



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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- 17 provinces among most at risk of climate change
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- DENR: Protect Kaliwa River Forest Reserve

### CCC IN THE NEWS:

- [Opinion] Climate actions ng CCC AT split project ng DAR

## BUSINESS WORLD

### [DENR registers over 500 companies seeking to comply with EPR law](#)

By: Sheldeen Joy Talavera

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said on Thursday that more than 500 companies have registered to comply with Republic Act 11898 or the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act of 2022, which holds companies responsible for managing the impact of their product packaging over their full life cycle.

## GULF TIMES

### [World officials laud success of 'Climate Change, Human Rights' conference](#)

Several international officials praised the success of the international conference on "Climate Change, Human Rights", which was organised by the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) in co-operation with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for

Human Rights, UN Development Programme (UNDP), League of Arab States, and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

## **JOURNAL ONLINE**

### **[UN, PH take major step to craft first-of-its-kind development framework for next 5 years](#)**

MANILA, 24 February 2023 – The United Nations (UN) Philippines took a major step towards crafting the UN’s Cooperation Framework with the Philippines for the period 2024 to 2028. In a meeting of over 500 participants from the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), and members of the UN Country Team (UNCT), the UN Philippines facilitated the process of identifying the priorities of the new cooperation framework.

## **MANILA STANDARD**

### **[17 provinces among most at risk of climate change](#)**

At least 17 provinces in the Philippines landed in the top 100 areas worldwide that are most vulnerable to the effects on climate change.

### **[DENR to industries: Focus on sustainability](#)**

By: Maricel Cruz

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has called on industries to include sustainability in all aspects of their business operations as part of their contribution to environmental protection.

## **NEWS WIRES**

### **[UAE's COP28 chief urges world to join in climate fight](#)**

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, February 26, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Four years after the UAE observed the Year of Tolerance, the designated president of the COP28 climate summit has asked his detractors to come together in collective efforts to make the world more sustainable.

## **ONE NEWS PH**

### **[Marcos Issues Executive Order For Investment ‘Green Lanes’](#)**

The Executive Order specifies strategic investments as those aligned with the Philippine Development Plan or any similar national development plan and can be characterized by significant capital or investment in the country.

## **PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

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## **PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY**

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CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY – An ecological literacy non-profit organization based in this city believes that using video will effectively spread powerful ideas that will educate, entertain, and inform people on environment-related topics from around Northern Mindanao.

## **RAPPLER**

### **[\[Opinion\] The urgent need for a national single-use plastic ban](#)**

By: Coleen Salamat

Multinational companies, big businesses, and developed nations continue to treat countries in the global south as plastic dumps. Break Free From Plastics (BFFP) has studied the top five consistent polluters for the past five years, and they are Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Nestlé, Unilever, and Mondelez International.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Climate change to affect food security – group](#)**

By: Bella Cariaso

AN environmental group warned on Saturday that the country's food security will be affected by climate change after the Gross Domestic Climate Risk of Assessor Cross Dependency Initiative identified 17 provinces vulnerable to rising sea level caused by global warming.

### **[DENR: Protect Kaliwa River Forest Reserve](#)**

By: Bella Cariaso

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has backed the passage of a proposed bill declaring the Kaliwa River Forest Reserve as a protected area under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas).

## **CCC IN THE NEWS:**

### **[\[Opinion\] Climate actions ng CCC AT split project ng DAR](#)**

By: Gilbert Pardez

Tuloy-tuloy ang pakikipag-ugnayan ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) sa pamahalaang nasyunal at lokal upang mas mapaingting pa raw ang antas ng paghahanda ng mga Pilipino sa panahon ng sakuna o kalamidad.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **DENR registers over 500 companies seeking to comply with EPR law**

By: Sheldeen Joy Talavera

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said on Thursday that more than 500 companies have registered to comply with Republic Act 11898 or the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act of 2022, which holds companies responsible for managing the impact of their product packaging over their full life cycle.

“Since we launched the EPR program, more than 500 private companies have registered. We also hope to simplify the entire process. I’m hopeful with the EPR program, having heard the willingness of the private sector to be part of the program,” Environment Undersecretary Carlos Primo C. David said during a Stratbase ADR Institute briefing.

“After we collect all the plastics collected by the producers themselves, what do we do with it? Maybe one alternative, beyond recycling, is waste-to-energy,” he said.

According to Mr. David, among the projects being proposed to the DENR are reclamation, offshore wind power, offshore quarrying, and waste-to-energy projects.

Apart from reclamation, he noted that the rest are new .so there is a need to develop systems for project evaluation and monitoring once they are in operation.

Environment Management Bureau Director Gilbert C. Gonzales noted that the “linear” approach of waste management must shift to a “circular economy” model, which minimizes waste and incentivizes recycling.

