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DAILY TRIBUNE

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By: Jing Villamante

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ECO BUSINESS

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By: Jumalynne Doctolero

Showing one's love for the environment can be done in many ways. One may participate in tree-planting activities or clean up drives, avoid littering in public places or even use sustainable transportation to go around. But there's a relatively new way to express your love for dear Mother Earth – "tree hugging".

[Uncontrolled population growth key factor in worsening weather conditions in Mindanao](#)

By: Nora Lanuza Molde

The Commission on Population and Development (CPD) in Caraga highlighted the devastating impacts of recent extreme weather events in the region due to uncontrolled population growth that increased climate vulnerability.

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[DSWD eyes 'LAWA at BINHI' project to combat El Niño effects](#)

By: Zaldy De Layola

Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Rex Gatchalian on Tuesday said the agency is finalizing its partnership with national government agencies, local government units (LGUs), and other private institutions for the launching of Project LAWA at BINHI.

[First climate-controlled tulip farm in Asia blooms in PH](#)

By: Kris Crismundo

Phinl Corp., a Danish-Filipino enterprise, is now growing tulips in the Philippines through a climate-controlled farm, the Board of Investments (BOI) said Tuesday.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Quezon City transforms schoolyards into climate-resilient oases](#)

By: Jing Villamente

Quezon City, a climate action and resilience champion, has committed to transforming schoolyards into green, community spaces that are resilient to heatwaves and flooding.

The city has joined the new 'OASIS Schoolyards' program in the Philippines, jointly launched by Resilient Cities Network and Temasek Foundation Tuesday to improve educational quality for Filipino students, while simultaneously addressing the challenges of climate change.

'OASIS Schoolyards' was originally conceived and implemented by the city of Paris as part of the Paris Resilience Strategy, to address the urgent challenges of climate change in urban areas, with a focus on mitigating the disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities and improving the well-being of children. Based on the principles of Openness, Adaptation, Sensitization, Innovation and Social Ties or 'OASIS', it has become an exemplary model using innovative solutions to transform schoolyards into urban oases resilient to climate change.

The schoolyards will be co-designed by school communities, including students, parents and teachers, as well as design professionals in consultation with stakeholders such as government, academia and community organizations. The schoolyards will also be used as an interactive learning tool for students as well as for local government officials to raise public awareness for climate resilience.

For a start, the program will adopt and pilot the 'OASIS' model in three public elementary schools in Quezon City. The city is excited to announce that Diosdado P. Macapagal Elementary School, Manuel L. Quezon Elementary School and Placido Del Mundo Elementary School have been selected to participate in this schoolyard transformation program.

Located in different parts of Quezon City, the schools were chosen based on their comparative vulnerability to heatwaves and flooding, and availability of open space within the school and surrounding neighborhood.

"Quezon City is truly honored to be selected as the first city in Asia for the 'OASIS Schoolyards' program, supported by Temasek Foundation. We are committed to tackling climate change and provide a livable and quality community for all by strengthening the adaptive capacity of our communities and resilience of our natural ecosystems. Inclusive climate action is also integral in the plan development to ensure

representation of various sectors including the youth. The 'OASIS Schoolyards' program resonates with the City Government's vision, and we express our enthusiasm in being part of this initiative," Mayor Joy Belmonte said.

"I am thrilled to see our vision of creating resilient, sustainable communities taking root in Quezon City. The launch of the 'OASIS Schoolyards' program marks a significant step towards empowering cities to address the urgent challenges posed by climate change. We are committed to transforming schoolyards into vibrant urban oases, fostering community engagement and empowering children as catalysts for positive change. Our collaboration with Temasek Foundation exemplifies our commitment to creating climate-resilient cities, starting with this innovative initiative in Quezon City," Lauren Sorkin, Executive Director, Resilient Cities Network said.

"Innovating through a real-life climate adaptation solution in schoolyards is a powerful way to activate local communities and stakeholders to be responsible for climate action proactively. It is also an experiential learning platform which youths in schools can relate to when at play in a school environment," said Mr Lim Hock Chuan, Head of Programmes, Temasek Foundation. "We expect this pilot program for the three 'OASIS Schoolyards' schools will show definitive results in improving livability of the urban environment around schools; and where important lessons will be incorporated into the school curriculum. Temasek Foundation hopes that our contribution will catalyze other local philanthropic organizations, including local governments and community stakeholders to embark on similar projects across Metro Manila", he added.

