actions individuals can take to reduce carbon emissions, such as turning off lights during daylight hours, using recyclable bags, recycling plastic bottles, walking for short distances, and conserving water.

“The world is striving for carbon neutrality by 2050. Our country is working to reduce its global carbon contribution, and local government units (LGUs) are mandated to track their carbon footprints as well,” Galang added. “This summit is focused on finding practical solutions to lower our emissions, and the sessions will tackle these challenges in depth over the next three days.”

The summit’s three-day program will showcase a variety of environmental projects and initiatives aimed at protecting and restoring the environment, while also promoting sustainable socio-economic development in communities.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

DSWD, partner agencies push communities to become more disaster resilient

By: Clinteast Van Totanes

The government gears up to help local communities become more resilient to the effects of climate change.

The Cordillera Regional Social Development Committee during its first quarter meeting on February 11, 2025, discussed ways to elevate programs that target a community driven development in the region.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) presented its proposed Community Resilience Project which aims to strengthen community capacities for participatory planning, and deliver resilient investments in vulnerable areas.

Manuel Ocaña, DSWD-CAR Deputy Regional Program Manager for Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS), explained that the project helps in building resilient facilities, resilient livelihoods and ecosystem conservation/protection.

This project entails involvement of local government units, line agencies and the community as a whole to identify projects that will answer individual life-cycle risks, economic risks, environmental risks and social and governance risk.

There are four components for this project to ensure the active participation of communities.

The community grants for resilient planning and investment component enables local government units to participate in the facilitation of risk and vulnerability assessment as a basis for formulating community resilience plans, and to identify community-managed resilient sub-projects.

Key partner agencies and the implementing institutions will also be empowered through trainings, knowledge exchange platforms and capacity building, under the institutional support for local resilience component.

The project is also responsive to disasters as a contingent emergency response component will allow the rapid reallocation of uncommitted project funds into urgent

needs in times of disaster. This is an ex-ante mechanism which could be mobilized for the rapid access of finance, to an eligible crisis or emergencies.

There will also be a project monitoring and management component to guarantee the smooth implementation of the projects and achievement of its objectives.

The DSWD will be working closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Agriculture, National Anti-poverty Commission and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples for the implementation of the project.

In the region, 15 municipalities in four provinces are eyed to benefit in this project. Nine municipalities in two provinces are set to be included in its expansion.

The RSDC, however, plans to appeal to the national level to increase the number of recipients to include areas where malnutrition is prevalent.

THE GUARDIAN

[Developing world urges rich nations to defy Trump's 'climate nihilism'](#)

Poorer countries want rapid emission cuts and more financial help in face of US leader's stance on global heating

Developing countries are calling on the rich world to defy the US president, Donald Trump, and bridge the global chasm over climate action, before the goal of limiting global temperatures to safe levels is irretrievably lost.

Diplomats from the developing world are rallying to support Brazil, which will host a crucial climate summit in November, after last year's talks in Azerbaijan ended in disappointment and acrimony.

Ali Mohamed, the chair of the African group of negotiators and Kenya's special envoy for climate change, pointed to record temperatures last year and continuing extreme weather. "Africa, responsible for less than 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions, remains disproportionately affected by the intensifying impacts of climate change," he said. "It is unacceptable that this devastation is caused by the pollution of just a few countries in the world, specifically the G20, and they must take responsibility for their actions."

As well as needing rich countries to cut their emissions, vulnerable nations need financial help, as they struggle to cope with the devastation they are already seeing. "Adaptation is the priority for us, not a priority," said Evans Njewa, chair of the least developed countries group. "We are prioritising adaptation, for our key sources of livelihood, and our economies. [Adaptation is essential to our] agriculture, water, the management of natural resources, food security and nutrition."

Trump's withdrawal from the Paris agreement came after a fraught and unsatisfactory ending to the Cop29 summit in Baku in November, at which poor countries were promised \$1.3tn a year in climate finance by 2035, but of that sum only \$300bn is to come chiefly from developed countries. The rest would be made up in hoped-for private sector finance and from potential levies, such as taxes on shipping and frequent flyers, which have yet to be agreed.

