



NEWS ROUNDUP

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[The future of sustainable and green developments](#)

By: Angela Kiara S. Brillantes and Mhicole A. Moral

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PCO

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PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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The Philippines will continue to pursue just and equitable climate action in its multilateral engagements to build resilience and adapt to the changing weather, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. said in an address in Australia on Monday.

PTV

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By: Brian Jules Campued

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THE MANILA TIMES

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By: Ben Kritz

One of the most challenging things about making climate science relatable to people who are not climate scientists is the difficulty in finding simple cause-and-effect examples that work within the time frame of the average person's attention span. Climate science is very good at describing causes and effects on timescales of decades, but most people do not think in those terms and have perfectly good reasons for not doing so. Thus, a completely accurate conclusion, such as "increasing sea and atmospheric temperatures are causing and will cause more frequent and stronger tropical storms," is an abstraction.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Climate and China loom over ASEAN talks in Australia](#)

By: Steven Trask

Southeast Asian leaders gather for talks in Australia on Monday, with clean energy cooperation and Beijing's aggressive stance in the South China Sea tipped to dominate discussions.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Meralco engages in dialogue with Climate Change Commission to advance sustainability commitment](#)

The Manila Electric Company (Meralco) recently held a dialogue with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) Philippines, underscoring its ongoing commitment to drive sustainability initiatives and bolster the country's transition towards a greener future.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Senator to provide disaster resilience scholarships with CCC, AIM

By: Wilnard Bacelonia

The office of Senator Loren Legarda has forged a partnership with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) to grant full scholarship to candidates for Executive Master in Disaster Risk and Crisis Management (EMDRCM) program.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS MIRROR

The future of sustainable and green developments

By: Angela Kiara S. Brillantes and Mhicole A. Moral

Natural disasters and sustainability issues have highlighted the vulnerability of traditional infrastructure, prompting a reevaluation of development strategies. Green and resilient real estate development is a strategy that aims to reduce the carbon footprint of buildings while also making them more resistant to natural disasters. This approach is crucial for the environment, as buildings are responsible for a significant number of carbon emissions.

Thus, since the real estate industry is a vital player in the economy, shifting towards green and resilient development can have a positive impact on both the environment and the economy. The opportunities and challenges in realizing such positive impact were explored last Jan. 26 in the BusinessWorld Insights and Project KaLIKHAsan forum themed “The Shift to Green Development” at Seda Manila Bay.

Delivering the keynote presentation, Angelo Tan, country lead for Climate Business Department (CBD) at the International Finance Corp. (IFC), discussed the complexities and opportunities to achieving sustainable real estate.

Mr. Tan emphasized the need for partnerships and the growth of the private sector as a crucial engine for growth in emerging markets like the Philippines.

“Our mandate at the Climate Business Department is to make sure that development is done that’s good for the environment. And when we work with the real estate sector, that means that we need to channel private capital toward climate smart investments,” Mr. Tan explained.

IFC is specifically mandated to collaborate with the private sector in addressing investments related to sustainability. In particular, the IFC’s goal at the Climate Business Department covers a wide range of sectors, including green buildings, renewable energy, electric mobility, waste management, and green cities.

However, Mr. Tan said that the organization does not merely invest in profitable ventures as it ensures that the projects it supports contribute to positive societal development.

“[W]e have a dual mission, ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity in emerging markets. But in 2024, we launched an ambitious new vision and vision for the World Bank Group, and that’s to create a world free of poverty on a livable planet,” he

said. “So anything that we now do, it has to be toward development that has a positive impact for the environment. How does that work translate to real estate? When we say sustainable real estate, this is what we mean.”

Mitigation and adoption

Mr. Tan emphasized the importance of adopting a green, resilient, and inclusive approach to real estate development since buildings contribute up to 40% of global carbon emissions. The construction and operation of buildings release greenhouse gases (GHG), contributing to the vicious cycle of global warming. The consequences, according to Mr. Tan, are particularly severe in regions like the Philippines, where the impact of climate change is compounded by exposure to frequent and severe disasters.

To break the cycle of environmental degradation, Mr. Tan stressed the importance of a dual approach involving both climate change mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation, he explained, focuses on reducing GHG emissions through measures such as energy-efficient building designs, passive housing, and the use of sustainable technologies like LED lighting. On the other hand, adaptation acknowledges the reality of climate change and aims to enhance resilience against its effects.

Challenges in green development

Mr. Tan identified cost as a primary barrier to the widespread adoption of green and resilient building practices. While various green measures have become more accessible and affordable, there is still an additional cost associated with building green. For developers working in lower-income segments, this added cost poses a significant challenge, as it makes selling prices higher and may deter potential buyers.