ECO BUSINESS

[Emissions of planned Southeast Asia fossil fuels projects tracked by Malaysian watchdog](#)

By: Bryan Yong

If the oil and gas reserves from planned extraction projects in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei are fully exploited, the equivalent of 9 per cent of the carbon budget for keeping global warming within safe levels will be used up, according to a new database of emissions-intensive projects in Southeast Asia.

Published last Friday by Malaysian climate watchdog RimbaWatch, the database tracks the emissions from planned carbon-heavy activity such as fossil fuel extraction and infrastructure, power plants, transportation and steel and cement plants in Southeast Asia.

The climate cost of 70 fossil fuel extraction projects in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei will amount to 9.9 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, which besides depleting the world's carbon budget could cause up to 2.1 million excess temperature-related deaths, RimbaWatch projected.

RimbaWatch uses annual and lifespan scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions from public company data to populate the database, which is called the Future Emissions Database. The database currently covers Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, but the non-profit plans to include other Southeast Asian countries in a final version.

Adam Farhan, RimbaWatch's director, said that the accuracy of emissions estimates depends on the companies' disclosures and other public information such as reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

For example, to calculate Malaysian oil and gas giant Petronas' Scope 1 and 2 emissions, RimbaWatch derived activity data published by Petronas via the emissions intensity of their products.

"While that may be limiting in the context of making general estimates of carbon lock-in from proposed assets in Southeast Asia, it's fairly credible", said Farhan.

Using data to cancel high-emissions projects

Assessments of the carbon cost of proposed projects have not been made before in Southeast Asia. Emissions from current assets have been technically reported on in Malaysia's Fourth Biennial Update Report to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

RimbaWatch aims to use the database to provide a clearer view of the cumulative impact of carbon-intensive projects on Malaysia's ability to meet its Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris climate accord, and for Malaysian companies to meet their climate targets. The watchdog hopes that the database can be used to advocate for the cancellation of high-emissions projects before they happen.

Companies are also allowed full access to the publicly-consulted formulas used in the database for their own calculations.

According to Farhan, the emissions tracker will include land reclamation and urban highway projects but they are currently finalising their formulas to minimise double counting.

Evidence to counter greenwashing

The preliminary analysis of the database is part of the non-profit's upcoming report that pits Southeast Asian companies with the highest carbon emissions potential against their country's climate targets.

RimbaWatch told EcoBusiness that it intends to use the database as evidence to hold accountable Petronas' 2050 net-zero carbon emissions goal. According to a UN High-Level Expert Group Report, non-state organisations, including Petronas, cannot claim to be net zero while continuing to expand fossil fuel production.

[\[Opinion\] Climate hazards are a kind of violence: how planned international migration offers solutions](#)

By: Philline van der Wolk-Donggay

Tuvalu, the world's smallest sovereign country, started recreating itself in the metaverse to become the world's first digital nation in 2022.

It was a move that can only be read as sincere desperation as it races to preserve its culture and identity in the digital world as climate change threatens to wipe the country off the physical world.

In the communications it submitted to the United Nations Framework convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Tuvalu declared that coastal erosion is an occurring problem and for some families, lands have already been consequently lost.

It is only one of many small island developing states (SIDS) in Asia and the Pacific facing extreme environmental vulnerabilities and climate catastrophe.

Factors like slow onset sea level rise causing coastal erosion already threaten livelihoods and property, and still the loss of territory from low elevation conditions is not the only concern for SIDS: infrastructure, food and water sources are also at risk, even as extreme weather events like tropical cyclones and storm surges directly threaten lives.

Thus, a new treaty announced in November 2023 granting climate change visas to citizens of Tuvalu by the government of Australia was a celebrated new development.

The Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union treaty offers 280 Tuvaluans—2.5 per cent of the islands' population—permanent residency in Australia each year according to details revealed by the Center for Global Development.

Tuvalu climate migrants will gain access to Australian education, health, and key income and family support upon arrival, yielding to the essence of the treaty's first article on Purpose with the specific wording of 'human mobility with dignity'.