Climate Reality Project Philippine Branch Manager Nazrin D. Castro said that shifting to the circular economy model “can help avoid excessive consumption, waste, and use of fossil fuels by using, reusing, repairing, and recycling existing materials and products.”

According to a survey conducted by Pulse Asia, 8 out of 10 Filipinos expressed a preference for products and services produced by firms that they believed to be environmentally responsible.

“Given this message, there is at least one challenge and this is for firms to satisfy this preference by providing products and services within the reach of consumers,” Pulse Asia President Ronald D. Holmes said.

## **GULF TIMES**

### **World officials laud success of 'Climate Change, Human Rights' conference**

Several international officials praised the success of the international conference on "Climate Change, Human Rights", which was organised by the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) in co-operation with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Development Programme (UNDP), League of Arab States, and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

India's National Human Rights Commission chairman Arun Kumar Mishra said that the conference dealt with an important issue that has become a real concern and challenge facing not only Qatar, but various countries of the world.

He said that the conference was an important occasion and a pioneering initiative worthy of appreciation and respect, as it brought together experts and researchers in the field of human rights and their counterparts in the field of combating climate change to understand the truth and reality of the various challenges that may be caused by man.

Chair of the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture Dr Susan Jabbour said that the conference was held at a very good time, when the Arab region suffers from many problems related to climate change.

She praised the discussions presented by the conferees over the course of two days. Human rights advocate and international law researcher Yasser al-Farhan, the founder of the Mizan Human Rights Organisation, said that he participated in the conference to contribute to making serious recommendations based on the human rights approach, in particular the impact of natural disasters.

He referred to this month's earthquakes that affected Turkiye and Syria.

Al-Farhan called on the specialists to control the use of technology and its objectives, because the main goal of technology should be to secure human life and achieve well-being and a safe life, not to destroy the health infrastructure and affect the lives of the living societies, or to affect the right to life.

The facilitator of the National Centre for Human Rights in Jordan, Dr Reem Abu Dalbough, said that the NHRC in Qatar excelled in holding such an important conference for the purposes of advancing global action at the level of policies and legislation and introducing human rights concepts in climatic conditions towards effectiveness on the ground.

Director of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the IFDI International Human Rights Organisation, Abdulmajeed Marari, stressed the importance of discussing the international industrial abuse of human rights, and pointed to the close link between climate change and human rights.

He called for rationalising dealing with the climate and industrial development in order to protect both economic goals and human rights.

UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders, Michel Forrest, said that the conference is of great importance as it is a launching pad for discussing the challenges caused by climate change, and the appropriate ways to tackle them.

Head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mohamed Ali Ensour, said that the importance of the conference lies in the fact that it was the first conference in the Arab region that deals with the effects of climate on human rights and the dimensions of the current global climate crisis on human rights in the Arab region.

## JOURNAL ONLINE

### [UN, PH take major step to craft first-of-its-kind development framework for next 5 years](#)

MANILA, 24 February 2023 – The United Nations (UN) Philippines took a major step towards crafting the UN’s Cooperation Framework with the Philippines for the period 2024 to 2028. In a meeting of over 500 participants from the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), and members of the UN Country Team (UNCT), the UN Philippines facilitated the process of identifying the priorities of the new cooperation framework.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) is a core instrument for providing a coherent, strategic direction for UN development activities by all UN entities at country level. The current UNSDCF is ending at the end of 2023.

This new UNSDCF is the first of its kind that is being developed in the context of the UN Development System Reform.

The reform of the UN System aims to make the UN nimbler, less bureaucratic, more transparent and accountable, and more decentralized and effective. It places sustainable development “at the heart” of the UN.

Compared to past cooperation frameworks where agencies first produced their plans and the cooperation framework ended up as a compilation of agency plans, the UN Reform requires the UNCT to agree as one-UN—not as individual agencies—on key priorities. Only then will agencies develop their own country programmes.

UN Philippines Resident Coordinator Gustavo Gonzalez said, “My vision of the new cooperation framework is not that of a fragmented collection of activities conducted by 23 UN entities and compiled in a nice catalogue, but a powerful and dynamic partnership instrument that brings the collective energy of a committed UN team in support of sustainable development in the country.”

Today’s consultation will be followed by similar consultations with the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and with civil society organizations (CSOs).

The message of Gonzalez, as prepared, follows:



I am glad to reach this day and I am extremely happy for this massive participation of colleagues from the UN and the Government. I believe this is a wonderful starting point.

Why are we here?

Very simple. We are here because the current framework of cooperation between the Philippine Government and the UN ends in December of this year and we need a new cooperation framework for the next 5 years.

In very practical terms, we are here to identify, to negotiate and to agree on what the UN—as a single team—is going to do between 2024 and 2028.

Of course we are not starting this dialogue from scratch. Most of the UN agencies present in this room have already started this discussion with their respective national counterparts.

