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DAILY TRIBUNE

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GMA NEWS

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MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By: April Grace R. Padilla

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By: Marita Moaje

The Philippines, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), is ramping up efforts to restore and protect coastal ecosystems and advance climate resilience through the National Blue Carbon Action Partnership (NBCAP).

RAPPLER

[PH, France mark a decade since joint call for climate action, Paris Agreement](#)

By: Iya Gozum

Ahead of the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in 2025, the Philippines and France marked a decade of two climate action landmarks: the Manila Call to Action on Climate Change and the adoption of the historic Paris Agreement.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

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Various renewable energy projects, namely solar and wind, of Vena Energy gained Green Lane Certificates of Endorsement from the Board of Investments-One-Stop Action Center for Strategic Investments.

According to Trade Undersecretary and Bol managing head Ceferino Rodolfo, the certificates were awarded to Opus Solar Energy Corp., Gemini Wind Energy Corp., and Ixus Solar Energy Corp., special purpose vehicles of Vena Energy, on 22 February.

In particular, the Green Lane Certificates were awarded for the following projects: the 416.025 MWp/318.750 MWac Opus Solar Power project of Opus Solar Energy Corp., the 200 MW Gemini Wind Power Project of Gemini Wind Energy Corp., the 301.392 MWp Aguilar Solar Power Project, and the 473.616 MW Ixus Bugallon Solar Power Project, both of Ixus Solar Energy Corp.

With a combined investment of approximately P75 billion, the said projects will be developed across Luzon and Visayas, creating up to 8,000 direct job opportunities during their construction, commissioning, operation, and maintenance.

According to Vena Energy, a leading renewable energy provider in the Asia-Pacific, they are committed to accelerating the transition to sustainable and affordable green energy while delivering long-term economic, social, and environmental benefits to host communities and stakeholders.

Vena Energy's diverse renewable energy portfolio includes 43 GW of onshore wind, solar, and offshore wind projects, alongside a green infrastructure pipeline comprising 24 GWh of battery energy storage systems, 620 MW of data centers, and 840 MTPA of green hydrogen and ammonia production.

With over 1,000 employees across 87 corporate and site offices globally, the company is dedicated to driving the widespread adoption of low-carbon energy solutions.

The awarded projects are among the 184 strategic investments endorsed by OSAC-SI under the Green Lane Services, totaling P4.614 trillion as of 19 February 2025.

Of these, 149 projects worth P4.211 trillion fall under the renewable energy sector.

GMA NEWS

Marcos lauds ADB's continued support for PH development

By: Anna Felicia Bajo

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. lauded the continued support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the Philippines, which has made significant contributions to the country's economic development.

Marcos said this during the courtesy call of newly elected ADB President Masato Kanda at Malacañang Palace on Wednesday.

"I mean the development that we have achieved that being assisted by the ADB, which is the most important partner that we have had in the Philippines," Marcos said in a press release issued Thursday.

"And yet, we find that in the last years, recent years, that has even increased. And so, I think, it is very encouraging, very promising," he added.

The Philippine president also described ADB as "the most important partner" of the Philippines, saying, "The partnership between the ADB and the Philippines has been tremendous."

The projects funded by the ADB, which are part of the current administration's initiatives, include the Bataan-Cavite Interlink Bridge Project, the Davao Public Transport Modernization Project, the Climate Change Action Program, the Build Universal Health Care Program, the Health System Enhancement to Address and Limit COVID-19 (HEAL) Project, the Competitive and Inclusive Agriculture Development Program, and the Walang Gutom 2027: Food Stamp Program.

Kanda assumed the ADB presidency on February 24, 2025, to complete the remaining term of former President Masatsugu Asakawa, whose term expires on November 23, 2026.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

[A study in green: education and the environment](#)

By: Judith Albano

IN classrooms across the Philippines, students are learning about sustainability, not just from books, but from life. From solar-powered campuses to zero-waste initiatives, educational institutions are becoming living laboratories for environmental innovation, preparing the next generation for careers in the growing green economy.

Digital meets environmental

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated education's digital transformation, bringing with it unexpected environmental benefits. What started as a crisis response has evolved into a sustainable practice leading to the dramatic reduction in paper consumption and transportation-related emissions through digital learning platforms.

DepEd Commons, the Department of Education's online resource platform, has eliminated the need for millions of printed handouts. Meanwhile, DepEd TV reaches students in remote areas without requiring additional infrastructure or creating waste. These initiatives aren't just making education more accessible – they're significantly reducing the sector's environmental footprint.

