



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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- The Wallace Line: How Climate Change Shaped Evolution, and What It Means Today
- Indoor plants help create healthier, more climate-resilient buildings
- Supreme Court agrees to hear case on Colorado dispute over climate change
- Heeding green groups' demand, High Court orders government to justify climate targets

### CCC IN THE NEWS:

- CCC Reboots "Bawal Plastik Dito" Campaign to Push Action Against Single-Use Plastics
- CCC, MMDA join forces to align Metro Manila programs with National Climate Goals

### AL JAZZERA

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By: Al Jazeera Staff, AFP and AP

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Authorities in Arequipa have called on the country's interim president to declare a state of emergency in the region as the governor announced that multiple shelters were being opened to house those fleeing the floods.

### AZ ANIMALS

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By: Jennifer Geer

Understanding history helps us make sense of the present and even make predictions for the future. It's not just historians who study history, but scientists as well. As climate change shifts the environment, animals must adapt to survive. By learning how they adapted in the past, scientists can make predictions for the survival of current species. This aids conservationists in determining where it's most effective to focus their efforts. One significant example of how different species were affected by climate change in the past is found along the Wallace Line.

## **NEWS MEDICAL LIFE SCIENCE**

### [Indoor plants help create healthier, more climate-resilient buildings](#)

Houseplants and more advanced plant systems, such as indoor living walls and hydroponic towers, have the potential to raise indoor humidity, boost thermal comfort and help create healthier, more climate-resilient buildings, according to new research led by the University of Surrey's Global Centre for Clean Air Research (GCARE).

Published in Building and Environment, the study brings together an international collaboration of experts to examine how plants genuinely influence indoor environmental quality. While the understanding of outdoor urban greening has advanced, the effects of indoor green infrastructure have remained poorly defined.

## **SCUTOSBLOG**

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Returning from its winter recess, the Supreme Court on Monday added just one new case to its oral argument docket. In a list of orders from the justices' private conference last week, the court agreed to review a ruling by the Colorado Supreme Court in Suncor Energy Inc. v. County Commissioners of Boulder County, a case brought under state law by Boulder, Colorado. Boulder contends that oil and gas companies have knowingly played a role in exacerbating climate change and therefore have caused millions of dollars of damage to its property and residents.

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A day after hearing the first petition in Israel against the state's climate policy, the High Court of Justice ordered the government on Tuesday to define and explain its minimum target for cutting global warming emissions, to detail what steps it was taking to reduce those emissions, and to explain what was happening with its climate bill.

The court set a June 26 deadline for responses from the government and the environmental protection, energy and health ministers.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

#### [CCC Reboots “Bawal Plastik Dito” Campaign to Push Action Against Single-Use Plastics](#)

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Building on the momentum of Zero Waste Month in January, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) reboots and expands its advocacy through the “Bawal Plastik Dito” online campaign, strengthening the national call to reduce single-use plastics and promote responsible consumption and sustainable alternatives.

Rolled out through a series of informational and interactive materials on the Commission’s digital platforms, the anti-single-use plastics (SUP) campaign aims to move public discourse beyond awareness and clean-up efforts, and toward long-term behavior change and systemic action.

#### [CCC, MMDA join forces to align Metro Manila programs with National Climate Goals](#)

By: John Lester Naguna

PASIG CITY, (PIA) — The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) have begun talks to align metro-wide operations with national climate policies, aiming to bolster the resilience of the National Capital Region against increasing environmental threats.

The agencies met at the MMDA Central Office to identify priority areas where urban management programs can be integrated with the country’s long-term climate frameworks, specifically the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2023–2050 and the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## AL JAZZERA

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Peruvian authorities say they have recovered the bodies of a father and son who died in a mudslide triggered by heavy rains, which have battered the country's southern regions of Ica and Arequipa, affecting an estimated 5,500 homes and forcing many people to evacuate.

Authorities in Arequipa have called on the country's interim president to declare a state of emergency in the region as the governor announced that multiple shelters were being opened to house those fleeing the floods.

Peru's Council of Ministers said on Monday that more than 700 districts nationwide have been declared in emergency status.

In Cayma, Arequipa, a vehicle was seen semi-buried under mud, and homes teetered on the verge of collapse after flash floods swept away the earth and destroyed roadways, the Reuters news agency reported.

According to the Associated Press news agency, the bodies of a father and son were recovered after being swept away by a landslide.

The recovery came a day after 15 people were killed when a military helicopter crashed while providing rescue services during the flooding.

Rescue teams found the wreckage of the helicopter in the Chala district, officials said. Seven children were among the 11 passengers and four crew members who died, according to the AFP news agency.