My office, together with the NEDA, and the DFA—the two main Government entry points of the UN—established a “core group” that has been exchanging information on the various areas of work, preparing relevant documentation, and agreeing on the way forward.

Even more important, the UN conducted a Country Common Assessment last year that is the latest understanding of the main development challenges in the Philippines. This document represents a sort of broad baseline that is guiding our engagement with the Government.

So we are here to engage on important matters but we are not starting from scratch. And this brings me to the second question.

Is it important to be here?

For the UN it is extremely important to be here, with you, with our government counterparts. In fact this is one of the most important collective meetings of the UN in the definition of the priorities of the framework of cooperation.

And in some way, this is an important moment in the life of the UN in the Philippines as we will be deciding on the first cooperation framework formulated within the context of the UN reform.

So you are also deciding on what each UN agency will do in the country for the upcoming five years because UN agencies are expected as part of the UN reform to derive their plan, to extract their priorities, from what we will be deciding today.

This is a fundamental change, compared to past cooperation frameworks where agencies produced first their plans and the cooperation framework was a compilation of them. Here, we first agree with you as a UN—not as individual agencies—on key priorities and after that agencies will be developing their own country programmes.

That's one of the most important changes brought by the UN reform, which by the way has been strongly supported by the Philippines in the search for an integrated, coherent and responsive country team, built around a common sense of purpose.

And let me quote what the President of the Republic said a few months ago at the UN General Assembly. "As host to 17 UN agencies, programmes and funds, the Philippines strongly supports reforms to ensure that the UN Development System delivers as one through its UN Country Team."

It is important to be here as the UN is not expected to be an observer of problems but a partner for solutions. We are the largest multilateral knowledge organization worldwide and our public goods and services should be at the disposal of the host country.

Jointly with your permanent missions in the various locations of the planet, the UN is the organization that negotiates, formulates, adopts, and disseminates, every day, the norms, principles, strategies and programs on the most fundamental practices of a society; about the food we produce and consume; on the pests and diseases threatening our lives, on reproductive health, on the protection of our oceans, of our planet, on how to protect the rights of workers, journalists and indigenous people; on policies about how to combat organized crime, corruption and violent extremism, most recently, on outer space and digitalization. That's the added value of the UN in a world that needs—more than ever—a collective leadership.

In many forums the President of the Republic shared his strong desire to bring the Philippines to the upper middle country status. He also shared the desire to position the Philippines as a member of the Security Council.

Definitely, the UN can assist in achieving these noble targets which will have an important impact on the lives of Filipino people and on the global and well-deserved leadership of the Philippines.

This Cooperation Framework can contribute to the improvement of indicators in the reduction of food insecurity, in the resolution of socioeconomic inequalities, in the recovery of learning losses, in filling the gender gap, in bridging the digital divide, in setting the most suitable policies and frameworks for climate justice, and also in the improvement of indicators that are systematically lowering the global aspirations of the Philippines, such as poverty, exclusion and insecurity in BARMM.

This Cooperation Framework can consolidate the ongoing agenda on human rights and make sure the country remains compliant with a key number of conventions and treaties related to environment and biodiversity protection, child protection, women's rights among others.

The added value of the UN—besides knowledge generation and normative work—is its global convening role, expressed in the dozens of governance mechanisms, from the Convention on Climate Change and the Human Rights Council to the various platforms that are expected—every year—to keep us on the right SDGs track, expand partnership, better integrate the Philippines in a highly competitive context and bring more investment and financial resources to the country. That's also the role of this UNCT.

My vision of the new cooperation framework is not that of a fragmented collection of activities conducted by 23 UN entities and compiled in a nice catalogue, but a powerful and dynamic partnership instrument that brings the collective energy of a committed UN team in support of sustainable development in the country.

Obtaining such UN consistency, UN coherence, UN focus on what really matters and avoiding a fragmented and disconnected support is in fact the main goal of this meeting and obtaining such goal is a shared responsibility: UN and the Government.

## MANILA STANDARD

### [17 provinces among most at risk of climate change](#)

At least 17 provinces in the Philippines landed in the top 100 areas worldwide that are most vulnerable to the effects on climate change.

Based on the 2023 Gross Domestic Climate Risk ranking of XDI, an independent specialist in physical climate risk and adaptation analytics, Pangasinan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Metro Manila and Bulacan are among the top 20 areas in the Philippines at risk of climate damage.

XDI said the report was based on its projections of damage to the built environment due to the effects of the climate crisis, including flooding, forest fires, and sea level rise.

The study measures damage ratio, which it defines as “an expression of the Annual Average Loss from extreme weather damage to a property as a fraction of the replacement cost of that property.”

The XDI report found that major centers of global trade, manufacturing, and economic activity were “among the most exposed” to extreme weather and climate change.