“A lot of [green] measures, they’re now much more affordable. So, there’s no excuse for anyone not to do green. But the cold, hard reality is there is an additional cost to doing green,” said Mr. Tan.

The complexity of green development, particularly in terms of certification, was another major challenge highlighted. Developers face additional costs for certifying their projects as green to avoid greenwashing. Mr. Tan emphasized the importance of third-party validation but acknowledged the financial burden it places on developers, particularly in the lower-income housing market.

He added, “There’s an additional cost to certifying as green. Why do you need to certify? Because we want to avoid greenwashing. We don’t want any developer to claim that they’re green without third-party validation. And what happens when you certify a project? You pay architects and engineers to look at your plans, visit the site, do a site

audit, and make sure that the building was constructed according to how it was designed.”

In addition, the lack of green building education and expertise, especially among smaller developers outside metro areas, adds to the complexity.

The speaker also identified cultural resistance to change, described as “nakagisnan” (sticking to traditional ways), as a barrier to green development. Some CEOs and CFOs still prioritize financial benefits without fully considering the environmental and social aspects of building practices, he said.

Opportunities in sustainable buildings

Mr. Tan also highlighted key points where businesses and investors are recognizing the importance of sustainable practices.

He noted the Philippines’ leadership in net zero buildings, with the first EDGE zero carbon building in the world located in the country. The ABCs of EDGE zero carbon, which stands for advanced energy efficiency, building retrofits, carbon offsets, and renewables, are explained as the key components of achieving net zero buildings.

“We need to make our buildings more efficient and more to consume less energy. Because what’s the use of having renewable energy if the building is an energy-guzzling building? Then you’re not really making a huge difference. So, we need to make our buildings more energy efficient, and by our standard, 40% energy efficiency. And that way, that standard is now being used by other organizations, 40% improvement over base case,” Mr. Tan explained.

Mr. Tan added that working across building typologies and reaching out to the provinces to transform the industry towards a more green and resilient Philippines is important to achieve the ambitions to be raised towards a more sustainable future.

A long-term investment

The forum also brought industry leaders and experts to discuss how real estate is improving building management and operations responsibly and sustainably.

Alexis L. Ortiga, vice-president for the Commercial Properties Group at SM Prime, shared that adopting green buildings should be considered a long-term yet smart investment.

“We need to think of sustainability as a marathon instead of a sprint. Green buildings are smart long-term investments, from installing double-glazed windows that lessen the load of AC use, to using gray water and energy recovery technologies that boost efficiency, decrease energy usage, and lower utility bills. The benefits in the long run will far outweigh the costs of today’s investments,” Mr. Ortiga said during the panel discussion of the forum.

For Gie Garcia, co-managing director and chief sustainability officer of NEO, the shift to green buildings should start in optimizing energy-efficient resources then gradually transitioning to renewable power.

Leechiu Property Consultants Chief Executive Officer David Leechiu pointed out that the green office market is up and thriving as the green shift among buildings is resulting in a much higher demand for green buildings.

For instance, real estate offices like those from SM Offices have embedded sustainable practices and strategies into their buildings, such as sky garden, walk bridges, bike facilities, and bike lanes, which promote sustainability and wellness of individuals.

Moreover, most demand is coming from multinational companies that aim to deliver more sustainable and green spaces.

“[M]ultinational companies have a high preference for developments that are green because, for one, it’s also integrated into their corporate goals and targets. It’s also part of their values,” Aboitiz InfraCapital Economic Estates Vice-President for Inventory Generation Jolan Formalejo shared.

Concrete steps

The panel also noted the importance for developers to look at green certification, as this can put buildings into a stronger position, minimizing carbon footprint while catering to the needs and demands of occupants, investors, or stakeholders.

According to NEO’s Ms. Garcia, green certification is important depending on the developer’s goals. Some use green certifications because it is advantageous, while others who solely aim for energy-efficient buildings, might not need green building certification but need to ensure compliance with the government’s requirement.

Retrofitting is also noted by the forum’s speakers as a means of making existing buildings more energy-efficient and sustainable.

Retrofitting is the best option for green buildings, Ms. Garcia remarked; nonetheless, embarking on this still depends on whether the building was properly maintained.

Mr. Ortiga of SM Prime, however, shared that retrofitting buildings is not always necessary because other companies are already embedding sustainable practices and strategies without them realizing it, and that's more than enough.

Besides retrofitting, green buildings need environmental policy and management systems the most.

