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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By Paul Jaysent F. Fos

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THE MANILA TIMES

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DAILY GUARDIAN

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The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), in partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Climate Change Commission (CCC), convened today climate leaders from the public and private sectors for the State of Climate Change Forum at Makati Diamond Residences in Makati City.

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The Climate Change Commission (CCC) met with the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO) of Cebu to identify strategic opportunities for institutional strengthening and capacity development in support of effective climate action at the provincial level.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

PANAY

Strengthening Iloilo's business climate from the ground up

ECONOMIC transformation does not always begin with billion-peso investments or towering skylines. Sometimes, it begins with a sari-sari store in a barangay corner, a modest carinderia serving daily wage earners, or a small repair shop keeping the city moving. Iloilo City's Nano Enterprise Incentive Ordinance recognizes this reality — and in doing so, reinforces the city's broader economic positioning in Western Visayas.

At first glance, the ordinance offers graduated discounts on regulatory fees and business taxes to nano enterprises with capital not exceeding P250,000. On paper, it looks like relief for the smallest businesses. In substance, it is strategic economic layering.

Iloilo City has long projected itself as a rising regional growth center — a hub for business process outsourcing, education, healthcare, real estate, and infrastructure development. Yet no growth narrative is sustainable if it rests only on large investors. A competitive investment climate is strongest when its foundation is broad, stable, and locally rooted.

Supporting nano enterprises strengthens that foundation.

An investment climate is not built solely through tax incentives for corporations or streamlined permitting systems. Investors look for ecosystems — communities with active consumer bases, reliable supply chains, entrepreneurial vibrancy, and local spending power. Nano enterprises generate exactly that. They circulate money within barangays, stimulate micro-supply networks, and reinforce local demand. This internal economic activity makes the city more attractive to external capital.

Simply put, a city that nurtures its smallest businesses sends a powerful message: growth here is inclusive. Paired with capacity-building support modeled after programs like the Uswag Negosyo Academy and modest capital assistance, the policy attempts to create upward mobility rather than temporary relief.

That upward mobility feeds directly into MSME competitiveness in Western Visayas.

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) account for the overwhelming majority of businesses nationwide. In Western Visayas, they form the backbone of local commerce, food services, retail, and community-based tourism. If Iloilo City can systematically help nano enterprises scale into small and medium ventures over a five-year horizon, it strengthens the region's competitive profile.

Competitiveness is not just about attracting external firms — it is about cultivating homegrown enterprises that can supply, partner, and innovate alongside larger players.

Iloilo City's initiative signals that growth here is participatory — that ordinary Ilonggos are not mere spectators of development but active stakeholders.

In a time when cities compete fiercely for capital, tourism flows, and entrepreneurial talent, Iloilo City is making a quiet but strategic move: strengthening its business climate from the ground up. By investing in nano enterprises today, it is reinforcing the stability, resilience, and competitiveness of its broader economy tomorrow.

Micro support, when done right, produces macro impact.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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The University of the Philippines Resilience Institute – Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards (UP RI-NOAH) recently conducted high-level discussions regarding the future of disaster resilience in the Philippines. The meeting was attended by UP RI-NOAH Director Dr. Mahar Lagmay and Negros Occidental 3rd District Rep. Javier Miguel Benitez.

The UP RI-NOAH facility was also visited by multi-sector representatives, including UP College of Fine Arts Dean Toym Imao and former UP Film Institute Director Rob Rownd, who vowed to explore ways in which the arts can elevate climate change narratives.

The visit focused on integrating advanced technology with creative industries to bridge the gap between scientific data and public understanding.

Benitez, who is also chairman of the House Special Committee on Creative Industries, met with Lagmay and representatives from the arts sector.

The wide-ranging dialogue covered flood management, the application of artificial intelligence (AI) in disaster resilience, and the potential for global platforms like Netflix to shape awareness of community resilience.

“The exchange highlighted how the arts and creative sectors can help bridge the gap between science, public understanding, and community resilience,” Lagmay said on his Facebook page.

The visit also emphasized that the creative sector is vital in translating complex scientific data into actionable public knowledge.

A key pillar of Rep. Benitez’s climate mitigation strategy is House Bill No. 2577, which seeks to convert the current University of the Philippines Resilience Institute (UP RI) into the University of the Philippines National Climate Resilience Institute (UP NCRI).