However, digital transformation goes beyond just reducing paper waste. Schools are using technology to teach environmental consciousness in innovative ways:

- Virtual field trips to renewable energy facilities
- Online collaborative projects tracking local environmental changes
- Real-time monitoring of campus energy consumption
- Digital platforms for environmental advocacy

Training tomorrow's green workforce

The Green Jobs Act of 2016 catalyzed a fundamental shift in Philippine education, mandating institutions to prepare students for careers in sustainability. Today, that mandate is transforming into action across educational levels, from technical schools to universities.

TESDA leads this transformation through its Greening TVET Framework, integrating sustainable practices into 89 different training programs. From automotive technicians learning responsible waste management to construction workers mastering energy-efficient building techniques, sustainability is woven into every certification.

Green skills in high demand

The job market is increasingly seeking professionals with specific environmental competencies across different sectors:

Renewable energy. Solar panel installation technicians and wind energy specialists are among the most sought-after professionals. [Technical Institute Name] reports that 85% of their renewable energy program graduates secure employment within three months.

Environmental management. Companies are actively recruiting professionals skilled in ecosystem restoration, waste reduction strategies, hazardous materials handling and corporate sustainability reporting

Sustainable agriculture. As climate change threatens traditional farming, experts in climate-resilient agriculture are becoming essential.

Challenges and solutions: bridging the green education gap

Despite promising initiatives, Philippine institutions face significant hurdles in delivering sustainability education. Yet, innovative solutions are emerging across the sector.

The digital dilemma

While digital learning reduces environmental impact, access remains uneven, with some regions still struggling with basic internet connectivity. In response, hybrid solutions are emerging, from solar-powered learning centers in remote areas to offline-capable educational resources. Community tech-sharing programs have proven effective in several provinces, while mobile learning units are reaching students in the most isolated communities.

Resource constraints

Implementing green programs often requires substantial investment. Schools face challenges in installing renewable energy systems, upgrading to energy-efficient facilities, and acquiring specialized training equipment for emerging green technologies.

Solutions are emerging through innovative collaborations. De La Salle University (DLSU) has partnered with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and DEVCON Philippines to create the Climate Resilience Technology (CResT) platform, providing research infrastructure and resources to accelerate climate tech solutions. Similar initiatives include the SCALE NCR program, which connects multiple institutions including Technological Institute of the Philippines (T.I.P.) and DLSU Animo Labs Foundation, combining resources for greater impact.

The Adopt-A-School Program has also become a vital conduit for sustainability initiatives. Globe Telecom's Global Filipino School initiative transforms public schools into centers of ICT excellence, incorporating environmental education into digital learning. Meanwhile, Land Bank of the Philippines recently signed an agreement with

DepEd to support facility improvements, with several projects focusing on energy-efficient upgrades and sustainable infrastructure.

Innovation and impact

Creative financing solutions are helping institutions overcome budget constraints. Green bonds for campus sustainability projects are gaining traction, while public-private partnerships are funding environmental programs at several universities. The GSIS has adopted 25 schools as part of its sustainability commitment, focusing resources on facilities that incorporate environmental design principles. Student-led fundraising efforts often take innovative approaches to environmental projects, creating micro-solutions that demonstrate sustainability in action.

Schools struggle to quantify the environmental impact of their initiatives. New assessment frameworks are being developed to track carbon footprint reduction, waste management improvements, and graduate employment in green sectors.

On the green horizon

The intersection of education and sustainability in the Philippines is poised for significant growth and evolution. Emerging trends suggest that green education will become increasingly central to the country's educational framework and economic development.

The job market is rapidly evolving, with sustainability-focused roles growing at an unprecedented rate. New career paths are emerging in fields like carbon accounting, environmental compliance, and climate adaptation. As the Philippines commits to its international climate obligations, the demand for professionals with specialized environmental skills will continue to accelerate.

The renewable energy sector alone is projected to create over 50,000 new jobs in the Philippines by 2030. Educational institutions are responding by developing targeted programs in solar technology, energy efficiency, and sustainable design. Universities like Mindanao State University are expanding their renewable energy research initiatives, preparing graduates for the green economy's growing demands.

Collaborative frameworks

The future of green education in the Philippines will be characterized by increased collaboration between educational institutions, government agencies, and private sector partners. The Climate Resilience Technology platform developed by DLSU, DOST, and DEVCON provides a model for how these partnerships can accelerate innovation and implementation.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority continues to expand its green competencies across training regulations, working closely with industry to ensure

skills match emerging job requirements. Meanwhile, the Department of Education is integrating climate change education more deeply into the K-12 curriculum, creating a foundation for environmental literacy from an early age.