Come to think of it, climate vulnerability is violence

When it comes to cross-border migration, climate and environmental impacts are omitted as reasons to seek protection and asylum under the Refugee convention of 1951 and its amendment in the 1967 protocol. Neither is climate change included among international migration drivers such as labour, family reunion and education as official conditions allowing states to grant entry visas and residency permits.

While the Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union treaty is groundbreaking in legalising the status of “international climate migrant” it is so far the only one of its kind, and the formal bilateral recognition of ‘climate migration’ is limited to just that—between two countries.

For Tuvalu and other highly climate-vulnerable low-income countries in the world, given current understandings of anthropogenic climate change, environmental impacts and climate hazards are in fact a kind of violence.

Every extremely hot day is a threat and assault on one’s health potentially causing death via heat stroke or at the minimum, heat stress sending a person into illness for days at a time in an economy mired in poverty, without proper social healthcare systems in place.

And that every typhoon warning is anticipation of impending suffering akin to war in the form of wide-scale destruction of homes and other infrastructure preventing service systems like transport and energy from supporting entire cities and communities, cutting supply of precious resources like food, drinking water and electricity.

Migration scholars like Hein de Haas in the book *Age of Migration* discuss migration aspirations as a function of people’s general life aspirations and perceived geographical opportunity structures. If people have broader life aspirations that cannot be fulfilled at home, this often generates aspirations to migrate, according to De Haas and co-authors.

For a moment, let’s forget raising material aspirations; what if one’s aspiration is essentially, back to the basics of ensuring one’s own survival or that of his and her family and loved ones? But that this can no longer be fulfilled in the home, nor the community, nor the country where one is a citizen of because of the violence of climate vulnerability within the context of an underdeveloped economy.

And perhaps more importantly, how do we reckon that those who suffer the most from climate impacts contributed to climate change the least—how do we address climate justice?

Does climate lead to mass migration? Short answer: No

Those of you, who like me closely follow the discourse on climate justice, welcome the argument in favour of fast-tracking climate action in order not to have to deal with droves of people from the global south migrating to the global north.

Often, when poor people from underdeveloped countries having little to do with historical emissions want to seek refuge in wealthier industrialised economies often with the highest historical and current emissions exacerbating climate impacts, it’s

understandable from a justice perspective. And it signals an image of upheaval: people moving en masse.

But counterintuitive as it may sound, there is no mass climate migration. And research evidence is disproving that climate change will lead to it. This is because migration is a multi-causal phenomenon driven by powerful economic, political, and social processes and is therefore difficult to attribute directly to environmental factors.

The work of De Haas and colleagues shows evidence that environmental degradation and disasters need to go hand in hand with political instability, poverty, violent conflict, and corruption to create conditions for large-scale displacement—they argue that the most vulnerable are often deprived of capabilities to move and thus, remain.

And yet accelerated climate impacts are anticipated by every climate science reporting in the last few decades, including the most prominent from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). And development institutions the world over are acknowledging the occurrence of climate displacement.

The World Bank in its seminal Groundswell report of 2021 declares that “climate change could force 216 million people across six world regions to move within their countries by 2050.”

Government bodies like the European Parliament are attempting to define “climate refugee” and in a 2023 Briefing Note declares that “over 376 million people have been displaced because of natural disasters brought about by climate change since 2008, with 36.2 million people displaced in 2022 alone.”

The EU proceeds to state that while many found refuge within their own countries, some were forced to go abroad.

Following the capabilities argument, upheaval and mass cross-border migration may never happen, but catastrophic suffering is expected. In this vein, the governments of the world have the chance to plan migration of the most vulnerable peoples in a way that adheres to the principle of ‘mobility with dignity’ exemplified by the Falepeli Union, with benefits for receiving countries.

Planned migration as climate pledge

At the recent UN climate conference COP28 in Dubai in December 2023 came the announcement of a Loss and Damage fund which would help compensate vulnerable countries coping with loss and damage caused by climate change

While a breakthrough for climate justice, operationalisation of the fund remains a challenge with only a handful of countries committing financial pledges. And especially in consideration of how an earlier commitment funding for climate adaptation and mitigation announced 13 years ago in Copenhagen via the Green Climate Fund similarly remains under-pledged, global climate governance must therefore consider other possibilities.

