



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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- PHL drafting sustainability blueprint

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### DUKE TODAY

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By: Mary E Klotman

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### ESG TODAY

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By: Mark Segal

Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP), one of Canada's largest investors, with over \$269 billion in assets under management, announced the launch of its new 2026 – 2030 climate strategy, which will replace the fund's portfolio emissions reduction targets with new goals to scale climate-related investments.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Gaining a foothold in the quest for climate justice](#)**

In a landmark opinion it issued last July, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that countries must meet their climate commitments, and warned that failure to do so may constitute “an internationally wrongful act.”

The opinion of the United Nations’ highest court may not be binding, but it nonetheless provides a strong argument for climate justice, a principle that appears to be withering in today’s harsh geopolitical landscape.

## **TURKIYIE TODAY**

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Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Alparslan Bayraktar said there are high expectations for the 31st Conference of the Parties, or COP31, to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which Türkiye will host this year.

Bayraktar made the remarks on the sidelines of the International Energy Agency Ministerial Meeting, which began Monday at the headquarters of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris and continues Tuesday.

## **YAHOO FINANCE**

### **[TotalEnergies in high-stakes French trial over climate change](#)**

By: Maxence D'AVERSA

TotalEnergies faces cutting back oil and gas production if NGOs prevail in a trial that began Thursday over accusations the French energy giant failed to properly consider environmental risks.

The case, brought by several NGOs and the city of Paris, is based upon a 2017 law that imposed a "duty of vigilance" on large companies.

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### BUSINESS MIRROR

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THE Philippine government is drafting a strategic blueprint to manage the country's economic shift toward a more sustainable and climate-resilient future, under the Philippine Just Transition Framework (JTF).

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through the Just Transition Technical Working Group, said the framework sets out the guiding principles and institutional foundations needed to support a fair transition across policy, regulation, and investment as the economy adjusts to global low-carbon trends.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

**ABS CBN**

[Coffee regions hit by extra days of extreme heat — scientists](#)[Coffee regions hit by extra days of extreme heat — scientists](#)

PARIS — The world's main coffee-growing regions are roasting for an additional number of days of climate change-driven heat each year, threatening harvests and contributing to higher prices, researchers said Wednesday.

An analysis found that there were 47 extra days of harmful heat per year on average in 25 countries representing nearly all global coffee production between 2021 and 2025, according to independent research group Climate Central.

Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Ethiopia and Indonesia -- which supply 75 percent of the world's coffee -- experienced on average 57 additional days of temperatures exceeding the threshold of 30C.

"Climate change is coming for our coffee. Nearly every major coffee-producing country is now experiencing more days of extreme heat that can harm coffee plants, reduce yields, and affect quality," said Kristina Dahl, Climate Central's vice president for science.

"In time, these impacts may ripple outward from farms to consumers, right into the quality and cost of your daily brew," Dahl said in a statement.

US tariffs on imports from Brazil, which supplies a third of coffee consumed in the United States, contributed to higher prices this past year, Climate Central said.

But extreme weather in the world's coffee-growing regions is "at least partly to blame" for the recent surge in prices, it added.

Coffee cultivation needs optimal temperatures and rainfall to thrive.

Temperatures above 30C are "extremely harmful" to arabica coffee plants and "suboptimal" for the robusta variety, Climate Central said. Those two plant species produce the majority of the global coffee supply.

For its analysis, Climate Central estimated how many days each year would have stayed below 30C in a world without carbon pollution but instead exceeded that level in reality -- revealing the number of hot days added by climate change.

The last three years have been the hottest on record, according to climate monitors.

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“Often when we think of climate change, we think in terms of the economy or the environment, but we don’t think in terms of health,” said Executive Vice President for Health Affairs Dr. Mary E. Klotman, noting that extreme heat, flooding and water scarcity directly threaten human health.

The event brought together experts from medicine, environmental science, engineering and policy to discuss a range of topics. Participants explored how rising temperatures, extreme weather and shifting ecosystems are reshaping public health in the Carolinas and beyond. Researchers showcased CHeRI-funded projects, including an atlas connecting health to where people live; work on fungal-related disease risks; an investigation of climate’s impact on the immune system, and more.

In a “pitch session,” teams proposed ideas designed to protect vulnerable communities.

The symposium also highlighted Duke’s growing investment in climate-health research, supported in part by a recent \$4.5 million award from The Duke Endowment to expand CHeRI’s work. With new funding and a surge of interest across campus, organizers hope the event will become a catalyst for long-term partnerships and innovative projects.