Long-term impact

As these educational initiatives mature, their impact on Philippine sustainability goals will become increasingly significant. Graduates equipped with green skills will drive innovation across sectors, from agriculture to transportation, manufacturing to construction.

The transformation extends beyond economic benefits. As environmental education becomes more widespread, community-level sustainability initiatives are likely to flourish, creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond the classroom walls.

The path forward has challenges, but the integration of sustainability principles into Philippine education represents a powerful opportunity. By nurturing a generation of environmentally conscious professionals equipped with the skills to address climate challenges, the educational system is helping build resilience into the country's future.

MONGABAY

[To benefit biodiversity & climate, restoring lost forests works best: Study](#)

By: Marlowe Starling

Tree-planting has become a go-to tool for taking carbon out of the atmosphere and repairing deforested habitats. And indeed, reforestation — planting trees or fostering tree regrowth in historically forested areas — is the most beneficial option, according to a new study in *Science*, providing habitat for wildlife while sequestering and removing carbon from the atmosphere.

But if done incorrectly, planting trees can come with a significant cost to biodiversity. By comparing the effects of replacing lost trees (reforestation), adding trees (afforestation) and growing biofuel crops over natural lands (bioenergy cropping), a team of researchers from the New York Botanical Garden, The Nature Conservancy and Princeton University found that not all techniques are equal.

As opposed to reforestation, afforestation means planting trees in historically unforested areas, such as savannas and grasslands. Bioenergy cropping means cultivating fast-growing, carbon-storing plants for biofuels. The study, published in January, incorporates IUCN data for more than 14,000 vertebrate species to measure the impact of each method on biodiversity.

“You might assume that anything we do that helps to mitigate climate change is also going to just indirectly benefit biodiversity,” said Evelyn Beaury, a co-author and assistant curator at the New York Botanical Garden’s Center for Conservation and Restoration Ecology. “That’s really the core assumption of this paper that we’re trying to test and disentangle.”

But importantly, tree-planting isn’t one-size-fits-all.

Oak trees in their second year of growth at The Nature Conservancy’s Edward H. McCabe Preserve in Milton, DE. In 2019, TNC restored 39 acres of former farmland back to native forest, advancing a long-term vision that included planting 11,700 shrubs and native trees, including black oak, red oak, pin oak, swamp white oak, white oak, chestnut oak, chokeberry, persimmon, dogwood and black cherry. Image © John Hinkson/TNC.

The rainforest Ipu Angit calls home is set to be demolished for wood pellet production by a coal company seeking to pivot to “green” bioenergy. Here he looks at a signpost erected in a biomass plantation concession near his home. Image by Nanang Sujana for Mongabay.

“Right tree, right place, right way,” said Susan Cook-Patton, co-author and senior forest restoration scientist for The Nature Conservancy, repeating a tagline the organization uses to encourage sustainable reforestation. Sustainable projects should prioritize

native trees in a place that historically had trees that local communities actually want to steward, she explained.

This misconception that planting trees automatically creates habitat for species has often led to environmental changes that hurt both wildlife and people, Cook-Patton said. Habitat connectivity, animals' population sizes and changing weather patterns ultimately drive whether wildlife will make use of newly forested areas, she said.

Meanwhile, planting non-native plants or adding trees to areas that are naturally sparse, such as savannas, can increase fire risk, reduce available drinking water and interfere with human activities like cattle ranching, said Kate Parr, a community and ecosystem ecologist at the University of Liverpool who was not involved with the research.

Parr led a 2024 study published in *Science* that employed a Mongabay reforestation app to evaluate how restoration and reforestation are conflated across Africa, revealing that many afforestation projects from the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative and World Resources Institute were misinformed by inaccurate environmental assessments. The groups erroneously classified some grassland and savanna ecosystems as degraded forest, when in fact they never had much tree cover to begin with. Adding trees to such ecosystems can harm local plants and animals that are adapted to these open-canopy environments, she explained. Indeed, Parr found that very few projects focus on the ground layer of savanna ecosystems — native grasses that can store lots of soil carbon — instead planting non-native trees and crops.

Another unintended effect of afforestation is albedo: the amount of sunlight reflected off of a surface. Lighter landscapes, such as a desert or savanna, reflect more solar energy, which keeps temperatures cooler. But darker landscapes, such as lush forests, absorb solar energy, increasing temperatures.