What if planned migration strategies for climate vulnerable countries with low historical emissions like Tuvalu, as demonstrated by efforts like the Falepeli Union, are marked as both climate adaptation and loss and damage activities in global climate politics?

The recognition of climate as a migration driver and migration as a climate risk mitigation and adaptation strategy can prove beneficial to both receiving-global north and sending-global south countries in many ways.

In the case of high-income industrialised economies with aging populations, receiving climate migrants can cover for labour shortage while fulfilling international commitments to climate adaptation and loss and damage pledges.

In the case of climate vulnerable low-income countries with high migration aspirations but low capabilities, an international pathway in climate migration will allow decent and dignified futures for themselves and their families.

If done in an orderly manner, a planned migration strategy in the true sense of the words, can be win-win for country parties to the UN Climate convention and just might illuminate a clearer path for the world towards a just and equitable climate-safe future for all.

GMA

PAGASA: Easterlies to affect parts of PH

By: Jiselle Anne Casucian

The eastern section of the Philippines may experience cloudy skies with scattered rain showers because of the easterlies, according to PAGASA.

In its Tuesday bulletin, PAGASA said Southern Leyte, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, and Dinagat Islands may also experience thunderstorms because of the easterlies.

The combined effects of the easterlies and localized thunderstorms, meanwhile, will be felt over Metro Manila and the rest of the country.

Possible flash floods and landslides may occur as a result of these weather conditions.

The country is also forecast to have light to moderate winds with slight to moderate coastal waters.

Sunrise in Metro Manila will be at 6:18 a.m. on Wednesday.

MANILA BULLETIN

[World needs 'trillions' for climate action: COP28 president](#)

The world needs "trillions" of dollars to spur on the green transition and tackle global warming, the head of last year's COP28 climate talks said Tuesday, warning that political momentum can evaporate without clear action.

COP28 president Sultan Al Jaber hailed progress made at UN negotiations last year in Dubai, where countries agreed to triple global renewables capacity this decade and "transition away" from polluting fossil fuels.

But the deal lacked important details, including on funding, putting the onus on this year's COP29 meeting in Azerbaijan.

With impacts accelerating as global heat records are smashed, experts say that funding agreed this year will also play an important role in encouraging governments to toughen up their decarbonisation targets.

Jaber said finance was "the key enabler of positive change at the speed and scale" needed.

"But not normal scale finance -- we need finance at every level," he said, at an event in Paris organised by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

Countries are expected this year to hammer out a new target for the amount of annual support rich nations will provide to poorer ones for their energy transitions and adaptation to climate impacts from 2025.

The failure of wealthy nations to meet their previous goal of \$100 billion per year by 2020 has soured trust, with indications the target was likely reached only in 2022.

Needs already far outstrip the money available. The UN-backed climate finance expert group has estimated that emerging economies except China will need to spend around \$2.4 trillion a year by the end of the decade.

"The world must now raise the bar to address the challenge we face," Jaber said.

"We need to start thinking trillions, not billions."

- 'Believe in numbers' -

Recognition of the scale of support needed has put the focus on expanding sources of funding.

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund are under pressure to initiate sweeping reforms to align their lending with the Paris deal goal of capping global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels.

Other initiatives under discussion include new taxation, especially on polluting industries, as well as redirecting fossil fuel subsidies into green development.

The United Arab Emirates, Azerbaijan and the 2025 COP host Brazil are launching an initiative to maintain global focus on keeping the 1.5C goal alive.

Jaber warned that there was a risk that "political momentum can dissipate and then fade away or disappear between COPs".

IEA chief Fatih Birol said the energy agency, which has become a key player in promoting the energy transition, would offer countries help to beef up emissions-cutting targets, with enhanced decarbonisation plans expected this year and in 2025.

He also announced a new mechanism from March 1 to measure the gap between countries' goals and the actions being taken.

"We trust the governments that they will do what they said they will do, but at the IEA, we believe in numbers," he said.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Preparing for the future today](#)

By: Cyn-Young Park and Robert Engle

Climate change is creating uncertainties for companies around the world. With the right policies, governments can help them to navigate tumultuous times and support green transformation.

Growing evidence of climate change suggests companies need to brace for severe negative impacts on their bottom lines. While climate change is real and it could instigate significant chaos and incur economic and financial costs, specifics about when, where, and how it will affect businesses remain uncertain.