In 2022, the Philippines topped 193 countries in terms of disaster risk, according to the WorldRiskIndex. The index calculates each nation’s exposure, or the extent the population is exposed to disasters such as storms, flooding, droughts, and sea level rise; and vulnerability or its susceptibility, ability to cope, and ability to adapt to these events.

Meanwhile, nine of the top 10 regions most at risk are in China.

The US followed China as the most high-risk states, with Florida, California and Texas as among the most vulnerable.

China, India, and the US make up over half the states and provinces in the top 100.

## DENR to industries: Focus on sustainability

By: Maricel Cruz

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has called on industries to include sustainability in all aspects of their business operations as part of their contribution to environmental protection.

Environment Secretary Antonia Loyzaga stressed that as the Philippines undergoes rapid industrialization and urbanization, the parallel effects of being an international hub for manufacturing

and production, as well as increased consumption have challenged the country's inadequate solid waste management system.

"It has become increasingly clear that our current production systems are not sustainable. We are consuming and disposing more quickly and far more than our environment can support, putting our future at risk," Loyzaga during her speech at the joint launching of the Philippine Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production (PAP4SCP) and the Roadmap to Institutionalize Natural Capital Accounting in the Philippines on Feb. 13.

She called on the companies to work together on integrating sustainability into all aspects of the supply chain.

"We all have a stewardship role in terms of protecting our environment and natural resources, and this responsibility is not solely the DENR's. The sustainable production and consumption policies we design must therefore be trans-disciplinary, time-sensitive, and spatially targeted in order for them to be transformational," she added.

Loyzaga pointed out that sustainable production means producing goods with a minimal ecological footprint, and products and services that meet the needs of the present without compromising the use of the next generations.

It must balance the sustainable production model between economic growth, social equity and responsibility, and environmental protection, she added.

The PAP4SCP, developed by the National Economic and Development Authority with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank, will serve as a guiding framework at the national level to lead sustainable behaviors and practices across sectors and at all levels of government.

## NEWS WIRES

### [UAE's COP28 chief urges world to join in climate fight](#)

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, February 26, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Four years after the UAE observed the Year of Tolerance, the designated president of the COP28 climate summit has asked his detractors to come together in collective efforts to make the world more sustainable.

Dr Sultan Al Jaber is due to head the 28th Conference of Parties (COP) by the hosts UAE, a decision seen by critics as a conflict of interest. The UAE is one of the largest oil producing countries in the world and a big producer of fossil fuels. Critics only see Dr Al Jaber as the head of the national oil company ADNOC, which operates from the UAE capital of Abu Dhabi.

Dr Al Jaber, however, is also the UAE's climate envoy as Dubai hosts the COP 28 from November 30 to December 12. He is also the current chair of Masdar City, which aims to generate 100 gigawatts of renewable power by the end of the decade, a goal that exceeds those set by some larger European nations.

Dr Al Jaber maintains a poise befitting the statesman among the discontent over his appointment. At the India Energy Week earlier this month, he only assured his critics: "There is no conflict of interest. It is in everyone's best interests for the energy industry to collaborate with everyone."

Under his leadership at the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference in October last year on the eve of COP 27, which was held in Egypt, Dr Al Jaber sent out the message from the UAE towards its Net Zero aim by 2050 – 'Maximum energy, minimum emissions.'

In India, too, Dr Al Jaber showed how the UAE is the perfect understanding ally as he reminded all that every country will require oil and gas for some time, and the switch cannot happen overnight. He said the need of the hour, rather, is to increase development of sufficient clean power to phase it out as quickly as possible, and doing so in a way that strengthens economies through policies that are "both pro-growth and pro-climate."

Nations should aim to raise spending on technologies including carbon capture, nuclear power and hydrogen, according to Al Jaber. "Spending on these fundamental enablers

of decarbonisation are less than 5 per cent of what is spent on renewables,” he said. “This must change.”

Terming the climate fight to keep the global warming rate to 1.5°C as “non-negotiable” recently, Dr Al Jaber also reminded that money remains a key aspect, too. “The step change in the progress we need will require lots of capital – not just billions, but trillions. And we must make sure that this capital is accessible and affordable,” he said.

Most global leaders have supported Al Jaber’s appointment and the UN’s decision to host this year’s COP in the UAE, including President Joe Biden’s special climate envoy, John Kerry.

Makhtar Diop, managing director of the International Finance Corporation, said at the World Government Summit last week: “The reality is that today, the UAE is one of the countries that invests most in renewable energy. That is a fact. So one can say a lot of things, but facts are here.”

With such strong words from global leaders and the man himself, having an influential person from one of the world’s richest countries is a double-edged sword worth having than a blunt object in the fight for saving the climate.

## ONE NEWS PH

### Marcos Issues Executive Order For Investment 'Green Lanes'

The Executive Order specifies strategic investments as those aligned with the Philippine Development Plan or any similar national development plan and can be characterized by significant capital or investment in the country.