"For our developments, we have more than five certified green professionals in the company that ensures the continuous efforts are being done to continuously implement efficiency into the buildings that we operate." Mr. Formalejo of Aboitiz InfraCapital said.

It was also noted that besides acquiring materials and technology fit for green buildings, developers and tenants should embrace sustainable practices such as efficient energy consumption, waste management, giving back to nature, as well as cultural reconnection with nature.

Education's role

The forum also pointed out the significance of education as a starting point in the shift to sustainable real estate.

According to NEO's Ms. Garcia, sustainable development starts with the younger generation and should be ingrained in their mindset for it to be effective.

IFC's Mr. Tan mentioned in his keynote the ongoing efforts to bridge this gap through programs offered at universities.

"We've partnered with Polytechnic University of the Philippines and National University, so architecture and engineering students at their fourth year can study DfGE (Design for Greater Efficiency). UP has tropical architecture. But beyond that, we don't have a lot of green architecture education," Mr. Tan shared, adding that it takes time to get students to absorb information on sustainable development and thus to put that to action.

This forum is part of PhilSTAR Media Group's initiative titled "Project KaLIKHAsan: Creative Solutions for a Sustainable Future," which brings together the group's print, digital, and on-ground platforms to raise the cause of meaningful, concrete sustainability in our industries and communities.

This BusinessWorld Insights forum was presented in partnership with SM Prime and is sponsored by Aboitiz InfraCapital, Megaworld, and RLC Residences; with the support of official venue partner Seda Manila Bay Hotel and official media partner The Philippine STAR.

GMA

Marcos: Climate change a 'deadly challenge' in the Pacific

By: Anna Felicia Bajo

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Monday expressed belief that climate change poses a "deadly challenge" in the Pacific region.

"This is a deadly challenge that threatens the very survival of millions, especially those in the small island developing states in the Pacific. The Filipino people share this vulnerability with our kin in the Pacific Island States," Marcos said before an audience of academics, public officials and civil society members at the Lowy Institute.

Marcos was invited as a speaker by the Lowy Institute, an independent, nonpartisan international policy think tank that provides research and perspectives on the international trends shaping Australia and the world.

"For us, the time to talk about ifs and whens has long since passed, it is here and it is now. We expect responsible states and partners to do more and they must do that now," he added.

The Philippine president stressed that developed countries have a responsibility to support vulnerable countries in climate adaptation and mitigation.

Marcos vowed that the government would continue to pursue just and equitable climate action in all our multilateral engagements, including in the context of the Loss and Damage Fund Board.

"We will also continue to pursue our climate action strategy, a pillar of which is our robust commitment to a just energy transition," Marcos said.

To recall, the Philippine government secured a seat on the board of the Loss and Damage Fund, which seeks to help poor nations cope with costly climate disasters.

The country's Department of Environment and Natural Resources said the Philippines is "most qualified" to host the Loss and Damage Fund because it is a living testament to the effects of climate change.

MANILA BULLETIN

[US space agency observes climate change's effect on 'slow-moving' landslides](#)

By: Dhel Nazario

United States (US) Space Agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) highlighted how climate change continues to alter Earth's weather patterns, with findings showing that landslides in wetter and drier regions show similar sensitivity to precipitation extremes.

In the study conducted in California, published in a feature article titled "NASA Study Finds Climate Extremes Affect Landslides in Surprising Ways" on the NASA website, researchers focused on the dramatic impact of fluctuating rain patterns on the behavior of slow-moving landslides in the country.

It showed that, in contrast to predictions, landslides show similar susceptibility to precipitation extremes in both wet and dry areas. Climate change is driving more volatile precipitation patterns around the world – very dry stretches punctuated by storms that drop large amounts of rain or snow in a short amount of time.

Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Secretary Renato Solidum said that that global warming enhances evaporation and therefore causes extreme rainfall which triggers landslides and flooding.

The NASA study also underlined the need to understand how landslides respond to extreme weather events, as well as the critical role of water in causing them.

"Water triggers landslides, and knowing how landslides react to record droughts or extreme rainfall can help researchers better predict their future behavior, including whether any could collapse, or fail catastrophically," the article read.

Furthermore, slow-moving landslides may not immediately endanger infrastructure or people, but over time, they can seriously harm buildings, roads, and other structures due to their impacts. Unexpected collapses can happen, presenting serious risks to the residents of the area.

Solidum explained that "one form of landslides are creeping landslides, where you can see trunks of trees bent."

"Other landslides are also shallow and they typically fail during the height of intense rain. Other landslides are deep, they typically move slower and can have a lag time between high rainfall episodes and failure - example Guinsagon landslide in 2006 in Southern Leyte," he added.