While the existing UP RI has been instrumental in advancing evidence-based strategies, it currently lacks direct fiscal support from the national budget and permanent plantilla positions.

The proposed bill would elevate the institute to national institute status, similar to the National Institute of Geological Sciences; ensure direct appropriations under the General Appropriations Act; establish permanent research positions to scale its national mandate; and create a centralized Resilience Knowledge Platform to serve as a public repository for disaster data and analytics.

Benitez’s visit also underscored a broader legislative push to address the Philippines’ status as the most at-risk country globally through House Bill No. 694, or the “Department of Climate Resilience Act of 2025,” which proposes a primary national agency to oversee disaster risk reduction and institutionalize a National Climate Resilience Framework.

Additionally, Benitez is a co-author of House Bill No. 4420, the “Climate Accountability (CLIMA) Act,” which aims to protect vulnerable communities from loss and damage by establishing corporate and state accountability for greenhouse gas emissions.

By combining these legislative efforts with the innovative mapping and modeling capabilities discussed at UP RI-NOAH, Benitez aims to foster a “whole-of-society” approach to climate justice and national safety.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[Romblon gov pushes proactive climate change, disaster risk action](#)

By Paul Jaysent F. Fos

Romblon Governor Trina Firmalo-Fabic has called on local officials and key sectors to adopt a more proactive and systematic approach to addressing climate change and disaster risks, as Romblon works toward crafting a long-term resilience plan for the province.

Speaking at the opening of the Provincial Climate and Disaster Resilience Summit at Sanctuary Garden Resort, the governor underscored the vulnerability of Romblon as an archipelagic province frequently hit by typhoons and heavy rains in recent years.

Fabic noted that government interventions in the past have largely focused on responding to crises after they occur.

“Kung mapapansin ninyo, mostly we have been trying to mitigate ‘yung sa mga crisis after crisis. Last year, sunod-sunod ang typhoons, and all we are doing is trying to figure out how we could protect our people,” she said.

She stressed that the province must shift from a reactive stance to a forward-looking strategy.

“This time, what we want to do is to be more proactive na bago pa man dumating ang mga sakunang ito, napag-usapan na natin ‘yung gusto nating mangyari pagdating sa climate change adaptation and resiliency,” Fabic said.

The governor clarified that resilience should not simply mean enduring hardship, but putting in place concrete measures that enable communities not only to recover but to become stronger.

Citing examples from countries like Japan, she pointed to wide, deep drainage systems that serve as flood-control mechanisms and water-storage facilities during shortages. She said similar policies and infrastructure projects, including breakwaters and flood control systems, should be studied for possible adaptation in Romblon.

Fabic also challenged the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officers, Municipal Planning and Development Officers, Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officers, and Local Chief Executives to integrate climate change adaptation and resiliency components into every local plan and policy.

“Ibig sabihin, sa bawat plano, program at polisiya na ginagawa natin, posible kayang palaging may component about climate change and resiliency,” she said.

The three-day summit, Feb. 24-26, aims to produce a nine-year provincial climate and disaster resilience plan that will guide municipalities in strengthening their capacity to withstand natural hazards and the growing impacts of climate change.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Creative approach to climate resilience pushed](#)

By: Red Mendoza

Negros Occidental 3rd District Rep. Javier Miguel Benitez emphasized the use of creative industries and technology to educate the public on climate resilience.

He made the remark during a recent visit to the University of the Philippines Resilience Institute-Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards Center (UP RI-NOAH Center).

In a statement released on Saturday, Benitez's office said he met with UP RI-NOAH Director Mahar Lagmay, UP College of Fine Arts Dean Toym Imao and former UP Film Institute director Rob Rownd to explore how the arts can elevate climate change narratives.

Benitez is the chairman of the House Special Committee on Creative Industries.

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The visit also emphasized that the creative sector is vital for translating complex scientific data into actionable public knowledge.

Benitez has filed several bills instrumental in climate mitigation, including House Bill (HB) 2577, which seeks to convert the UP RI into the University of the Philippines National Climate Resilience Institute.

