



NEWS ROUNDUP

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- CCC reinforces LGU action in Romblon's nine-year climate and disaster resilience roadmap
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MAGDIWANG, ROMBLON — The Climate Change Commission (CCC) underscored the critical role of local government units (LGUs) in translating national climate action plans into concrete and effective strategies on the ground during the Provincial Climate and Disaster Resilience Summit: Hagiyos held on Sibuyan Island, Romblon.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

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China's next five-year plan set to be published this week will help dictate how fast the top polluter can cut greenhouse gas emissions and the extent of new support for clean technology sectors, policy settings that are critical to determining the world's success in tackling climate change.

Policymakers gathering in Beijing from March 5 for the National People's Congress, China's flagship annual political meeting, will review progress on green goals and most importantly endorse economic and policy strategy through 2030 — President Xi Jinping's deadline for the nation to peak its carbon pollution.

Though the relentless adoption of renewable energy and electric vehicles has begun to limit growth in China's climate footprint — with one analysis concluding carbon dioxide emissions fell 0.3% in 2025 — there are concerns the nation's new strategy will focus more on stimulating growth in green manufacturing than on accelerating efforts to minimize greenhouse gases.

As pressure mounts on the Chinese government to boost growth, create jobs and compete with the US, "focusing on green industries and technologies helps Xi to advance all three of these goals," said Neil Thomas, a fellow on Chinese politics at the Asia Society's Center for China Analysis. However, "the trade off is a plateauing in China's ambition when it comes to emissions reductions."

Data published Saturday indicated China has missed a flagship climate target set in its previous five-year plan, to lower carbon emissions intensity per unit of GDP by 18% through 2025. A 5% reduction last year would take the cumulative decline to about 13% based on past statements.

Emissions Intensity

Latest data indicates China missed a major climate change target set in its last five-year plan.

Counting emissions

Officials have signaled the 15th five-year plan will see China shift toward setting climate targets based on total volumes of emissions, alongside carbon intensity — a measure that's faced criticism as it can obscure the true extent of progress in cutting pollution.

While experts don't necessarily expect a clear pollution cap, the new policies could include language calling for emissions to decline from a peak during the 2026-2030 period, or potentially set out how much they should fall, said Hu Min, co-founder of the Beijing-based Institute for Global Decarbonization Progress.

Green growth

Clean energy sectors like solar, EVs and batteries contributed about 11% of China's gross domestic product last year, and without that contribution the nation would've missed its 5% growth target, CREA said in a note last month.

China is likely to offer further backing to manufacturers and also support growth in other decarbonization technologies like energy storage, green hydrogen and nuclear fusion. Officials will probably show more tolerance for excess capacity in green technology sectors — unlike in mature industries like steel or

cement — because China is focused on capturing future global demand, the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change said in a February report.

World's Biggest Polluters

China is the largest source of global greenhouse gas emissions

Fossil fuels peak

In 2021, Xi called for China to begin reducing its coal consumption in the 15th five-year plan period. However, he has recently used slightly more conservative language — instead calling for a peak in the next five years, without referencing any reduction. That same language has appeared in proposals for the 15th five-year plan.

The sun also rises

1.17 million

The number of gigawatt-hours of electricity that China generated from solar power in 2025, up 40% from a year earlier. Solar overtook wind for the first time last year.

Secret superpower

“Very soon, maybe even later this year we’ll be producing more chips than we can turn on — except for China.”

Elon Musk

That view is echoed by Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang, who pointed out in December that “China has twice the amount of energy we have as a nation.”

Attractive assets

Solar energy and battery suppliers are luring back investors as the Middle East war brings questions of energy security to the fore yet again.

Solar companies in China — which is a top importer of oil from the Middle East — have been among the biggest gainers on the S&P Global Clean Energy Transition Index this week. Inverter makers GoodWe Technologies and Ginlong Technologies are up more than 10% on the week.

As the Chinese government unfurls massive spending on grid enhancement and battery storage, those with healthier balance sheets stand to benefit the most, according to Bloomberg Intelligence.