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By: Mark Segal

Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP), one of Canada's largest investors, with over \$269 billion in assets under management, announced the launch of its new 2026 – 2030 climate strategy, which will replace the fund's portfolio emissions reduction targets with new goals to scale climate-related investments.

Launched in 2021, OTPP's prior climate goals included targets to reduce portfolio emissions intensity by 45% by 2025, and by 67% by 2030. OTPP also announced an ambition in 2021 to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Alongside the launch of the new strategy, OTPP announced that it surpassed the 2025 goal, achieving a 50% reduction in the emissions intensity of its investment portfolio from a 2019 baseline

With the launch of the new 2026-2030 climate strategy, OTPP said that it will shift away from a focus on portfolio emissions intensity, and towards real-world impact, by prioritizing and measuring investments aligned with a net zero future.

Anna Murray, Senior Managing Director and Global Head of Sustainable Investing at OTPP said:

“Our climate strategy reflects an impactful and pragmatic evolution that builds on our progress and learnings to date and leans into our strengths as a private investor. Accelerating the global energy transition will require a significant role for private capital, and we are pleased to set out an ambition that can have a real-world impact through working with our companies to advance transition planning and directing capital toward attractive investments in sectors tangibly enabling the energy transition.”

According to OTPP, the new strategy will focus on two core pillars, including investing in climate solutions to deploy capital into companies that provide products, services or technologies that reduce or remove greenhouse gas emissions, help manage exposure to climate-related risk, or enable climate solutions, and; accelerating transition planning, by working with portfolio companies to develop and advance decarbonization plans that strengthen climate resilience and support long-term business value.

As part of the new strategy, OTPP announced a new target to have \$70 billion in Climate Transition Aligned (CTA) private markets investments by 2030, roughly double its current level. The pension manager also released a CTA Framework, outlining criteria for CTA investments, which broadly include companies that are decarbonizing their operations, as well as those enabling the global energy transition.

OTPP added that it aims to have its portfolio primarily invested in assets aligned with its CTA Framework or in low emissions assets by 2050, as part of its commitment to “taking an active role in supporting the global goal to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.”

Jo Taylor, President and CEO, said:

“Our climate strategy recognizes that the world's shift to cleaner energy is underway and represents a generational investment opportunity that stands to reshape economies. By focusing our ambitions in

private investing and active ownership where we have influence, we are positioning the Fund to remain resilient and constructively contribute to the transition through the companies in which we invest.”

## THE MANILA TIMES

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In a landmark opinion it issued last July, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that countries must meet their climate commitments, and warned that failure to do so may constitute “an internationally wrongful act.”

The opinion of the United Nations’ highest court may not be binding, but it nonetheless provides a strong argument for climate justice, a principle that appears to be withering in today’s harsh geopolitical landscape.

The impact of climate change varies widely. Some people and places may be more vulnerable than others to sea level rise or extreme weather.

“While everyone must do their part to address climate change, the burden should not be borne by those that have contributed the least,” Unicef said. “The world’s richest 10 percent are responsible for 50 percent of GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions, and the poorest 50 percent are only responsible for 10 percent.”

In the ICJ’s view, industrialized countries must be made to accept responsibility for creating this gaping inequality.

The message is clear: Polluters must stop emitting and pay for the harm they have inflicted.

The world’s biggest industrial economies, however, refuse to be bound by legal clauses in dealing with climate issues.

Environmental groups, meanwhile, have rallied around the ICJ ruling. Oxfam said it “elevates national climate commitments everywhere by confirming that countries must reduce emissions enough to protect the universal rights to life, food, health and a clean environment.”

Greenpeace International hailed the opinion as “the start of a new era of climate accountability at a global level.”

Last week, Vanuatu introduced a draft of a UN General Assembly resolution that endorses the ICJ opinion. The Philippines is among the endorsing countries.

Vanuatu Climate Minister Ralph Regenvanu believes the resolution “will be about ensuring the court’s findings are not left on paper, but become living obligations.”

He underlined the importance of following up the ICJ opinion with a resolution at the General Assembly, anticipating that countries opposed to it could shoot it down in other consensus-based forums.

The pushback that Regenvanu warned about has already started. And the United States, one of the world’s leading greenhouse gas emitters, is leading the charge.

The US State Department, according to the Associated Press and Al-Jazeera news agencies, has circulated a cable to all US embassies and consulates that is “strongly urging Vanuatu to immediately

withdraw its draft resolution and cease attempting to wield the (ICJ's) Advisory Opinion as a basis for creating an avenue to pursue any misguided claims of international legal obligations.”