Companies are already starting to feel the pinch.

According to a report by the Carbon Disclosure Project, companies estimate the costs related to climate change to be roughly \$1 trillion over the next few decades unless actions are taken now to prepare for the impact.

Investors are not immune to climate risks. Global equity portfolios could lose up to 45 percent in value should climate-related fears dent investor sentiments, according to a recent report by Cambridge University.

Despite increasing awareness of climate change and international efforts to curb global warming, oil and gas prices have soared in recent years. High energy prices have also led to underperformance of a majority of “sustainable” funds.

The rise in fossil fuel prices stems from the private sector’s response to high uncertainties associated with climate risks, as firms and their shareholders should prepare for the risks of early and unexpected termination of their businesses, known as termination risks, in their investment strategies. This internalization of termination risks is a key factor influencing their financial decisions.

Uncertain future

Our research examined the strategies companies and investors are adopting when they operate in industries that might be shut down at an uncertain future date due to climate risks.

When these companies, particularly those at risk from climate change, factor in the possibility of being forced to close, they often invest less in their operations.

This lower investment can lead to a decrease in the supply of their products while they are still in business, which can cause the prices of these products to rise before the businesses actually shut down.

Contrary to the common perception of high energy prices as a failure of sustainability, an increase in fossil fuel prices could be a natural consequence of the inevitability of policies to mitigate climate change. Accordingly, it can be also interpreted as evidence that the private market does indeed recognize that climate change is real and must be addressed.

In fact, the consequences of private sector decarbonization are quite similar to the consequences to be expected from implementation of an optimal carbon tax. For example, when fossil energy prices are high, it will encourage conservation and induce fossil energy firms to prepare for termination.

Of course, there is a key difference between private sector decarbonization measures and carbon taxes, in that the profits from the private process would be channeled to investors bearing the risk of climate change rather than governments who could use the proceeds to reduce other regressive taxes or accelerate decarbonization.

Sustainable investors

Sustainable portfolios should still have climate hedge characteristics, even though they temporarily underperformed conventional diversified portfolios. If climate risk continues to increase, results for sustainable investors should improve relative to unhedged investors.

A substantial rise in fossil fuel energy prices is inevitable to prompt a shift to renewable energy. However, better policies implemented now can considerably reduce the cost of climate mitigation.

For example, governments can adopt and implement a carbon tax. Research shows putting a price tag on carbon emissions can be effective in cutting emissions.

Implemented well, a carbon tax can boost investments in low-carbon energy, raise government revenues, and support green growth, rather than private sector decarbonization simply leading to higher equity values for fossil energy investors.

Increased government revenues could be also directed to support transition to a greener economy or limit expected physical risks.

Private sector investors can play an important role in advancing climate actions and supporting the transition to a lower-carbon economy. A natural investment strategy is to put a portion of investors' portfolio into a climate hedge, which should increase in value if climate risk increases and decrease when climate risk declines.

Multiple challenges

Yet, multiple challenges exist in identifying potential climate-related risks in investment portfolios as well as new investment opportunities, leading to less than desirable private sector climate finance.

Multilateral development banks such as ADB can help scale up private sector investment to bridge the gap in climate finance by providing policy advice, quality projects and capacity building.

As the financial impacts of climate change on businesses and investors are felt immediately through profit losses and drops in shareholders' value arising from inaction, it's time to act decisively to mitigate risks and harness opportunities.

Proactive strategies and policies are needed to substantially increase investment in low carbon transition for Asia and the Pacific's evolving economies.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

Are you a tree-hugger?

By: Jumalynne Doctolero

Showing one's love for the environment can be done in many ways. One may participate in tree-planting activities or clean up drives, avoid littering in public places or even use sustainable transportation to go around. But there's a relatively new way to express your love for dear Mother Earth – "tree hugging".

Tree hugging is a national campaign recently launched by the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources - Forest Management Bureau (DENR-FMB) to encourage Filipinos to appreciate trees and the benefits that come from nurturing them.

The campaign is also FMB's way to introduce tree hugging as an alternative way of celebrating love month, showing love and care for the environment, our forests, and of course, trees.

Tree hugging can be traced way back to the 1970's.