ESG funds that recently took the controversial step of dropping restrictions on weapons manufacturers are now reaping the financial rewards of that decision.

Defense stocks were among the best performers when markets opened on Monday after war erupted in the Middle East. That adds to a longer stretch of gains for the sector, with the MSCI Europe Aerospace and Defense Index almost doubling in value since the beginning of last year.

For ESG funds, those stocks would traditionally have been off limits. But last year saw a major shift in investor willingness to embrace arms manufacturers, with many casting the move as key to defending democracy. More than half of European funds registered as “promoting” environmental, social and governance goals were invested in defense assets by the middle of last year, Morningstar Sustainalytics reported in August. That marked a quadrupling since Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine, the research firm said.

Asset managers embracing defense assets include Allianz Global Investors and Deutsche Bank’s DWS, while AkademikerPension is among institutional investors that have dropped defense exclusions as part of its evolving ESG strategy.

The shift underscores how ESG investing is adapting to a new geopolitical reality. Other major adjustments are showing signs of paying off. Some money managers have cut their exposure to US Treasuries, which slid on Monday on concern the war in the Middle East may trigger another bout of inflation.

At the same time, ESG funds that shun fossil-fuel producers for environmental reasons have missed out as oil and gas stocks rallied during the escalating conflict. The Bakersteel Global Funds Sicav - Precious Metals Fund ranks among this year’s top-performing ESG funds, gaining roughly 35% after rising 218% last year.

More from Green

China is quietly dominating yet another area of the global energy transition: long-duration energy storage.

Unlike conventional lithium-ion batteries that typically store power for four hours or shorter, long-duration energy storage, or LDES, can hold and release electricity for many more hours or even days. As intermittent renewables become a bigger part of the global power supply, LDES is badly needed to help balance energy supply and demand, and China is racing ahead of the rest of the world.

China also plans to upgrade its capability to recycle older solar modules in the coming years, as massive amounts of aging equipment are set to fall out of use.

Technology developer Syzygy Plasmonics made a series of preliminary deals aimed at building out production of low-emission jet fuel across the Americas.

TotalEnergies agreed to sell a 50% stake in a portfolio of German battery projects to European asset manager Allianz Global Investors as part of a strategy to boost returns from its green-energy investments.

Societal collapses happen more often than you think, and there’s much we can learn from the past to avoid or, at least, delay another one. This week’s guest on Zero is Luke Kemp, author of Goliath’s Curse, which draws lessons from the rise and fall of societies over 5,000 years of human history. Akshat Rathi asks Luke whether our current moment — with climate change and AI — makes us uniquely vulnerable to societal collapse or more resilient than we might think.

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(Many of us remember the Blizzard of '78 as three days off from college classes and competitive beer-drinking to wile away the hours.) January 2026 had been a month in New England with lots of calls to snowplow drivers, adding to the overall turmoil of a much snowier winter than previous years.

President Donald J. Trump fed into the confusion on social media with the implication that the snowier winter was proof of his position that global warming was a hoax. This is just one of many lies about climate that permeate the internet. The fact that our planet is warming has been proven in hundreds of different ways. Burning oil and gas, which are the deposits of ancient plants and animals, heats the planet and is destroying the unity of the Earth's biosphere.

A Primer in Snowier Winters and Climate Change

New England is among the fastest-warming regions in the world. NOAA Fisheries outlines how, in the Northeast US continental shelf ecosystem over the last two decades, ocean temperatures have warmed faster than the global ocean. In particular, the Gulf of Maine has warmed faster than 99% of the global ocean. Such warming is a driver of climate change and contributes to physical, chemical, and biological variability in the overall ecosystem.

Climate Central, a non-profit that provides research, maps, tools, and visualizations about climate threats, offers some really easy-to-understand information about the complex topic of how climate change affects snowfall likelihood.

Warmer air holds more moisture, which can fall as snow when temperatures are below freezing. Think of the atmosphere as a big sponge that can hold lots of moisture.