The cable said the draft resolution was based on “speculative climate models to fabricate purported legal obligations that seek to assign blame and encourage baseless claims.”

The US position is hardly surprising. The Trump administration has pursued an anti-climate agenda, dissociating itself from the 2016 Paris Agreement, which set down targets for limiting global warming.

Trump's withdrawal from the treaty is seen by an environmental activist as “a betrayal of the communities at risk from climate disaster, especially those on the frontlines of the crisis in the Global South.”

The US also boycotted the UN Climate Change Conference in Brazil last November, where Colombia, the Netherlands, and Pacific Island nations announced they were planning to host historic talks on phasing out fossil fuels.

“Trump is trying to drag the rest of the world backwards by launching conflicts for oil and bullying other countries into deepening their reliance on dirty, dangerous fossil fuels,” one political analyst said.

Other major polluters like Russia and China are likely to follow in the US' footsteps by vigorously campaigning against the Vanuatu resolution. Their common argument is that legal provisions in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change are enough to ensure climate justice.

That doesn't absolve them from being held to account for failing to protect the planet from the impacts of climate change.

Ambassador Odo Tevi, Vanuatu's permanent representative to the UN, said the ICJ opinion provides authoritative legal clarity.

“Our collective responsibility now is to ensure that this clarity strengthens global climate action and multilateral cooperation,” Tevi said.

We must highlight the urgency for global solidarity and support in addressing climate change now. Time is not on our side.

## TURKIYIE TODAY

### [Türkiye sees high expectations for COP31 as climate summit approaches](#)

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Bayraktar made the remarks on the sidelines of the International Energy Agency Ministerial Meeting, which began Monday at the headquarters of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris and continues Tuesday.

As part of the meeting, Bayraktar held bilateral talks with ministers from several participating countries as well as with International Energy Agency President Fatih Birol.

“The International Energy Agency Ministerial Meeting is a very important meeting held every two years and is a multilateral platform with ministers from all member countries and other invited member countries,” Bayraktar told an Anadolu Agency correspondent.

He said Türkiye held intensive bilateral meetings with ministers from the United States, Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark, in addition to making several statements during the sessions.

#### COP31 focus in bilateral meetings

Bayraktar said COP31 featured prominently in discussions with counterparts, including meetings with a European Union commissioner.

“As Türkiye, we have many items on our agenda, but one of the most important issues that attracts the interest of all countries is our COP31 hosting and presidency term. There are very high expectations from Türkiye in this regard,” he said.

“COP31 is one of the most important platforms in the world in the fight against climate change,” Bayraktar added.

He said participants asked what new contributions Türkiye would bring to the process and what priorities it would set.

“We stated that Türkiye will have certain regional focus topics in this area,” he said.

#### Rising global electricity demand

Bayraktar said discussions also focused on how countries can contribute collectively to the fight against climate change, noting that one of the key issues raised was the rapid increase in global electricity demand.

He said securing investment and financing is becoming increasingly challenging, particularly for developing economies.

“In particular, developing economies like ours are now facing a different challenge,” Bayraktar said. “In the past, only countries like ours had growing economies and increasing electricity demand. But now, with

artificial intelligence and data centers, demand is increasing in developed countries as well, and financial resources are, in a sense, being divided.”

“In fact, we need to be able to access more financing,” he added.

Bayraktar also said supply chain challenges related to access to equipment were raised during the meeting.

“We also brought this issue to the agenda,” he said.

Emphasizing the importance of electricity grid development, Bayraktar said Türkiye has set “very serious targets” in this area.

In his address to the meeting, he stressed the need for strong international cooperation.

“We are going through a period in which we need to put ideologies or political views aside,” he said.

Bayraktar also highlighted the importance of stable policymaking.

“That is, policies that do not change from one administration to another,” he said. “In this sense, our country is able to attract investments thanks to political stability and policies that have been sustained for the past 23 years under the leadership of our President.”

He said another issue emphasized was ensuring citizens are better informed and more involved in energy and climate transition processes.

“One thing that stands out is this: one of the outcomes of this meeting,” Bayraktar said. “It is held every two years, but it seems that there is a need for it to be held every year.”

He noted that IEA President Birol said such an option could be considered, adding that two years is a very short period in a rapidly changing global energy sector.

Bayraktar said Türkiye expects an intensive period of international engagement this year.

“I hope that this year, with our hosting of COP31, many of our international events will take place both in Türkiye and abroad, and we will enter a very intensive period in terms of our participation in these events,” he said.