The iconic Chipko Movement in India had villagers, mostly women, stand up against widespread deforestation and chose to embrace trees as a non-violent way to protect them from loggers.

The word "chipko" translates to "hug" in Hindi, a word from which the movement was named after.

Tree hugging can be extracted from the deep cultural and spiritual beliefs of local communities. Various communities around the world consider trees as sacred and revered as sources of life, energy, and sustenance. From which the movement came along, it has now become a symbol of environmental activism and reverence for nature.

Benefits of tree-hugging?

On top of its significance in the fight against climate change, study shows that human beings can benefit from it, psychologically.

1. Gives calming energy

Study shows that hugging a tree increases the level of hormone responsible for the calmness and emotional wellbeing of a person. It reduces stress, lowering blood pressure.

2. Accelerates recovery

Spending time with trees can improve immunity and accelerate recovery from illness or trauma.

3. Good for mental health

Mental health experts say tree hugging is a profound form of meditation as it is about being present in the moment, getting physical contact with other living things. In that moment of concentration, senses awaken, positive hormones are released, making your mind and body feel better.

The DENR National Capital Region joined the celebration by encouraging residents of Metro Manila to take a picture of themselves hugging their favorite tree and posting it on their social media platforms, garnering almost a hundred participants.

Employees from the Pasig River Coordinating and Management Office (PRCMO), Environmental Management Bureau NCR (EMB NCR) also joined in the fun by hugging trees inside the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center and the National Ecology Compound in Quezon City.

How to participate?

Individuals can take pictures of themselves, either selfie or groupie showing a creative way of hugging any tree around Metro Manila.

Post the picture in your social media accounts with a short description about the tree such as species and location, more especially if it's a native heritage tree. Use #TreeHuggerNgNCR as your hashtag.

Truly, participating in these campaigns may only be within a certain time frame but caring for the environment, and expressing your love for trees is timeless, as its significance to human lives are endless. For more information, follow DENR National Capital Region's Facebook page.

Uncontrolled population growth key factor in worsening weather conditions in Mindanao

By: Nora Lanuza Molde

The Commission on Population and Development (CPD) in Caraga highlighted the devastating impacts of recent extreme weather events in the region due to uncontrolled population growth that increased climate vulnerability.

"Rapid population growth in Caraga and across Mindanao is a key driver of these worsening climate disasters," said Alexander A. Makinano, regional director of CPD Caraga, during his interview with the Philippine Information Agency in Agusan Del Norte.

"As more people occupy marginal lands and forests are cleared, communities become more exposed to extreme weather," he added.

Caraga Region, located in northeastern Mindanao, has been hit hard by a series of floods, landslides, and storms over the past month triggered by the trough of Low Pressure Area (LPA). As of February 3, over 60,000 families across Caraga were affected, with thousands displaced from their homes.

According to the Office of Civil Defense Caraga, major incidents include 81 flooded areas, four landslides, and damage to 40 road sections plus four bridges across Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Butuan City, and Surigao del Sur. Power outages affected nine cities and municipalities. Over 23 houses were totally damaged, and 14 cities and municipalities were declared under state of calamity.

With Caraga's population growing by over 22 percent from 2000 to 2015, increasing from just over two million to 2.6 million residents, Dir. Makinano further explained, "All these extra people need land for farming, housing, more roads, infrastructure, and basic services. But when marginal areas are cultivated and forests logged, they increase the hazard risk, especially during severe weather events."

Makinano suggested strengthening the family planning program so couples can choose smaller families, stating that "fewer children per household will ease pressure on fragile environments across Caraga and reduce disaster impacts."

"Environmental groups also concurred that slowing population growth must be part of any strategy to curb climate change and build resilient communities, especially in Caraga, a region considered high-risk for climate change. This will benefit both current and future generations," Makinano concluded.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

DSWD eyes 'LAWA at BINHI' project to combat El Niño effects

By: Zaldy De Layola

Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Rex Gatchalian on Tuesday said the agency is finalizing its partnership with national government agencies, local government units (LGUs), and other private institutions for the launching of Project LAWA at BINHI.

He said the Project LAWA at BINHI or Local Adaptation to Water Access and Breaking Insufficiency through Nutritious Harvest, aims to strengthen the capabilities of the poor and vulnerable families during severe drought under the DSWD's Risk Resiliency Program (RRP) through cash-for-training and cash-for-work (CFTW).