Winter is the fastest warming season for most of the US, resulting in less snow in most places.

Of the 2,041 US locations that Climate Central surveyed, nearly two-thirds (64%) of locations now get less snow than they did in the early 1970s.

However, another 731 locations (36%) have seen snowfall increase. That's because the "sponge" atmosphere collides with cold Arctic air, which compresses into snow.

Climate change affects the timing, location, amount of snowfall, and spring snowmelt patterns. The warming atmosphere holds about 4% more moisture per 1°F of temperature rise. But where that moisture falls, and whether it's more likely to fall as rain or snow, varies by region. Two basic conditions are needed to produce snow: freezing temperatures and moisture in the atmosphere.

Over the last half century, annual total snowfall has risen in Boston and many locations along the coast of New England. Sea surface temperature of the waters where the February storm picked up moisture was higher than average, allowing for more evaporation. Oceans off the Atlantic Coast are seeing mean sea-surface temperatures exceed 150 year old records over the northeast continental shelf. This winter the Gulf of Mexico temperature has been about 3 to 6 degrees F. above average — and it's been the ninth snowiest on record for Boston.

Add stronger nor'easters to the additional contribution to coastal risk in a warming world. The most recent blizzard and storm, a Nor'easter that intensified off the Atlantic coast, struck the Northeast February 22 through February 24. A dozen deaths have been reported, including at least six attributed to shoveling snow. In Rhode Island, where more than 3 feet of snow fell in at least two locations, two people died, The Providence Journal reported. A 2025 study indicates that nor'easters are becoming stronger, with both the maximum wind speeds of the most intense (>66th percentile) nor'easters and hourly precipitation rates increasing since 1940.

The Takeaway about Global Warming and Colder Climate Conditions

With continued warming, the number of days below 32°F is expected to decline further in many regions over the coming decades. An earlier decrease in snow cover increases the amount of sunlight absorbed by Earth, and in turn, surface temperatures. The world is warming because of the burning of fossil fuels, but that can also mean that snowier winters in coastal areas can result. Continued patterns of winter snow may prove vital to the seasonal cycle, as how long the ground remains snow covered in spring affects the length of the growing season, the timing and amount of river runoff, permafrost thawing, wildlife, and fire risk.

Is an expanding global warming crisis inevitable? No, at least not if we reject burning fossil fuels.

A low-carbon scenario is achievable with advancements in renewable energy, electrified transport, reduced commuting, efficient building standards, sustainable food systems, and shared consumption. Further ambition, particularly in the nutrition sector through deeper decarbonization of agricultural practices and in personal transport, where investment in infrastructure and space reallocation, could shift the focus from mobility to accessibility.

And it's not just the winter months about which we should be concerned. Creating more city parks, brimming with verdant plants and low-hung shade, can be one of the best ways to lower surface and air temperatures for times of extreme heat. Because many people in the world do not have air-conditioning, creating welcoming outdoor spaces make sense on many levels — social, environmental, health, and technological.

While fossil fuel subsidy reform can help reduce global GHG emissions and tackle climate change, it is only one tool in the carbon emissions reduction toolkit. It will take being able to count on incentives for clean energy programs as well as stringent penalties to reduce global warming.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[El Niño may return later this year](#)

GENEVA, Switzerland (AFP) — The warming El Niño weather phenomenon could return later this year as its cooling opposite La Niña fades away, the United Nations said Tuesday.

The UN's World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said the recent, weak La Niña was expected to give way to neutral conditions, which could then swing into El Niño before the end of 2026.

La Niña is a naturally occurring climate phenomenon that cools surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. It brings changes in winds, pressure and rainfall patterns.

The WMO said there was a 60-percent chance of neutral conditions during the three-month window from March to May, with a 30-percent chance of La Niña conditions, and El Niño at a 10-percent probability.

There is a 70-percent chance of neutral conditions during April to June.

In May to July, the chance of neutral conditions drops back to 60 percent, with the chances of El Niño at 40 percent.