For many in the developing world, this is not good enough. If they are to play a role in curbing carbon – and most of the future growth in emissions is projected to come from the developing world – they are demanding a better financial settlement.

“The failure of Cop29 to secure sufficient financing for developing countries – those most affected by climate impacts – represents a grave setback,” said Harjeet Singh, a climate activist and the founding director of the Satat Sampada Climate Foundation. “Without this support, their recovery efforts and transitions to renewable energy are severely hindered, jeopardising global emission reduction goals and exacerbating the climate crisis.”

At Cop30 in Belém, Brazil, all countries are supposed to come up with stringent national plans on cutting emissions, called nationally determined contributions (NDCs), that are in line with the goal of limiting global temperature rises to 1.5C above preindustrial levels.

Current NDCs, agreed at the Cop26 summit in Glasgow in 2021, are insufficient to hold temperatures within 1.5C of preindustrial levels. Last year was the first to be consistently above 1.5C, and if that trend continues in the longer term the crucial limit will be judged to have been irretrievably breached. The new NDCs will govern emissions for the next decade, so Cop30 represents one of the last chances to put the world on track to avoid irreparable climate breakdown.

Camilla More, a climate diplomacy researcher at the International Institute for Environment and Development thinktank, said: “The world can’t afford to delay any further. That’s why this round of climate targets is critical in changing the course of global efforts to combat climate change.”

Brazil’s president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, has boosted the prospects for Cop30 with two widely welcomed appointments. André Aranha Corrêa do Lago, a veteran climate diplomat, will take on the role of Cop president, and Ana Toni, the government’s climate change secretary, will be executive director of the summit.

The two will face a daunting task: Cop29 ended in fierce criticism of the developed world from poor countries, led by India, which denounced the outcome as “abysmally poor”.

Yalchin Rafiyev, the chief negotiator for the Azerbaijani hosts, told the Guardian that his experience of Cop29 made him optimistic for Cop30, as countries should have more common ground in discussions of how to reduce emissions than they had in settling who should pay for it. “Finance [the subject of Cop29] was the most divisive issue,” he said. “If we could manage to get agreement on finance, I am hopeful that we should be able to agree on NDCs.”

Mohamed Adow, the director of the Power Shift Africa thinktank, said the fierce controversies that overshadowed Cop29 need not dog Belém. “There’s a good chance that the rancour and acrimony of Cop29 will be less problematic in Brazil. A large part of the blame was due to the weak Azeri hosts, who mishandled the talks, offended a number of countries and lacked either the diplomatic nous or geopolitical heft to steer talks to a positive outcome,” he said. “The good news is Brazil is much better suited to the job. A progressive leadership, experienced diplomats and one of the great rising forces in geopolitics should result in a much more positive environment.”

Brazil will need powerful allies, however, and with Trump and his many admirers around the world ascendant, there is a dearth of strong leadership on the climate among the biggest economies. Influential countries that have championed climate action in the past are facing fraught elections this year, or internal political crises: in Germany, the coalition led by the chancellor, Olaf Scholz, broke down in the face of a far-right challenge, with elections to be held this weekend; in France, the president, Emmanuel Macron – who convened several climate finance conferences – remains mired in political turmoil; across the EU, rightwing parties are fomenting a backlash against green policy; and in Canada, the previous fragile cross-party consensus on climate action could crumble in the election looming after premier Justin Trudeau’s resignation.

The stance taken by China, which with more than 30% of global emissions is the world’s biggest source of greenhouse gases by some distance, will be crucial. China has a target of peaking emissions by 2030, and reaching net zero by 2060. This is “highly insufficient” and would lead to a world more than 3C hotter than preindustrial levels, according to Climate Action Tracker. With rapidly increasing power generation from renewable sources, and a burgeoning electric vehicle market, the country could do much better.