To further promote the Philippines as an investment destination, President Marcos has issued an order directing the establishment of green lanes for strategic investments in all government agencies.

Signed on Thursday, Feb. 23, by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin for the President, Executive Order 18 covers all national government agencies and their regional and provincial offices, as well as government-owned and controlled corporations and other government instrumentalities.

It also covers local government units and those involved in the issuance of permits, licenses, certifications or authorizations covering strategic investments.

The move is consistent with the Eight-Point Agenda of the administration and is “part of the continuing efforts of implementing ease of doing business reforms,” as “it is imperative to adopt measures that will expedite transactions with the government.”

The EO specifies strategic investments as those aligned with the Philippine Development Plan or any similar national development plan and can be characterized by significant capital or investment in the country.

Strategic investments – according to the EO – are also those with consequential economic impact, positive impact on the environment, significant contribution to the country’s balance of payments, with complex technical processes and engineering designs and will improve the country’s infrastructure capabilities.

They also include highly desirable projects, foreign direct investments and projects or activities under the Strategic Investment Priority Plan, it said.

Within six months from the issuance of the EO, the Department of Trade and Industry-Board of Investments (DTI-BOI) shall establish a One-Stop-Action-Center for Strategic Investments (OSAC-SI), which shall serve as the single point of entry for all projects qualified as strategic investments.



Aside from addressing investor concerns such as identifying strategic investments, the OSAC-SI will also include aftercare or post-investment assistance as part of its services, EO 18 said.

The DTI-BOI, within three months from the issuance of the order, shall produce and regularly update an investor manual or guidebook or its equivalent, containing the list of government requirements for the establishment of strategic investments per sector, as well as the concerned NGAs, LGUs or quasi-judicial bodies issuing relevant permits and licenses.

“The DTI-BOI will be supported with additional manpower, including the designation of Account Officers for Strategic Investments, as well as equipment necessary to operationalize the OSAC-SI, in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management,” the EO read.

It also directs the Department of Information and Communications Technology to make available to LGUs the software for the computerization of the business permit and licensing system, with the help of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

A Technical Working Group (TWG), to be headed by the DTI-BOI, will be formed to ensure the implementation of the order.

Member agencies of the TWG include the DTI, DILG, Department of Finance, National Economic and Development Authority and the Anti-Red Tape Authority.

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

### [World's largest ice rink stays shut for first time due to mild Canada winter](#)

Canada's renowned Rideau Canal Skateway, the world's largest natural ice skating rink, will not open this season for the first time due to a lack of ice, its operator said on Friday, blaming the closure on climate change.

The 7.8 km (4.9 miles) Rideau Canal Skateway, first opened over 50 years ago, is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Canada's capital city Ottawa that is a top attraction for skating enthusiasts seeking outdoor thrills during Canada's usually biting cold winters.

The National Capital Commission (NCC), which maintains and operates the Skateway, said that although they have been assessing and preparing for the impacts of climate change, their efforts to open the rink this season have "come to an end."

"This year taught us a great deal about the effects of milder winters on the Skateway," the commission said in a statement on Friday.

The NCC has previously said it can only open when the ice is at least 12 inches (30 cm) thick, for which there must be 10 to 14 consecutive days of temperatures between -20 Celsius and -10 Celsius (-4 and 14 degrees Fahrenheit).

In Ottawa the mean temperature in January was -5.9 Celsius (21.4 Fahrenheit), according to the Weather Network, well above the -10.3C average. Temperatures this year are being driven by the La Niña weather phenomenon, while climate change has made mild winters more likely than they were a few decades ago, said Doug Gillham, manager of the Weather Network's forecast centre.

The NCC and the Standards Council of Canada have commissioned a climate change risk assessment to understand the impact of climate change on the Skateway. Under the scenario of moderate emissions, "the NCC should prepare for seasons with less than 40 days of skating approximately 50% of the time," it says.

The average season has been 50 days – and went up to 95 days in the early 1970s, according to the NCC website.

“Even the cold of the last 24 hours couldn’t make up for this winter’s higher-than-average temperatures, snow and rain, which contributed to a thin and porous ice surface,” the NCC said on Twitter.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### [Young environmentalists promote advocacy via documentary series](#)

By: Nef Luczon

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY – An ecological literacy non-profit organization based in this city believes that using video will effectively spread powerful ideas that will educate, entertain, and inform people on environment-related topics from around Northern Mindanao.

This is what prompted the Association of Young Environmental Journalists (AYEJ) to produce "Kwentong Kalikasan", a TV documentary and video magazine series which features stories and works of conservationists and emerging advocates of the forest landscape.