Yet, it's understandable that afforestation would become "an enticing land-use practice for places that don't necessarily have a lot of forests that you could sustainably restore," Beaury said.

As countries across the globe have organized more pointed pledges to address climate change, reforestation and other land-based strategies have become an important component of many national climate goals.

"Obviously, [these strategies] aren't the biggest part of any single plan to reach net zero, because they aren't necessarily as efficient as shifting from coal and natural gas to solar panels, but they have this unique capability of getting us to reverse the emissions that we've already put into the atmosphere," said lead author Jeffrey Smith, an ecologist at the Princeton University High Meadows Environmental Institute.

Less clear was how those strategies affect biodiversity. Smith led two analyses to assess each method's effectiveness for the recent study: how habitat conversion affects vertebrates and how climate mitigation affects vertebrates. What they found was that

altering habitats — such as removing, replacing and adding trees — had a much bigger effect on vertebrate species than climate change itself to date.

“It’s not to say that addressing climate change isn’t good for biodiversity, but we have to be really cognizant of what it means for habitat[s],” Smith said. “The more you can do to address climate change through reforms to the energy system, through shifting away from fossil fuels, the better.”

Smith noted that other nature-based methods, such as wetland restoration and applying biochar to crops, were excluded because of data deficiencies. The researchers also lacked sufficient data for invertebrates, though these make up the bulk of species on Earth.

“This is a massive global study that gives us sort of a broad sense of regional patterns, but for any sort of given location, there’s a lot of nuance that we’re missing,” Smith said.

Smith hopes the study’s results help global leaders recognize reforestation as the most efficient land-based solution to their sustainability goals. Plus, in another study from The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International, reforestation was found to be “orders of magnitude” cheaper per ton of CO₂ than other carbon-removal technologies, Cook-Patton said. Although reducing fossil fuels is key, properly restoring natural habitats with native species can go a long way for countries and communities with limited resources.

“That’s what we try to get our science to do: help accelerate finding those locations where it does work,” she said.

The number-one option, however, is protecting existing forests. It sequesters more carbon, protects more biodiversity and is 7-9 times more cost-effective than tearing them down and regrowing them later, according to a 2019 study in *Nature Climate Change*. Given the urgency of climate action, preserving what’s left is crucial, Cook-Patton said.

Beaury said their research will hopefully encourage funding for projects that are sustainable, responsible and prioritize the needs of local communities. It’s important to scale projects quickly, she added, but also mindfully.

“It’s so easy for the general public and big international NGOs and governments to get caught up in this tree-planting frenzy,” Parr said. “We have to be very careful about how we communicate the complexities more broadly.”

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Legarda champions cultural preservation as a national investment](#)

By: Jan Escosio

Senator Loren Legarda called on embracing cultural preservation as an indispensable investment in the nation's future during her keynote address at Cultural Thoughts and Trajectories, held at Manila House on Monday, February 26, 2025.

The event, organized in partnership with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) in celebration of National Arts Month, brought together policymakers, diplomats, cultural leaders, and academics for a thought-provoking exchange on safeguarding and advancing Filipino identity in an era of rapid global change.

"We cannot possibly fully grasp the world that awaits two thousand years ahead, but what we choose to preserve today—our knowledge, our traditions, our stories—will ripple through time, shaping lives long after we are gone, just as the wisdom of the past continues to guide us now," Legarda declared.

The four-term senator opened her address with a vivid image of the ancient Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras, emphasizing how ancestral ingenuity offers solutions to contemporary challenges. "These terraces endure because of the quiet brilliance of a people who, long before the world had the language for it, understood sustainability, engineering, and balance," she explained. "Now, as modern societies grapple with climate crises, food insecurity, and ecological resilience, the world looks back to these ancient marvels—to learn."

A recipient of the prestigious Dangal ng Haraya Award, Legarda reframed cultural preservation as both a pillar of national resilience and a source of innovation. "In an era where power is measured in economic might, the Philippines carries a different wealth: a soft power that endures rather than conquers, that inspires rather than imposes," she asserted. "Within the lessons of our ancestors may be found the answers to questions future generations have yet to ask. And in that, perhaps, lies our greatest advantage."