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Working in agriculture, Gillian saw first-hand how these systems failed both producers and consumers. During the COVID-19 pandemic, supply chain disruptions only deepened these gaps, pushing food loss and waste into national headlines. Determined to act, she brought together a small team – a fellow female physicist, and their friend, whose research focused on measuring fruit spoilage – to find a practical, data-driven solution.

The collaboration led to the founding of Anihan Technologies (AniTech), an agri-tech start-up using sensors and data to reduce food losses across the agricultural value chain. AniTech equips agribusinesses with affordable Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, a web-based monitoring platform and actionable data reports that help farmers, distributors and cold-storage operators make better decisions, from irrigation and fertilization to storage and transport. Ultimately, this leads to better crop quality, increased farm yield and supply chain productivity, and the availability of fresh and healthy food for consumers.

For Gillian, building a hardware-based start-up in a male-dominated agri-tech sector came with steep challenges. “Trust doesn't come easily when you're a new entrant introducing new technology in agriculture,” she shares. Limited access to capital, long crop cycles and climate risks made progress slow and required careful financial planning.

Gillian's participation in the UN Women Climate Tech Accelerator, supported by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the Republic of Korea with contributions from the CHARLES & KEITH Foundation, proved to be a turning point. Beyond technical mentorship, the programme strengthened AniTech's ability to translate innovation into measurable impact. It helped the team define clear metrics, refine its business model and better understand how gender dynamics affect technology adoption in agriculture, particularly among women farmers and workers often excluded from digital tools.

Since joining the programme, AniTech has deployed 56 sensors across more than 10 farms in the Philippines and expanded pilot projects through partner distributors in Japan, Brunei and Singapore. These deployments have helped distributors and cold-storage managers to remotely monitor produce, detect early signs of spoilage and prevent losses by taking timely action, effectively demonstrating how climate solutions can deliver real results on the ground.

Looking ahead, AniTech aims to lower the cost of digital tools, strengthen advisory support and build partnerships that make climate-smart agriculture more accessible.

Gillian's message to other women innovators is clear: “the work we're doing is tough, but it's never been more important. Together, we can create something that lasts and solve real challenges for real people.”

Katja Freiwald, Regional Lead for Women's Economic Empowerment, UN Women Asia and the Pacific says AniTech's story is inspiring: "It shows that when women are supported to lead in climate and agriculture, the impact goes far beyond one enterprise. It reaches farmers, families and local systems."

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Women, climate and the discipline of competence](#)

By: Secretary Robert E.A. Borje

We often describe women in climate action as warriors. The image is compelling: Steady in storms, unyielding in negotiations, tireless in communities that rebuild again and again. But that metaphor deserves scrutiny.

If someone must fight simply to be heard, the system remains uneven. If leadership is framed as conquest, space must be taken from someone else. Climate governance cannot operate that way, especially in a country as exposed as the Philippines.

We face stronger typhoons, rising seas and longer heatwaves. The risks are recurring. What we need is competence, built deliberately and measured honestly.

Climate leadership is not granted by identity. It is formed through exposure to risk, years of experience, technical training and decisions that carry consequence. I would submit that gender does not decide that. Performance does.

Expertise in climate governance grows through practice. It develops in planning rooms where hazard data are tested, in legislative drafting that must withstand scrutiny, and in negotiations where a misplaced phrase can affect financing. Training sharpens it. Opportunity, however, proves it.

When access to those experiences is restricted, whether by unequal education, limited professional networks, assumptions about who should lead, or unequal access to economic assets, the country narrows its own capacity and, therefore, its ability to effect meaningful change.

The Philippines reflects both progress and unfinished work.

We rank high in global gender parity indices, particularly in education and political participation. Filipino women graduate at strong rates and serve actively in public life.

Yet disparities remain in labor force participation, land ownership, income security and post-disaster recovery burdens. After major climate events, economic strain often falls disproportionately on women, especially those in informal work or unpaid care roles. The picture is not just binary. It is structural.

To be clear: Where pathways are open and standards are clear, capability rises. Where barriers persist, potential remains constrained.

The same principle applies in climate diplomacy. In negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, technical precision determines outcomes. Adaptation finance frameworks, carbon market rules, and loss and damage arrangements are shaped by mastery of detail. Representation without preparation weakens national interest. We cannot afford that.