He said the launching of Project LAWA at BINHI will help elevate climate change to the forefront of political discourse and ensure its continual prioritization in policy.

"The DSWD is firm in its commitment to strengthen the RRP. Our Memorandum of Understanding is symbolic of our collaboration with national agencies and LGUs in aiming for enhanced program convergence, focusing on core social protection services such as food security, water sufficiency, sustainable livelihood, and family and community disaster preparedness and mitigation on the effects of El Niño," Gatchalian said in a news release.

The project will provide Learning and Development Sessions (LDS) on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR), and CFTW to beneficiaries in priority areas exposed to the effects of El Niño.

The target beneficiaries include families of farmers, fisherfolks, indigenous peoples (IPs), and other climate and disaster-vulnerable families identified as poor by Listahanan 3 or upon assessment and validation of the Local Social Welfare and Development Office (LSWDO).

Each beneficiary will be given the opportunity to participate in CFTW activities for 10 to 25 days with the corresponding daily wage based on the prevailing Regional Daily Minimum Wage Rate (RDMWR) range of the project area.

Among the projects that the beneficiaries will partake in are related to water efficiency such as the construction of small farm reservoirs (SFRs); repairs and rehabilitation of water harvesting facilities; repairs of multipurpose water infrastructures; diversification of water supplies; aqua or hydroponics; and aquaculture, among others.

For food security, the beneficiaries will be participating in activities such as communal vegetable gardening; urban gardening; school-based and community-based vegetable gardening; community-based diversified integrated farming; planting of disaster-resilient crops, fruit-bearing trees, and mangroves; and vermicomposting.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will determine the proactive interventions to lessen the economic vulnerability of communities from the effects of the El Niño phenomenon will be signed on Feb. 22 in Doña Remedios Trinidad town in Bulacan.

Aside from the DSWD, the MOU signatories include the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of Agriculture (DA), University of the Philippines - Los Baños (UPLB), and the United Nations World Food Programme (UN-WFP).

The Feb. 22 ceremonial launching will also be attended by participants and representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UNFAO), legislators, provincial and municipal local chief executives, DSWD executive and management committee members, partner-beneficiaries, and other concerned stakeholders.

On Jan. 19, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. signed Executive Order No. 53 to streamline, reactivate, and reconstitute the old El Niño task forces under EO No. 16 (s. 2001) and Memorandum Order No. 38 (s. 2019).

Under EO 53, President Marcos directed the task force to develop a comprehensive disaster preparedness and rehabilitation plan for El Niño and La Niña to provide “systematic, holistic, and results-driven interventions” to help the public cope and minimize their devastating effects.

[First climate-controlled tulip farm in Asia blooms in PH](#)

By: Kris Crismundo

Phinl Corp., a Danish-Filipino enterprise, is now growing tulips in the Philippines through a climate-controlled farm, the Board of Investments (BOI) said Tuesday.

Phinl has registered its PHP157.4-million climate-controlled tulip farm in Maddela, Quirino Province, according to BOI Executive Director Corazon Dichosa.

Phinl's farm is the first fully contained and computer-controlled indoor hydroponic tulip farm in Asia.

Phinl sees the opportunity in growing tulips in the Philippines with the increasing demand for high-quality tulips here, the BOI said.

"The success of Phinl's climate-controlled tulip farm in the country demonstrates our commitment to innovation and sustainability in agriculture. We are proud to welcome pioneers in this field and look forward to contributing to the growth of the local floral industry," Dichosa added.

To grow tulips in a tropical country like the Philippines, Phinl uses a technology akin to hydroponics, a method of cultivation that utilizes an inert medium instead of soil to ensure optimal conditions for growing the plant.

It operates in a completely closed environment to ensure the full control of temperature, humidity and light intensity.

"The Phinl project is a clear example of our initiatives at the BOI, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, that champion sustainability in the agricultural industry. We have been registering projects that are scalable and leverage the latest technologies. In fact, in the last quarter, we have registered projects on integrated dairy farms, modern vegetable farms, and hybrid seed productions, among others," Trade Secretary and BOI Chair Alfredo Pascual said.

"It can be noted that some of these are in areas traditionally considered a challenge, if not downright impossible for the Philippines," Pascual added.

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