Val Vestil, AYEJ co-founder and executive director, said in an interview Sunday that the series is more than just a movement for forest conservation, but is also an initiative to inspire courageous action where visual storytelling helps "putting a face to the issues and innovations, relating specifically to the current state of our forests."

"What better way to do that than by telling the stories of our frontline forest guardians and showing evidence of why it's of prime importance to protect the last remaining forest cover," he said.

Vestil said it has partnered with the Forest Foundation Philippines in fulfillment of the production of its maiden 14 episodes.

"We started the production in March last year (2022). That includes key messages, development, and workshop with stakeholders on what messages needed to be communicated in the documentaries," he said.

Vestil said the episodes are currently available on various online platforms, including AYEJ's YouTube channel.

With the support of Forest Foundation Philippines, "Kwentong Kalikasan" offers a unique look into the lives of forest conservationists highlighting their advocacy to preserve Bukidnon and Misamis Oriental's most pristine and vital ecosystems.

Through interviews and cinematography, the series exposes the vast landscapes in the Northern Mindanao region and "takes viewers on a journey to the heart of our forests and the frontlines of the battle to save them."

### People's stories

Other than environmental advocates, the series also highlights stories of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) communities.

Anilaw Makumpot Mansumangka was only 15 years old when he discovered the important connection between forest conservation and nurturing their culture as pa of the Higaonon-Talaandig tribe of Misamis Oriental.

"The forest is our church, pharmacy, market, and hospital. For us lumad youth, if we forget the importance of nature, we will also lose the value of being part of a tribe. Our identity as lumads is tied to the forest," he said.

Anilaw now leads the Anak ng Tribu Higaonon-Talaandig Association, reaching out to fellow IPs in promoting and preserving their culture and the importance of forest conservation through capacity-building initiatives, leadership formation and socio-economic activities.

The series also features Reina Bontuyan, a mountaineer turned entrepreneur who founded an outdoor sports center that not only sells equipment and apparel but also educates on how to more responsibly interact with nature through workshops and training sessions.

Forest Ranger Zoilo Montebon, on the other hand, gives a peek into the life and struggles of the Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGV) of Bukidnon.

"The KGV works for an honorarium but they don't really mind much about the money. Because we simply want to protect the forest. Because protecting the forest is worth more than the value of money. Everything we need is already in the forest," Montebon said.

Eric Buduan, AYEJ senior program officer, said 30 million hectares of land area in the Philippines were historically mostly covered with forests.

However, commercial logging operations from the 1900s to the 1990s resulted in a significant decline.

Buduan said despite national greening efforts, the decline in forest cover has affected the capacity of the forests to provide ecological goods and services such as biodiversity, water services, and timber and non-timber products.

He also said forest conservation is not just about tree planting but also about awareness and understanding of the importance of forests, and that was the inspiration to produce "Kwentong Kalikasan".

The series has been assessed by the National Council for Children's Television and passed the standards for being a child-friendly program.

## RAPPLER

### [\[Opinion\] The urgent need for a national single-use plastic ban](#)

By: Coleen Salamat

Multinational companies, big businesses, and developed nations continue to treat countries in the global south as plastic dumps. Break Free From Plastics (BFFP) has studied the top five consistent polluters for the past five years, and they are Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Nestlé, Unilever, and Mondelez International.

In the Philippines, the Solid Waste Management Act or RA 9003 is a landmark development in managing plastic and waste pollution. RA 9003 isn't the only policy instrument against plastics. In fact, around 500 local governments, including Quezon City, Marikina City, and Davao City, have passed ordinances banning single-use plastics that have helped reduce local plastic waste.

Still, the plastic problem continues to persist. According to a recent Commission on Audit report, even after more than 20 years of passage of RA 9003, solid waste generation in the country has steadily increased from 9.07 million metric tons in 2000 to 16.63 million metric tons in 2020.

RA 9003 mandates the National Solid Waste Management Commission to prepare and publicize a list of Non-Environmentally Acceptable Products and Packaging (NEAPP) that could have helped regulate plastic waste. After 20 years, the guidelines have yet to be made public.

On the other hand, RA 11898, the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act, lapsed into law last July 2022. The law requires large companies (brand or product manufacturers and importers) to establish or phase-in EPR programs for plastic packaging to achieve efficient management of plastic packaging waste, reduced production, importation, supply or use of plastic packaging deemed low in reusability, recyclability or retrievability, and plastic neutrality through efficient recovery and diversion schemes. EPR may legitimize false solutions like incineration and cement kilns – that should not be used in EPR recovery and recycling as it harms the environment and human health. Plastic pollution requires more than extended producer responsibility. Plastic production reduction should have been stressed.

The said limitations make it more crucial than ever to push for a comprehensive national single-use plastic ban to put in place a systemic mechanism to curb plastic waste.

There have also been several bills filed in both the lower and upper houses to cut down on plastic waste.