Across decades of climate engagement, Filipinas have served as negotiators, legal architects, public health experts, and coalition builders. Their influence has endured not because they were framed as

symbols, but because they developed expertise through sustained exposure to complex policy work. They deserved and earned respect.

This continuity rests on legal foundations shaped by distinguished climate leadership. Senator Loren Legarda, principal author of the Climate Change Act of 2009 and the People's Survival Fund, has advanced a broader legislative agenda that integrates disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, environmental protection and cultural stewardship into national policy. Her work reflects a consistent philosophy: gender equity must move alongside institutional strength and policy discipline. The laws she championed do not merely recognize women's participation. They embedded climate action within durable systems where competence, accountability and long-term planning could endure.

And that distinction is strategic and consequential.

An ecosystem of merit does not require constant fighting. It widens exposure, protects standards and evaluates performance fairly. Equity in this context is not about advantage. It is about removing distortion so that merit can surface clearly. Meritocracy without equity is incomplete because unequal starting conditions skew outcomes. Equity without merit weakens institutions. Resilience requires both.

We honor the women who have acted as warriors in the climate arena, because many have had to. But the real test of national maturity is whether the next generation will not need to fight for the right to contribute.

Our responsibility is not to produce more warriors. It is to build systems strong enough that the best Filipino, woman or man, can serve without obstruction.

Climate resilience is not a contest of genders. It is the disciplined work of building competence and allowing it to lead.

Women's Month, then, is not only a time for recognition. It is a reminder of unfinished work. It asks whether our schools, workplaces, public institutions and communities are widening the pathway from exposure to expertise for every Filipino.

If we get the system right, recognition will follow performance. And performance, sustained over time, will secure the future we are trying to build.

DAILY GUARDIAN

[PDRF, DENR convene climate leaders for annual discourse on status of climate change](#)

The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), in partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Climate Change Commission (CCC), convened today climate leaders from the public and private sectors for the State of Climate Change Forum at Makati Diamond Residences in Makati City.

Now on its third run, the annual forum serves as an avenue for global and local climate leaders from various sectors to foster constructive dialogue on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

This year, with the theme “Natural Capital: Investing in Forests for Water Sustainability,” the forum, attended by more than 200 multisectoral representatives, highlighted the critical role of forest ecosystems in sustaining watersheds, innovative financing mechanisms for climate resilience investments and nature-based solutions (NbS) for environmental sustainability.

In the keynote address delivered by DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs Atty. Jonas R. Leones, DENR Secretary Raphael P.M. Lotilla highlighted the importance of multisectoral collaboration in creating and maintaining vital structures that safeguard water security.

“The private sector has a pivotal role here. Your innovation, capital and efficiency are indispensable. We’re looking at avenues such as impact investing, developing robust payments for ecosystem services and robust public-private partnerships that leverage private sector expertise, technology and capital to accelerate project implementation in forest, watershed and water management,” he said.

In alignment with this, PDRF President Butch Meily emphasized the private sector’s role and commitment in turning the Philippines’ high-risk status (2025 World Risk Index) into an opportunity for global leadership in climate finance.

“In this changing world, there is one constant — the commitment of private companies to play a role in calamities. The key to our future lies in the government, civil society, the private sector and other groups working to prepare for the impacts of the degradation of our environment as development and population increase,” Meily said.

The high-level panel discussion with Secretary Borje, Atty. Allan Barcena (Energy Development Corporation), Sarah Bergado (Manila Water), June Cheryl Cabal-Revilla (Metro Pacific Investment Corporation) and Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong focused on science-based data, business cases and models that work; and the structural bottlenecks, policy gaps and the reality of the “ridge to reef” approach.

CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Secretary Robert E.A. Borje underscored the crucial role of data-driven public policies in climate adaptation.

“It is no longer about how many policies we have but whether those policies change behaviors, investments and outcomes. Preventive adaptation is about reducing exposure before losses materialize. It is about using science and data not just to inform plans, but to change decision rules,” Secretary Borje said.

Building on the insights from the high-level panel discussion, succeeding climate sessions focused on technical discussions on climate finance and the ridge-to-reef approach to sustainability, respectively.

The first session, featuring Kevin Tagpinez (World Bank Group), John Adrian Narag (Department of Finance) and Rachelle Anne Miranda (Department of Science and Technology), tackled ways to unlock capital for green projects and leverage innovations for resilience.