"The WMO community will be carefully monitoring conditions in the coming months to inform decision-making," said Celeste Saulo, who heads the UN's weather and climate agency.

"The most recent El Niño, in 2023-24, was one of the five strongest on record and it played a role in the record global temperatures we saw in 2024," the WMO secretary-general said.

El Niño contributed to making 2023 the second-hottest year on record and 2024 the all-time high.

Above-average temperatures

The WMO underlined that naturally occurring climate events such as La Niña and El Niño take place against the backdrop of human-induced climate change, which is "increasing global temperatures in the long-term, exacerbating extreme weather and climate events, and impacting seasonal rainfall and temperature patterns."

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says there is a 50- to 60-percent chance of El Niño developing during the July-September period and beyond.

"Seasonal forecasts for El Niño and La Niña help us avert millions of dollars in economic losses and are essential planning tools for climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture, health, energy and water management," Saulo said.

"They are also a key part of the climate intelligence provided by WMO to support humanitarian operations and disaster risk management, and thus save lives," she said.

The WMO's latest Global Seasonal Climate update says there is a widespread global signal for above-average land surface temperatures for March to May.

Rainfall predictions in the equatorial Pacific show a lingering La Niña-like pattern, but in other parts of the world the signal is more mixed, it says.

[DSWD opens socio-cultural meetings with focus on community resilience](#)

The Department of Social Welfare and Development kicked off its chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) this Wednesday with emphasis on cooperation for climate resilience and food security endeavors among partner countries.

DSWD undersecretary for Policy and Plans Adonis Sulit led the opening of the 40th ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (SOCA) meeting attended by delegates from various countries such as Singapore, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam.

Sulit underscored the timeliness of such meetings with global relations becoming increasingly complex due to shifting social, economic, and climate hurdles in the world.

“This meeting provides an important platform for reflection, coordination, and collective action to ensure that the socio-cultural pillar remains responsive, inclusive, and resilient,” he stated.

The socio-cultural pillar is considered as one of the three pillars in the ASEAN community that is currently chaired by the Philippines with Political-Security and Economic Community being the other two.

Amid rising tensions in other parts of the world, the SOCA chair stressed the importance of partnerships between the countries in the ASEAN region to provide better assistance when it comes to development.

“As the ASCC Blueprint 2025 concluded, and with the commencement of the ASCC Strategic Plan, we are hopeful that this meeting would serve as an important platform for our reflection, foresight, and convergence,” Sulit explained.

Through the aforementioned blueprint, social welfare initiatives were developed to boost policy implementation, environmental sustainability, and human development through programs like the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre).

This program was said to have allowed for improvement of livelihood, women empowerment, and infant mortality among others across the region based on a report from ASEAN.

Sulit also stated that the country was prepared to work with leaders from other nations to develop similar initiatives in an effort to improve on what he said was a “people-centered” ASCC.

“The Philippines looks forward to engaging closely with all ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat as we work together toward a more caring and sharing ASEAN community,” he said.

“One that leaves no one behind and remains firmly anchored on solidarity, cooperation, and mutual respect,” he added.

Aside from the ASCC meeting, the DSWD said that it will host two other ASCC meetings from this Wednesday to this Thursday, 5 March.

PHILSTAR

[Climate change forces facelift for Michelangelo's 'The Last Judgment'](#)

VATICAN CITY, Holy See — Michelangelo's famous "The Last Judgment" fresco in the Sistine Chapel is getting its biggest facelift in more than three decades to remove a light whitish residue left by sweaty visitors.

The restoration of the 16th century masterpiece in the Vatican is aimed at bringing back to light the vibrant colors of the work, which measures nearly 14 meters (46 feet) high.

Visitors will still be able to access the Sistine Chapel during the restoration but the fresco is obscured by a large scaffolding covered with a reproduction of the work.

Vatican Museums director Barbara Jatta described the white layer being removed as "a bit like a cataract," during a press tour on Saturday of the project, due to be completed before Easter.