In a separate statement posted on the US-based social media platform X, Bayraktar said he met with EU Energy and Housing Commissioner Dan Jorgensen in France.

“At a time when we are part of a regional and global transformation process, we want to strengthen our relations with concrete outcomes,” Bayraktar said.

He added that Türkiye views the deepening of energy cooperation with the European Union as highly important.

## YAHOO FINANCE

### [TotalEnergies in high-stakes French trial over climate change](#)

By: Maxence D'AVERSA

TotalEnergies faces cutting back oil and gas production if NGOs prevail in a trial that began Thursday over accusations the French energy giant failed to properly consider environmental risks.

The case, brought by several NGOs and the city of Paris, is based upon a 2017 law that imposed a "duty of vigilance" on large companies.

The law seeks to counter companies offloading responsibility onto subcontractors by requiring them to identify and prevent any risks toward human rights as well as the environment throughout their production chain, including overseas.

TotalEnergies and the plaintiffs are at odds over the reach of the definition of the environment -- whether it means risks on a local scale such as a polluted river or more broadly global warming.

The energy firm's lawyers argued global warming is beyond the scope of the law.

But a lawyer representing four NGOs including nonprofit Sherpa told the court that "selling hydrocarbons to be burned creates an environmental risk".

"Is there really no link between global warming and the preservation of biodiversity or the prevention of air pollution?" the lawyer stated.

The NGOs also accuse TotalEnergies of not including within its vigilance requirements the "indirect emissions" produced by its end customers burning its products, which amount to 342 million tonnes of CO2 per year.

The plaintiffs are demanding TotalEnergies stop developing new hydrocarbon projects as well as make a 37 percent reduction in oil production and a 25 percent reduction in gas production by 2030.

"We will ask you to make a courageous, unprecedented decision, but one based on the law," one of the lawyers for the NGOs said.

TotalEnergies claimed it was the victim of "demonisation" by the plaintiffs.

"If the company, which accounts for less than two percent of global production, were to shut down, global warming would still continue," one of TotalEnergies's lawyers said during the hearing.

The trial is due to continue Friday, but a ruling is not expected for several months.

Environmental groups have high hopes for the ruling.

It "could have systemic implications" for "other sectors, such as transport," said Sherpa's Thea Bounfour.

Lawsuits against major polluting companies have been on the rise as the consequences of climate change become more apparent.

At the end of 2024, Dutch courts rejected on appeal a case brought by climate advocacy groups who argued that oil giant Shell was not doing enough to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, overturning a landmark ruling handed down three years earlier.

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The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through the Just Transition Technical Working Group, said the framework sets out the guiding principles and institutional foundations needed to support a fair transition across policy, regulation, and investment as the economy adjusts to global low-carbon trends.

The 28-page draft was developed based on consultations with government agencies, labor groups, employers, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and private sector stakeholders after it was released for public comments from Feb. 3-9.

The multi-agency roadmap defines the national mission as a “transformative, people-centered shift to a low-carbon, energy-secure, and climate-resilient economy that prioritizes equity, inclusivity, and balance” throughout the transition process.

The policy document cautions that a business-as-usual approach — one that fails to keep pace with the global low-carbon transition — could reduce projected gross domestic product (GDP) growth by up to three percentage points and increase unemployment by 2040.

To address these risks, the framework evaluates three potential development pathways and concludes that a managed “just transition” would deliver the most favorable economic outcomes for the Philippines.

Based on assessments by the Climate Change Commission and the DENR, following this pathway could raise real GDP by more than 16% by 2040.

The draft further projects that a coordinated transition strategy could reduce poverty levels, lifting more than 12 million people above their current economic status by 2050 compared with present trends.

“A just transition requires a whole-of-economy, whole-of-society, and whole-of-government approach and can only be achieved through the meaningful and effective participation of all stakeholders,” the document read.

The technical working group notes that small and medium enterprises, which employ a large portion of the workforce, face a significant “capacity gap” and limited ability to invest in green technologies, leaving them at heightened risk during the transition to low-carbon industries without targeted support.

To address potential labor displacement, the roadmap proposes the creation of an “Early Warning System” to identify at-risk workers and direct them toward reskilling and upskilling programs. The JTF estimates that these targeted interventions could increase female labor force participation by 24 percentage points by 2050 compared with a decarbonization-only scenario.

The framework also addresses public transport modernization, underscoring the need to protect the livelihoods of jeepney drivers and operators through concessional financing and technical assistance.

The 16-agency working group notes that successful implementation will depend heavily on securing stable and predictable access to international climate finance and technology. — Erika Mae P. Sinaking

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