The last session, featuring Atty. Jose Andres Canivel (Forest Foundation Philippines), Dr. Rex Cruz (University of the Philippines Los Baños), Abegail Gatdula (Energy Development Corporation) and Atty. Arturo Fadriquela (DENR Forest Management Bureau), focused on integrated water resources management (IWRM) from the mountains to the coast.

This year's forum was made possible through the support of Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc., First Philippine Holdings, Metro Pacific Investments Corporation, Makati Business Club and Liveable Cities Philippines.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Making 'no plastic' reminder stick](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) reboots and expands its online campaign against single-use plastic with its release of “Bawal Plastik Dito” digital sticker packs for the Telegram and Viber apps.

Users of the two social media platforms can download the catchy and colorful stickers and share them to their friends or others to help strengthen the national call to reduce single-use plastics and promote responsible consumption and sustainable alternatives.

“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,” CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. 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 rebooted 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.

The CCC emphasized that addressing plastic pollution can also be done by rethinking consumption patterns, redesigning systems, and choosing a development pathway that does not depend on disposability.

“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.”

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[CCC, Cebu PDRRMO boost institutional strengthening for climate resilience](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) met with the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO) of Cebu to identify strategic opportunities for institutional strengthening and capacity development in support of effective climate action at the provincial level.

The engagement forms part of the Commission's continuing efforts to deepen collaboration with local governments and ensure the integration of climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) into provincial and municipal development planning processes.

During the meeting, the PDRRMO presented Cebu's climate and disaster risk profile, highlighting historical impacts, current vulnerabilities, and ongoing initiatives to address climate-related hazards.

The discussion, which was participated in by 12 Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officers (LDRRMO) from the Province of Cebu LGUs and six PDRRMO Officers, provided an opportunity to identify strategic gaps, strengthen coordination mechanisms between provincial and municipal offices, and improve risk-informed planning tools. Among the LGUs that are present are Danao City, Mandaue City, Talisay City, Lapu-Lapu City, Cordova, Sogod, Bogo City, Argao, Compostela, Consolacion, Asturias, and Pinamungajan.

The CCC emphasized the importance of enhancing Climate and Disaster Risk Assessments (CDRA), strengthening Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs), and aligning local development strategies with national frameworks, particularly the National Adaptation Plan (NAP). Expanding access to climate finance, including the People's Survival Fund (PSF), was likewise identified as a priority to support local adaptation initiatives.

Technical insights from Dr. Rex Victor Cruz of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, and Dr. Mercedita A. Sombilla of Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) supported the dialogue, emphasizing the importance of science-based decision-making, climate projections, and evidence-driven policy formulation.

CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje underscored that institutional continuity and strong inter-agency coordination are essential to sustaining climate action.

"Climate resilience is built on strong institutions," Borje said. "When provincial and municipal governments are aligned, guided by science, and supported by clear systems, climate action becomes more strategic, sustained, and impactful. Our role is to ensure that local governments are equipped not only to access climate finance, but to strengthen their planning frameworks for the long term."

Cebu PDRRMO focal Ret. Col. Dennis Francis V. Pastor emphasized the importance of the meeting as a step to disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation.

"Cebu continues to face increasing risks brought about by climate change. These risks disproportionately affect the lives and livelihoods of our people. This reality urges us to coordinate strongly in crafting science-based planning and sustainable coordination among national agencies, the provincial government, and our LGUs," Pastor said.

The program also included the handover of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2023–2050 to the Cebu PDRRMO, reinforcing the importance of aligning provincial and municipal development strategies with national climate frameworks.

The CCC also highlighted that the NAP, developed under the leadership of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., serves as the country’s long-term blueprint for adaptation and resilience. By grounding provincial systems and local plans in the NAP, Cebu strengthens a whole-of-government approach to addressing climate risks and safeguarding development gains.

The activity concluded with renewed commitment to align provincial and municipal development plans with national climate priorities, reinforcing Cebu’s role in advancing integrated, whole-of-government climate resilience strategies.

The CCC reiterated that sustained institutional support, data-driven governance, and strengthened partnerships remain fundamental to protecting communities, safeguarding development gains, and building a climate-resilient Cebu.

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