Jatta said the layer covered "the entire 180 square-meter surface" of the work.

The Vatican Museums said in a statement that the substance was "invisible to the naked eye" but had "dimmed" the original colors of the piece.

The fresco is being dabbed with distilled water through a layer of Japanese paper to remove the substance, identified as calcium lactate.

"Perspiration has increased in recent years because of climate change. Due to perspiration we produce lactic acid... which becomes calcium lactate," Fabio Morresi, head of scientific research at the Vatican Museums, told reporters.

Vatican Museums staff said measures had already been taken to reduce the number of visitors present at any one time in the Sistine Chapel, which is also the place where cardinals meet in closed-door conclaves to elect new popes.

Part of overhaul

Morresi described the difference in the fresco before and after the treatment as like "two different worlds" and said working on the masterpiece was an "emotional" process.

"The Last Judgment," which was painted between 1536 and 1541, is the centrepiece of the Sistine Chapel, and is located just behind the altar.

Then-pope Paul III was said to have been so impressed by the work that he fell on his knees and ask for divine forgiveness when he first saw it.

Of the fresco's 391 figures, many are nude or semi-nude, which caused scandal at the time.

Many were covered up with cloths painted over the original following Michelangelo's death.

Some of the painted cloths were removed in 1994 during the last major restoration.

The current project is being sponsored by US donors and is part of a major overhaul of the Sistine Chapel that began in 2010.

Work is normally carried out when the Sistine Chapel is closed to visitors and without the need for scaffolding but Vatican Museums officials said this was not possible for "The Last Judgment" because of the scale of the work.

Morresi said the restoration felt personal for him because he was hired in 1988 when the last major facelift of the Sistine Chapel was just starting and he is now nearly at retirement age.

"It's marvelous... There's a piece of me in here," he said.

THE MANILA TIMES

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The Climate Change Commission (CCC) reinforced the role of local government units (LGUs) in driving climate and disaster resilience efforts during the Provincial Climate and Disaster Resilience Summit: “Hagiyos” held on Sibuyan Island.

The summit forms part of the development of Romblon’s Nine-Year Climate and Disaster Risk Resilience Roadmap for 2026 to 2034, which seeks to provide a strategic direction in addressing climate risks at the local level.

CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje underscored the need for LGUs to translate national climate action plans into concrete and effective strategies on the ground.

“Araw-araw, hinaharap natin ang isang katotohanan—na ang ating buhay at kabuhayan ay nagiging mas marupok, kapag tayo’y nag-aatubili at hindi kumikilos,” Borje said.

He stressed that LGUs must move beyond planning and toward disciplined implementation to secure a climate-resilient future for the province, noting that “science tells us where the risks are. Discipline ensures we act on that knowledge.”

The CCC also cited key national policy frameworks supporting resilience efforts, including the National Adaptation Plan, the Nationally Determined Contribution, and the People’s Survival Fund, which promote science-based approaches in local decision-making and implementation.

In support of the province’s initiative, the commission provided technical guidance to local stakeholders in updating their Local Climate Change Action Plans to ensure alignment with the National Adaptation Plan and help craft a responsive, science-informed roadmap.

Romblon Governor Trina Alejandra Q. Firmalo-Fabic highlighted the importance of a long-term roadmap in strengthening the province’s preparedness against intensifying climate impacts, including heavier rainfall and stronger typhoons.

The summit gathered local leaders, including mayors from Magdiwang, Romblon and Cajidiocan, vice mayors, civil society groups and national government agencies.

The CCC said it remains committed to supporting LGUs through capacity building and technical assistance in crafting effective, science-based and locally tailored climate action plans.

[CCC, Santa Fe youth plant 33 Molave trees for climate resilience](#)

Youth leaders, students, farmers and fisherfolk in Santa Fe, Cebu joined the Climate Change Commission in a tree-growing activity aimed at strengthening ecosystem-based adaptation and local climate resilience.