Torrential downpours have caused widespread damage across southern Peru, affecting about 5,500 homes and forcing many residents to evacuate.

Images shared by Peruvian media showed streets torn up in the affected areas and vehicles buried deep in the mud slides as rescue workers attempted to clear streets using mechanical earth movers.

The El Niño Costero (coastal) climate phenomenon has been the cause of the recent weeks of heavy rain in Peru, weather forecasters report, and is expected to strengthen slightly next month, threatening more heavy rain.

While El Niño is a natural cycle that has existed for millennia, scientists increasingly link its severity to climate change. Rising global temperatures provide a warmer "baseline" for the ocean, making it easier for these extreme heating events to reach record-breaking thresholds and increasing the atmosphere's capacity to hold the moisture that fuels torrential rain and catastrophic flooding.

## AZ ANIMALS

### [The Wallace Line: How Climate Change Shaped Evolution, and What It Means Today](#)

By: Jennifer Geer

Understanding history helps us make sense of the present and even make predictions for the future. It's not just historians who study history, but scientists as well. As climate change shifts the environment, animals must adapt to survive. By learning how they adapted in the past, scientists can make predictions for the survival of current species. This aids conservationists in determining where it's most effective to focus their efforts. One significant example of how different species were affected by climate change in the past is found along the Wallace Line.

The Wallace Line is an imaginary divide separating plant life and animal species between Australasia and Asia. It runs between the islands of Bali and Lombok in the south and between Borneo and Sulawesi in the north. While an island on one side of the divide may be home to monkeys and tigers, on an island across the line, you might spot cockatoos and marsupials. New research points to climate change millions of years ago as an explanation for why the species differ so greatly east versus west of the line.

#### History of the Wallace Line

British naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace noticed an interesting phenomenon while exploring the Indonesian Islands in 1856. As he crossed the Lombok Strait (a deep ocean trench separating the islands of Bali and Lombok), he realized the ecosystem changed abruptly. While Bali had woodpeckers and weaver birds, Lombok was home to cockatoos.

It was a surprise to find a complete divide in animal and plant species, with only a 15-mile narrow strait separating them. By 1859, Wallace's observations led him to propose the concept of the Wallace Line—an invisible boundary separating the biogeographical regions of Southeast Asia and Australia. This discovery challenged the prevailing belief that plant and animal species are randomly distributed around the planet, showing instead that their distribution is closely linked to Earth's geological history.

#### The Species That Live on Each Side of the Wallace Line

The Wallace Line marks a clear division between the animal species of Asia and those of Australasia. Rather than a gradual transition, there is a sharp separation. Here are some examples of animals found on each side.

##### West of the Wallace Line (Asia)

The countries and islands west of the line include the western islands of Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines.

Animals: tigers, monkeys, orangutans, and rhinos.

Birds: woodpeckers, thrushes, and sunbirds.

##### East of the Wallace Line (Australasia)

Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the eastern islands of Indonesia.

Animals: marsupials, monotremes, and Komodo dragons.

Birds: cockatoos, honeyeaters, and lorries.

## Why Does the Wallace Line Exist? A New Theory

A 2023 study introduced a new theory to better explain the strange phenomenon of the Wallace Line. Around 35 million years ago, the continent of Australia began drifting north, away from Antarctica. Eventually, Australia crashed into the Eurasian plate. This action created the volcanic islands of the Malay archipelago. Deep ocean trenches prevented land animals from crossing the Wallace Line.

Beyond the geographical changes, the convergence of plates triggered global climate change. Study lead author Alex Skeels explained in a statement:

“When Australia drifted away from Antarctica, it opened up this area of deep ocean surrounding Antarctica, which is now where the Antarctic Circumpolar Current is. This dramatically changed Earth’s climate as a whole; it made the climate much cooler.

Despite this global cooling, the climate on the Indonesian islands, which organisms used as a gateway to hop to Australia, remained relatively warm, wet, and tropical. So the Asian fauna were already well-adapted and comfortable with these conditions, which helped them settle in Australia.

This was not the case for the Australian species. They had evolved in a cooler and increasingly drier climate over time and were therefore less successful in gaining a foothold on the tropical islands compared to the creatures migrating from Asia.”

### How Does Learning About the Wallace Line Impact Us Today?

Australia’s animal species evolved to thrive in dry and cooler climates. If they attempted to move west into the more humid and warm islands of Asia, the climate would prevent their success. In contrast, animals that evolved in Asia were well-adapted to the tropical islands and could more easily expand their range.

By studying how climate change affected species in the past, scientists hope to get a better understanding of the issues facing the planet today. Skeels explained, “Our findings could also inform predictions for animal migration in the future and help us predict which species may be better versed at adapting to new environments, as changes to Earth’s climate continue to impact global biodiversity patterns.”