A staunch advocate for cultural preservation, Legarda, who chairs the Senate Committee on Culture and the Arts, has authored landmark legislation such as the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 (RA 10066) and the Cultural Mapping Law (RA 11961), mandating a comprehensive inventory of Filipino tangible and intangible heritage. Her advocacy extends beyond policy into tangible impact: from community-driven programs, sustainable livelihood projects, and international cultural diplomacy. From publications and media productions to museums, galleries, gastronomy, music, built heritage, and indigenous languages, her work has elevated cultural preservation into a national development strategy.

"But let me be clear about our purpose: culture is not mere adornment; it is a vital engine of livelihood and economic growth. The hands that keep it alive must be

equipped with the necessary infrastructure, resources, and market access to sustain their craft as a viable profession. Anything less is a betrayal of the very legacy we seek to protect,” Legarda stressed.

The event also highlighted how Legarda’s cultural diplomacy has elevated the Philippines on the world stage. From leading the country’s triumphant return to the Venice Biennale in 2015 after a 51-year absence to securing its role as Guest of Honor at the Frankfurter Buchmesse 2025, she has ensured global recognition for Filipino artistry and scholarship. Her initiatives, such as Sentro Rizal, a global network of cultural centers in Philippine embassies, and the Philippine Studies Program, now housed in over 20 universities worldwide, have institutionalized the academic study of Filipino culture and history across continents.

An internationally recognized champion for climate resilience and disaster risk reduction, Legarda, who serves as UNDRR Global Champion for Resilience, also underscored the urgent intersection of culture and climate action.

“For a nation consistently ranked among the most vulnerable in the World Risk Index, the stakes are nothing less than survival. Integrating the wisdom of our cultural heritage into climate action may very well be the key to climate resilience.”

Legarda’s collaborations with state universities have already shaped national conservation policies, informing sustainable approaches to forest management, coastal stewardship, and upland resource governance. By merging indigenous knowledge with modern science, these initiatives offer forward-looking solutions to environmental challenges.

Following her keynote, the program featured two in-depth lectures delivered by National Artist Virgilio Almario and NCCA Chair Victorino Mapa Manalo. The event concluded with a dynamic open forum, facilitating cross-sectoral dialogue and reinforcing a collective resolve to embed cultural preservation as an integral pillar of national development.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[DENR taps Filipino, Korean youth groups as environment stewards in W.Visayas](#)

By: April Grace R. Padilla

Filipino and Korean young adults from the “Young Adult Worker Volunteer Group of Save the Earth from A to Z We Are One Family” signed a deal with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) field office in Western Visayas to serve as environmental stewards for protection and community development.

The group initiated the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support DENR Region 6’s environmental programs.

“This partnership, established through an MOU, is a vital step in promoting environmental stewardship and empowering communities to take an active role in protecting their natural resources,” said DENR 6 Officer-in-Charge Regional Raul L. Lorilla.

The MOU outlined various activities supporting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that both parties can jointly undertake.

It also covered two sets of campaigns: Campaigns for Humanity, with areas of educational support, well-being promotion, emergency relief and cultural exchanges; and Campaigns for Earth, including climate change response, plastic reduction, terrestrial ecosystem protection and marine ecosystem protection.

The MOU unites both parties in efforts toward enhancing environmental protection and promoting sustainable community development, leveraging the strengths and resources of both organizations.

Both DENR and the group seek to create innovative solutions and engage more stakeholders in meaningful environmental initiatives.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Climate-related extreme weather surged 400% over last 50 years: WHO](#)

The last half-century has seen a dramatic surge in climate-related extreme weather events, according to the UN's World Health Organization (WHO).

“Over the past 50 years, extreme weather events have increased by 400 percent due to climate change,” the WHO Regional Office for Europe said Wednesday on X.

The UN agency also pointed to the impact of climate change on various health issues, including infectious diseases, respiratory and non-communicable diseases, mental health, and injuries such as drownings.

“Climate change drives disease burdens of all types,” it added.

It further called for collective action to tackle the climate crisis and its impact on health.

[PH boosts coastal protection efforts, advances climate resilience](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Philippines, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), is ramping up efforts to restore and protect coastal ecosystems and advance climate resilience through the National Blue Carbon Action Partnership (NBCAP).

In a news release on Thursday, the DENR said the agency spearheaded the launch of the NBCAP in Quezon City on Wednesday, in collaboration with the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) Philippines, and supported by the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Ocean Action Agenda and the United Kingdom Government's Blue Planet Fund.

"NBCAP aims to strengthen the protection and restoration of blue carbon ecosystems in the Philippines, ensuring their sustainability for climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and community development," the DENR said.

It said blue carbon ecosystems play a critical role in mitigating climate change and supporting local livelihoods through evidence-based interventions and strategic collaborations.