The initiative resulted in the planting of 33 Molave saplings, a native tree species seen as vital in promoting community-driven, nature-based solutions in vulnerable island municipalities such as Santa Fe.

The activity forms part of ongoing collaboration between the CCC and local government units in Cebu to reduce vulnerability and localize climate preparedness efforts across island towns.

“This activity demonstrates how local action, especially with strong youth participation, can deliver tangible climate solutions on the ground,” said CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje. “Beyond planting trees, we are planting the seeds of education and values formation that are building a generation of Filipinos with a keen sense of respect, responsibility, and stewardship for nature and ecology.”

“Climate resilience is ultimately built by people through informed communities, empowered youth, and leaders willing to act decisively,” Borje emphasized. “If we nurture both our ecosystems and our values today, we secure not only stronger landscapes but also a more climate-resilient nation for generations to come.”

Student leader Tristan James N. Pacilan of the Supreme Secondary Learner Government of Santa Fe National High School underscored the importance of grassroots involvement in climate action.

“As someone who has experienced the wrath of a disaster, it is important to realize that it is also us, the people at the community level, who are also one of the root causes of the problem. So now, with the Supreme Secondary Learner Government joining this small initiative of planting trees, we believe that our micro efforts will grow a macro effect,” Pacilan said.

Since 2022, the CCC has actively led reforestation and tree-growing initiatives, including the Net Zero Challenge. The Commission has planted around 6,000 trees nationwide, with recent efforts conducted in Sarangani and Sultan Kudarat as part of its campaign to localize climate action.

The tree-growing activity in Santa Fe aligns with the government’s broader climate and development agenda under President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and supports the National Adaptation Plan, which promotes resilience through strategies such as reforestation and community-based climate action.

The CCC said it will continue working with local governments and communities to mainstream climate initiatives, strengthen environmental stewardship and accelerate the country’s transition toward a climate-smart and sustainable future.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[CCC reinforces LGU action in Romblon’s nine-year climate and disaster resilience roadmap](#)

MAGDIWANG, ROMBLON — The Climate Change Commission (CCC) underscored the critical role of local government units (LGUs) in translating national climate action plans into concrete and effective

strategies on the ground during the Provincial Climate and Disaster Resilience Summit: Hagiyos held on Sibuyan Island, Romblon.

The CCC emphasized the need to harmonize local climate action plans amid the continuing intensification of climate change impacts, which affect families and communities in Romblon through intense rainfall and stronger typhoons.

“Araw-araw, hinaharap natin ang isang katotohanan—na ang ating buhay at kabuhayan ay nagiging mas marupok kapag tayo’y nag-aatubili at hindi kumikilos,” said CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje.

He stressed that LGUs must move beyond planning and toward disciplined implementation to secure a climate-resilient future for the province, noting that “science tells us where the risks are. Discipline ensures we act on that knowledge.”

The CCC also highlighted key national policy frameworks that guide and strengthen the country’s resilience efforts, including the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), and the People’s Survival Fund (PSF), which support the use of science-based approaches in local decision-making and implementation.

The summit was part of the development of the province’s Nine-Year Climate and Disaster Risk Resilience Roadmap for 2026 to 2034, which aims to provide clear, strategic direction for addressing climate risks at the local level.

In support of this initiative, the CCC provided technical guidance to local stakeholders to update their Local Climate Change Action Plans, ensuring alignment with the NAP, toward the formulation of a responsive, science-informed roadmap.

Romblon Provincial Governor Trina Alejandra Q. Firmalo-Fabio emphasized the importance of a long-term roadmap in strengthening the province’s preparedness and resilience against climate impacts. She noted that having a clear plan enables communities to act proactively, avoid losses and damage, and adopt best practices that ensure readiness.

The event gathered local leaders, including mayors from the municipalities of Magdiwang, Romblon, and Cajidiocan, vice mayors, partners, civil society organizations, and national government agencies.

The CCC remains committed to supporting LGUs through capacity building and technical assistance in crafting effective, science-based, and locally tailored climate action plans.

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