## NEWS MEDICAL LIFE SCIENCE

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Published in *Building and Environment*, the study brings together an international collaboration of experts to examine how plants genuinely influence indoor environmental quality. While the understanding of outdoor urban greening has advanced, the effects of indoor green infrastructure have remained poorly defined.

To address this knowledge gap, researchers developed a ten-question framework that examines the evidence across technical, microbiological, health, socio-economic and place dimensions - offering the clearest picture yet of how different types of indoor greening perform in real buildings. The study also introduces the first clear comparison of 26 different indoor greening systems and how they impact indoor-environmental quality parameters, giving designers and building managers clearer guidance than ever on what actually works and where evidence is still lacking.

The analysis shows that larger indoor greening systems can make spaces feel up to two degrees cooler and more comfortable, even when temperatures remain the same. Some engineered systems help reduce fine particulate matter and volatile organic compounds, although the strength of these effects depends on plant density, lighting and overall design. The study also points to early evidence that greenery may enrich the indoor microbiome by introducing more environmentally derived microbes.

The study is a collaboration of 35 experts across the UK, Europe, USA, Australia, India, and Brazil through the GREENIN Micro Network Plus project.

Professor Prashant Kumar, lead author of the study is the founder of Surrey's Global Centre for Clean Air Research and leader of the GREENIN Micro Network Plus project. He said:

"People spend around 90 per cent of their lives indoors, but surprisingly, we still understand very little about how indoor plant systems can reshape those environments. Our collaborative work shows that indoor greening can make a meaningful difference in certain situations - not just to how buildings feel, but to how they cope with heat, humidity and pollutants.

"But these benefits don't happen by accident. They rely on using the right systems, in the right way, with the right lighting and maintenance. Treating greening as environmental infrastructure, rather than decoration, as well as filling substantial research gaps in the topic area, will be key to unlocking its full potential."

The study also makes clear that more work is needed. Many older experiments used unrealistic numbers of plants or controlled chambers in labs that do not reflect real homes or offices. The authors argue that the next step is to carry out long-term, in-building studies that consider lighting, ventilation, occupancy and maintenance - the practical realities that determine whether indoor greening performs well over time.

The research forms a core part of the GREENIN Micro Network Plus project, which brings together universities, local authorities, environmental organisations and horticultural experts to explore how indoor spaces can be designed for better air quality, comfort and wellbeing in a changing climate. It also lays important groundwork for future design guidance and policy based on what indoor greening can realistically achieve.

Led by the University of Surrey's Global Centre for Clean Air Research (GCARE), in collaboration with the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) and the Universities of Bath, Oxford, York, and Cranfield, GREENIN Micro Network Plus is funded by the EPSRC under the Grant No. APP55977.

## SCUTOSBLOG

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Returning from its winter recess, the Supreme Court on Monday added just one new case to its oral argument docket. In a list of orders from the justices' private conference last week, the court agreed to review a ruling by the Colorado Supreme Court in *Suncor Energy Inc. v. County Commissioners of Boulder County*, a case brought under state law by Boulder, Colorado. Boulder contends that oil and gas companies have knowingly played a role in exacerbating climate change and therefore have caused millions of dollars of damage to its property and residents.

The oil and gas companies urged the state courts to dismiss the case, arguing that the state-law claims are superseded by federal environmental laws and the federal government's power to conduct foreign policy.

The state courts ruled that federal law did not trump Boulder's claims. While the Colorado Supreme Court indicated that it was "express[ing] no opinion on the ultimate viability of the merits of" Boulder's claims, it concluded that the oil and gas companies' efforts to dismiss the case in state court boiled down to an argument "that a vague federal interest over interstate pollution, climate change, and energy policy must preempt Boulder's claims."

The oil and gas companies came to the Supreme Court in August, asking the justices to weigh in. They told the justices that the dispute "provides the Court with its best opportunity yet to resolve one of the most important questions currently pending in the lower courts. Energy companies that produce and sell fossil fuels," the companies wrote, "are facing numerous lawsuits in state courts across the Nation seeking billions of dollars in damages for injuries allegedly caused by the contribution of greenhouse-gas emissions to global climate change. But as the Court has recognized for over a century," the companies said, "the structure of our constitutional system does not permit a State to provide relief under state law for injuries allegedly caused by pollution emanating from outside the State."

Without waiting for a request from the justices for its views, the federal government filed a "friend of the court" brief urging the justices to take up the case. It contended that "Colorado ... may not apply its law to the companies' conduct outside the State."