The most recent policy development is Senator Loren Legarda's Senate Bill 246, "An Act Regulating the Manufacturing, Importation, and Use of Single-use Plastic Products, and Providing Penalties, Levies, and Incentives System for Industries, Business Enterprises, and Consumers Thereof."

The bill "provides an ambitious yet comprehensive approach to solving the single-use plastics problem, which involves actions from national and local governments, industries, business enterprises, and consumers for the manufacturing, selling, use, recycling, and disposal of all single-use plastics in the Philippines."

Highlight of the bill calls for national and local government, industry, and multi-stakeholder solutions to single-use plastics. To support Republic Act No. 9003, the proposed measure includes research and technology development for single-use plastic alternatives and recycling and disposal center strengthening. Senate Bill 246 is a leap, should it be passed into law, to guard against harmful systems of consumption and production that generate plastic waste.

However, policy change is just one of the many fronts on which to fight for a system shift towards a plastic-free Pilipinas. Building collective power among impacted sectors and communities holds the key to following the path toward zero waste, seeking corporate accountability, exposing and opposing false solutions and greenwashing, and pushing for environmental justice and a just transition



## THE MANILA TIMES

### Climate change to affect food security – group

By: Bella Cariaso

AN environmental group warned on Saturday that the country's food security will be affected by climate change after the Gross Domestic Climate Risk of Assessor Cross Dependency Initiative identified 17 provinces vulnerable to rising sea level caused by global warming.

"Based on the report, areas like Pampanga, Zambales, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija — basically areas in Central Luzon — are basically vulnerable to climate change, as this region is prone to flooding and it is usually hit by typhoons," Aksyon Klima ng Pilipinas Interim Secretariat member John Leo Algo said in a radio interview.

"Whenever Central Luzon is affected by a typhoon, the damage to the agriculture sector is big, and it directly affects short-term and even long-term food security in the country," Algo added.

Besides Central Luzon, other areas expected to be affected by climate change include Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Pangasinan, Ilocos Sur, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Cagayan, Surigao del Sur, Sulu, Leyte, Samar and Southern Leyte.

Algo noted that Eastern Visayas was severely affected by Super Typhoon "Yolanda" in November 2013.

"In November this year marks the 10th anniversary of the landfall of Super Typhoon Yolanda in the country. Because of this, Filipinos became aware of the severity of the effects of climate change," he added, noting the country is now among the most vulnerable to the impact of climate change.

"We are among those most at risk countries because of the crisis on climate brought by the pollution being emitted by rich countries in the West, particularly countries in Europe and the United States. The emission of fossil fuels is causing extreme weather," he said.

Algo lauded the government's efforts to make rich countries accountable to the effect of climate change while underscoring the need to educate ordinary people of the perils the planet is facing.

"We always emphasize education because we believe education is the foundation on which we build the road to sustainable development for the Filipino people," he said.

In 2022, the Philippines had the highest disaster risk among 193 countries, according to another study, scoring high in exposure, vulnerability, susceptibility, lack of coping capacities and lack of adaptive capacities.

A 2020 UN study also found the Philippines among the hardest hit by natural disasters in recent years.

## DENR: Protect Kaliwa River Forest Reserve

By: Bella Cariaso

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has backed the passage of a proposed bill declaring the Kaliwa River Forest Reserve as a protected area under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas).

Rizal Rep. Emigdio "Dino" Tanjuatco 3rd filed House Bill 5055, which seeks to establish the Kaliwa River Forest and Wildlife Sanctuary (KRFWS).

According to the DENR, the government supports all efforts to further protect and preserve the Kaliwa River Forest Reserve and the rest of the Sierra Madre Mountain Range.

Republic Act (RA) 7586 or the "Nipas Act," as amended by RA 11038 or the "Expanded Nipas Act of 2018," mandates the DENR to implement measures to sustain the perpetual existence of all native plants, animals and natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

The proposed KRFWS, which has a total area of 31,883 hectares, is under the jurisdiction of the municipalities of Tanay, Rizal and General Nakar, Quezon.

It is regarded as the home of various endangered wildlife species such as the Northern Philippine hawk-eagle (*Nisaetus philippensis*), Philippine Brown Deer (*Rusa marianna*), Philippine Warty Pig (*Sus philippensis*) and the Northern Rufous Hornbill (*Buceros hydrocorax*), among others. It is also the habitat of the critically endangered Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*), a species endemic to the Philippines.

The proposed KRFWS has 12,147 hectares of remaining forest with approximately 172 types of plant species, 39 of which are endemic and 17 are classified as threatened. Some species that can be found in the area are *Rafflesia* (*R. philippinensis* and *R. lagascae*) and Tayabak or Jade Vine (*Strongylodon macrobotrys*).

### Endemic species

A recent study led to the discovery of a new species of Pungapong (*Amorphophallus funtarumii*), which was first found in a portion of the proposed KRFWS. This new species has been classified as highly endangered due to the threats of forest degradation and destruction.