The DENR said the NBCAP focuses on strengthening policies, financing mechanisms, and conservation efforts for key coastal ecosystems, such as mangroves, seagrasses, and tidal marshes.

These ecosystems serve as natural barriers against storm surges, support marine biodiversity, and act as carbon sinks that absorb atmospheric carbon dioxide.

During the event, ZSL Philippines Country Director Edwina Garchitorea highlighted the importance of using data-driven strategies to protect both communities and marine environments.

"The restoration of our blue carbon ecosystems is essential to the nation's environmental and economic future. They serve as natural defenses, sources of food and livelihood, and carbon sinks where carbon can be absorbed and stored," she said.

Through the NBCAP, the Philippine government aims to finalize a National Blue Carbon Action Roadmap, which will integrate scientific research into policy-making and community initiatives.

Experts from top academic institutions, including Severino Salmo II of UP Diliman, Dixon Gevaña of UP Los Baños, and Yasmin Primavera-Tirol of Aklan State University, emphasized that these efforts align with the Philippines' commitment to international biodiversity and climate agreements, particularly those outlined in the United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP).

Despite a decade of research on blue carbon ecosystems in the Philippines, access to scientific data and methodologies remains limited.

The NBCAP aims to address this gap by making research more available to policymakers and conservationists and fostering multi-sectoral collaboration.

"Through NBCAP, we will convene scientists, policymakers, and community stakeholders to develop and guide high-impact and high-integrity programs that aim to restore all blue carbon ecosystems," Garchitorena said.

"Our goal is to attract more partnerships, funding, and legislative support to ensure the effective protection and sustainable management of these vital ecosystems."

RAPPLER

[PH, France mark a decade since joint call for climate action, Paris Agreement](#)

By: Iya Gozum

Ahead of the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in 2025, the Philippines and France marked a decade of two climate action landmarks: the Manila Call to Action on Climate Change and the adoption of the historic Paris Agreement.

Ten years ago, then-French president Francois Hollande made a “climate visit” to the Philippines, drumming up support for the Paris Agreement set to be adopted later that year. On February 26, 2015, Manila and Paris called for climate solidarity and for nations to reach a climate change agreement.

“It was supposed to be a traditional visit,” Senator Loren Legarda recalled in a gathering in Makati on Wednesday, February 26.

Legarda said she had to convince officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs to agree with the French contingent to make the meeting between Hollande and then-Philippine president Benigno Aquino III about climate.

“It was the year that the Paris Agreement was supposed to be discussed in Paris by the end of the year,” the senator said.

Less than a year after Hollande’s visit in the Philippines, 195 parties adopted the Paris Agreement in the French capital, a legally binding international treaty that seeks to limit emissions and curb climate change.

“President Francois Hollande’s state visit to the Philippines in 2015 was really a pivotal moment for bilateral cooperation between France and the Philippines on climate and maritime issues,” French Ambassador Marie Fontanel said on Wednesday.

Both nations are drumming up support for the third United Nations Oceans Conference happening in Nice, France in June 2025, and the COP30 in Belem, Brazil, in November 2025. (READ: COP30 in Brazil set to spotlight developing countries’ climate finance needs)

The goal is to mobilize at least 60 ratifications for the High Seas Treaty in time for the oceans summit.

The treaty, which seeks to protect marine biodiversity beyond limits of national jurisdiction, had been ratified by 17 countries so far, and 110 countries have committed to ratify it, including the Philippines.

“The third UN Ocean Conference will be a key moment to advance multilateral commitments to protect marine ecosystems, mobilize financial resources and share the

scientific knowledge necessary for the development of informed public policies,” said Fontanel.

A few months after the oceans conference, at COP30 in Brazil, countries are expected to drive up targets on emissions reductions, known as national determined contributions.

Brazilian Ambassador to the Philippines Gilberto Fonseca Guimarães de Moura said the Philippines and France’s joint call 10 years ago is an example of “successful international collaboration” and show a way forward in climate and environmental action.

The Philippines has become a poster child of climate action and now assumes a bigger voice in international talks as the host of the Loss and Damage Fund Board, a body that would manage funding for vulnerable countries suffering from the inevitable impacts of an increasingly warming world.

Addressing climate change hinges much on international cooperation, as exemplified by the annual COP when countries gather to discuss climate action.

The global impacts of US President Donald Trump’s second exit from the Paris Agreement are yet to be fully realized, but the withdrawal already created a vacuum in much-needed climate leadership.

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