Boulder urged the justices to allow the lawsuit to go forward. It contended (among other things) that the Supreme Court does not have the power under federal law to review the Colorado Supreme Court's ruling because it is not yet final. Taking up the case now, Boulder argued, "would require the Court to wade into a thicket of preliminary questions that promise nothing but rabbit holes and dead ends." But in any event, it continued, the companies' "novel constitutional theory would vest judges—not legislators—with broad authority to decide" whether federal or state law should apply in particular areas.

After considering the case at five consecutive conferences, the justices on Monday agreed to grant review. They instructed the litigants to address an additional question in their briefs and at oral argument: whether the Supreme Court has the power to hear the case at all.

The justices are likely to hear oral arguments in the fall, with a decision to follow sometime in 2026.

The Supreme Court once again did not act on several high-profile petitions for review that it has repeatedly considered, involving issues such as the Second Amendment rights of people convicted of non-violent felonies, whether states can ban AR-15s and large-capacity magazines, and the parental rights of a Massachusetts couple who contend that middle-school officials hid the social transition of their child from them.

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On Monday, three High Court justices heard a petition submitted by two green organizations, Green Course and Youth for Climate, calling for an interim injunction to compel the government to explain why its 2030 emissions-cut target is 27 percent rather than 43%, as set by the UN to cap rising global temperatures.

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The Sixth Assessment Report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), issued in 2022, called for a global 43% cut in emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and other gases helping to drive climate change in order to implement the Paris agreement, which seeks to cap global warming at 2 degrees Celsius (3.6°F), preferably 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7°F), relative to pre-industrial levels.

Representing the petitioners, Assaf Fink argued on Monday that Israel's ratification of the Paris Agreement did not align with the government's decision to set a 2030 target of just 27%. In practice, he added, the state would likely cut emissions by only 19%.

Eran Tzin, who also represents the petitioners, said Tuesday that the court's order represented "a significant milestone" and aligned with "breakthrough international rulings which establish that governmental discretion ends where science sets a minimum threshold for public protection."

"Meeting this standard is not a political choice, but a fundamental duty of the state to protect the lives and health of its residents," he added.

After many drafts and attempts to pass a climate bill over the years, a controversial version passed its first reading in the Knesset in April 2024 and has been stuck at the Knesset committee stage since then.

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Rolled out through a series of informational and interactive materials on the Commission’s digital platforms, the anti-single-use plastics (SUP) campaign aims to move public discourse beyond awareness and clean-up efforts, and toward long-term behavior change and systemic action.

CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje underscored that addressing plastic pollution is a climate imperative, particularly for a country highly vulnerable to climate risks.

“Single-use plastics are not just a waste issue; they are a climate issue. From production to disposal, plastics contribute to emissions, degrade ecosystems, and place additional burdens on communities already exposed to climate impacts,” Borje said. “Reducing our dependence on disposability is a necessary step toward building climate resilience.”

Anchored on the Commission’s earlier “Bawal Plastik Dito” sticker-pack initiative, the revamped campaign expands into a year-long information drive to reinforce message recall and sustain public engagement beyond one-off observances. It also supports the implementation of existing laws and policies on plastic waste by translating national commitments into clear, actionable messages that empower individuals and institutions to act.

“By encouraging practical choices and supporting systemic change, we can reduce plastic pollution while advancing climate adaptation and ecological protection,” Borje added. “The solutions are within reach, but they require collective action.”

Ultimately, the CCC emphasized that addressing plastic pollution goes beyond managing waste. It requires rethinking consumption patterns, redesigning systems, and choosing a development pathway that does not depend on disposability.

## CCC, MMDA join forces to align Metro Manila programs with National Climate Goals

By: John Lester Naguna

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The agencies met at the MMDA Central Office to identify priority areas where urban management programs can be integrated with the country's long-term climate frameworks, specifically the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2023–2050 and the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

The meeting focused on the National Capital Region's (NCR) status as one of the country's most densely populated and climate-vulnerable areas, facing chronic risks from extreme rainfall, flooding, sea-level rise, and urban heat.

"We recognize MMDA's central role in managing drainage systems, flood control facilities, transport networks, solid waste operations, and disaster response mechanisms that are increasingly affected by climate change," said CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje.

Borje added that the goal is to "institutionalize a climate lens" across metro systems to ensure current infrastructure investments remain viable against future climate risks.

The NAP, developed under President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s administration, serves as the primary blueprint for these efforts. The CCC urged the MMDA to adopt a systemic, risk-informed approach to urban governance that considers both immediate disaster reduction and long-term low-carbon development.

The collaboration seeks to consolidate high-impact initiatives into a "climate-smart metro framework." By synchronizing efforts, the agencies hope to protect critical infrastructure and safeguard communities through a unified "whole-of-metro" approach. (JLN/PIA-NCR)

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