DENR Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) Regional Director Nilo Tamera said that the aforementioned species are endemic, can only be found in the Philippines and are considered "keystone species, with crucial roles in defining an entire ecosystem. Once legislated, fund support for the management of the KRFWS is assured and stringent regulations will be implemented."

Apart from its rich biodiversity, the Kaliwa River Forest Reserve is also home to the Indigenous Peoples of the Dumagat-Remontado of the Sierra Madre who play an important role in the conservation and protection of the environment and natural resources within the area.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### [Opinion] Climate actions ng CCC AT split project ng DAR

By: Gilbert Pardez

Tuloy-tuloy ang pakikipag-ugnayan ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) sa pamahalaang nasyunal at lokal upang mas mapaigting pa raw ang antas ng paghahanda ng mga Pilipino sa panahon ng sakuna o kalamidad.

Ginawa ni CCC Secretary Robert Borje ang pahayag matapos maglabas ng General Flood Advisory ang Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (DOST-PAGASA) dulot ng masamang panahon.

Aba'y ayon kasi sa DOST-PAGASA, ang Eastern Samar, Southern Leyte, Northern Samar, Leyte, Biliran, Samar, Camiguin, Misamis Occidental, Lanao del Norte, Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, Davao de Oro, Davao Occidental, Surigao del Norte, Dinagat Islands, Agusan del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Maguindanao, at Lanao del Sur ay marapat na maghanda laban sa mabilisang pagragasa ng baha at pagguho ng lupa sanhi ng pag-ulan.

Habang tinitipa ko ang kolum na ito, nagbabala ang ahensya ng posibleng pagkakaroon ng kalat-kalat na pag-ulan sa hilagang bahagi ng Luzon dulot ng amihan at 'isolated at localized thunderstorms' naman sa Palawan, Visayas, at Mindanao.

Nabanggit ni Borje na nakapagtala na raw pala ang National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) ng pagbaha sa 118 lugar sa CARAGA kung saan aabot sa P9.4 milyon ang halaga ng pinsala sa imprastruktura sa Region 11 habang nasa P7.8 milyon naman ang pinsala sa sektor ng agrikultura sa Regions 6, 10, 11, at 12.

Mahalaga nga naman ang patuloy na pakikiisa nating lahat sa climate actions.

Sabi nga ni Borje, sa ganitong paraan, ay "mas masisigurong mapoprotektahan ang buhay, kabuhayan, at kinabukasan ng mga Pilipino laban sa mga epekto ng nagbabagong klima."

Maging ang mga komunidad at local government units (LGUs) ay pinaaalalahan din ng kalihim, lalo na ang mga nasa matataas at mabababang mga lugar, na maghanda sa mga posibleng sakuna gaya ng landslides at flashfloods.

Samantala, mas pinaigting nga pala ng pamahalaan ang implementasyon ng Support to Parcelization of Lands for Individual Titling (SPLIT project).

Ayon kay Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Sec. Cheloy Valicaria-Garafil, ang pagpapatupad daw ng proyekto ay pinangungunahan ngayon ng Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) na nasa ilalim ng pamumuno ni Sec. Conrado Estrella III.

Katunayan, ayon kay Garafil, natupad na raw ang pangarap ng 1,321 na agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) mula sa Bohol, Cebu, at Negros Oriental na magkaroon ng sariling lupang sakahan sa tulong ng SPLIT project ng ahensya.

Kung hindi ako nagkakamali, nasa 1,171.34 ektarya ng mga lupang pang-agrikultura ang naipagkaloob ng gobyerno sa mga benepisyaryo sa rehiyon.

Maliban dito, sinasabing nangako ang DAR na magkakaloob din ito ng iba pang tulong sa mga magsasaka alinsunod sa direktiba ni Pang. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. bilang parte ng food security agenda ng kanyang administrasyon.

Mabuhay po kayo at God bless!

Katuwang ang SM Foundation at iba pa, ang “Barangay 882” radio program ng inyong lingkod ay matutunghayan sa ALIW Channel 23, DWIZ AM Radio, DWIZ 882 FB page, at DWIZ ON-DEMAND sa Youtube tuwing araw ng Sabado sa ganap na alas-4:00 hanggang alas-5:00 ng hapon. Para naman sa inyong mga sumbong, reaksiyon, suhestiyon, etc., maaari n’yo po akong i-email sa [gil.playwright@gmail.com](mailto:gil.playwright@gmail.com) o kaya’y i-DM sa aking Facebook account (Gilbert Laguna Perdez), Twitter, Instagram, at sa FB page na ‘Gilbert Perdez’. Paki-subscribe na rin ang aking Youtube channel at Tiktok page na ‘Gilbert Perdez’. Maraming salamat po at stay safe!

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