When it does come, China’s NDC needs to be tough if hopes of a 1.5C limit are to be kept alive. “We believe a 30% reduction [in emissions] by 2035, based on an imminent emissions peak of 2025, would be a strong Chinese NDC,” said Li Shuo, the director of the China climate hub at the Asia Society Policy Institute. “This goal will be very challenging, though, in light of the geopolitical environment, as well as China’s domestic economic struggles.”

India, the world’s sixth biggest economy, will also be a key player, with its heavy reliance on coal alongside a rapidly growing renewable energy sector. Arunabha Ghosh, the chief executive of the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, a New Delhi-based thinktank, said: “India must remain steadfast in its commitment to climate action – to capitalise on the strategic opportunities in technology, investment, industrial

development, green livelihoods, and greater resilience for the economy. Climate risks are now macroeconomic risks, and climate policy is now industrial policy.”

While many of Europe’s major economies are taking a rightward turn, the exception is the UK, where the prime minister, Keir Starmer, has made shifting to a low-carbon economy one of his key “missions” for government. Starmer is seeking closer relations with China, the US and Europe. He had a 45-minute phone call with Trump days after the inauguration, though climate policy was not discussed. Rachel Reeves, the chancellor of the exchequer, visited China in January, and Ed Miliband, the secretary of state for energy security and net zero, is expected to make a trip to Beijing this year.

Paul Bledsoe, a former Clinton White House climate adviser, now with the American University Center for Environmental Policy, called on the UK to fill the global leadership vacuum left by the “climate nihilism” of the US president. “Given the dearth of EU centre-left leadership, UK leaders like Keir Starmer and Ed Miliband must step forcefully into the void, leveraging relationships with key nations in the global south including Brazil, India, and Kenya,” he said. “This ought to be Britain’s most important Cop since Glasgow.”

CCC IN THE NEWS:

MANILA STANDARD

[CCC: Open, inclusive climate regime build lasting resilience](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Philippines stressed the importance of transparency, accountability and collaboration in addressing climate challenges across social and national boundaries during a high-level meeting in Manila.

Climate Change Commission vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje renewed the country's commitment to open and inclusive climate governance, citing its role in strengthening climate resilience and sustainable development at the Open Government Partnership Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting held on Feb. 7.

"Governments must not work in silos. Meaningful participation leads to stronger policies, better implementation, and greater public trust," he said.

"Our commitment to open governance means breaking down barriers and equipping communities with the knowledge and tools to take action so we can build a culture of appreciation for open climate governance mechanisms that drive real, lasting resilience across the Asia-Pacific."

Borje cited the Philippines National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan (NDCIP) as prime examples of collaborative policymaking under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s administration.

He said under the current leadership, climate action has been prioritized through clear governance structures that encourage broad stakeholder participation.

"The NAP was completed in under 10 months, and the NDCIP in just five months, demonstrating that when governance frameworks are in place and stakeholders are actively engaged, we can achieve both strong outputs and impactful outcomes," Borje said.

A key focus of the discussion at the meeting was climate finance transparency, especially the Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET) mechanism.

The CCET system tracks the allocation of climate-related funds, allowing the public to monitor financial flows and ensuring that investments translate into meaningful and measurable outcomes.

Meanwhile, Borje proposed the creation of an ASEAN-wide open governance framework for climate finance and carbon markets to foster regional cooperation.

He stressed the need to balance high-quality deliberation with high-quality investment, citing the Philippine Energy Plan (PEP) 2020-2040, which outlines the country's transition to renewable energy while ensuring financial transparency and public trust.

Borje called on civil society organizations, research institutions and advocacy groups to play an active role in monitoring climate finance and shaping policies.

The event brought together government officials, civil society leaders, and policy experts to explore how open governance can accelerate sustainable development in the region.

Experts from Australia, Indonesia, Mongolia and Sri Lanka tackled pressing issues, such as artificial intelligence governance, anti-corruption efforts, misinformation and public finance reforms.

The CCC, meanwhile, affirmed its commitment to integrating open governance principles into climate policies, ensuring that adaptation and mitigation efforts align with national and global goals while fostering transparency and public engagement.

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