Meanwhile, in a separate NASA study in Asia region of China, Tibet and Nepal, it was stated that rising temperatures are predicted to increase the frequency and intensity of downpour events, which may worsen landslide activity in vulnerable areas. It warns that "more frequent and intense rainfall events due to climate change could cause more landslides."

The study mentioned the concerning implications for regions that frequently see high levels of precipitation, such as those experiencing monsoon seasons from June to September which can cause landslides, which can have disastrous effects ranging from the devastation of entire communities to the interruption of vital utilities like transportation and drinking water supplies.

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PCO

[PBBM invites Australian business leaders to invest in PH; Our economic team will give you all the support you need to grow your business – PBBM](#)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. invited on Monday Australian business leaders to consider investing in the Philippines as he welcomed opportunities for greater cooperation between the Philippines and Australia in terms of climate change and energy transition.

In his speech during the Philippine Business Forum led by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in Melbourne, President Marcos said that the Philippines is the ideal destination for complementation in both manufacturing and services.

“I invite esteemed Australian businesses to consider the Philippines as a reliable partner that can support your expansion and operations. Let us embark on a journey of strengthened economic ties, mutual growth, and shared success,” President Marcos said.

Australia Philippines Business Council (APBC) President Rafael Toda was present during the forum along with Founder and Deputy Chairman St. Baker Energy Innovation Fund Trevor St Baker AO, and Medgate (Asia) Holdings Pty Limited Director David King.

Other business leaders present during the forum were Australia New Zealand Business Chamber President Benjie Romualdez and Philippines Australia Business Council (PABC) Chairman Atty. Dennis Quintero.

Macquarie Private Bank Senior Adviser Martin Lakos was the moderator of the forum.

President Marcos underscored that the forum serves as a “celebration of the robustness and resilience of the Philippine economy.”

The President also emphasized that the presence of the Filipino of the business leaders is a clear manifestation that the Philippines is enhancing its regional economic integration agenda on several aspects.

The presence of the Australian business leaders, on the other hand, “speaks volumes about the importance of fostering robust business partnerships and collaborations” between the Philippines and Australia, according to President Marcos as he thanked them for their unwavering support.

He added that the forum also highlighted the vitality of the economic and commercial ties of the Philippines and Australia.

In 2023, total trade with Australia amounted to USD 4.06 billion with imports valued at USD 3.497 billion and exports at USD 561.8 million.

President Marcos stressed that the recent global challenges, especially those that were brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, present an opportunity for the Philippines to enhance its participation in regional and global value chains.

“As part of our development strategy, we are keen to explore new avenues of cooperation and foster mutually beneficial partnerships that are commercially meaningful,” President Marcos told Australian business leaders.

The chief executive also highlighted the country’s steadfast commitment to purposeful reforms, which is evident in key legislative amendments such as the Public Service Act, Foreign Investments Act, Retail Trade Liberalization Act and the Renewable Energy Act.

Other legislative amendments include the streamlined business registration, infrastructure development, and the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program (CREATE Act), and the overhaul of fiscal incentive structures and responsive policies, including those facilitating public-private partnerships (PPP).

He also highlighted before business leaders the establishment of the Maharlika Investment Fund, which is the country’s sovereign wealth fund that underscores dedication to financing priority projects and driving socioeconomic impact.

“We prioritize the ease of doing business, exemplified by efforts to simplify tax payments, streamline regulations, and showcase our unwavering support for businesses,” he said.

He added that the Executive Order No. 18 also established green lanes for strategic investments, simplifying procedures and reducing bureaucratic hurdles.

The chief executive also shared during the forum about the enactment of three priority bills such as the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Code of the Philippines; the Internet Transactions Act; and the Tatak Pinoy Act.

“We continue to accelerate and deepen policy reforms to improve the environment where business such as yours will continue to thrive,” he said.

On renewable energy, President Marcos said that the Philippines accord great importance to addressing climate change and achieving energy transition for being highly vulnerable to climate crises and to strengthen dedication to environmental stewardship and encourage private sector to actively engage in sustainable practices.

He recognized that Australia also gives importance to climate change issues as it is a priority under the Strategic Partnership with the Philippines.

“I welcome the opportunity for greater cooperation on climate change and energy transition. I’m glad to see that we have made a good start here today with the agreements that we have come to, between our private sector partners,” he said.

Aligned with our efforts on decarbonization, we are positioning ourselves as regional hub for smart and sustainable manufacturing,” he said.

President Marcos said that the Philippines is at the forefront of attracting sustainability-driven strategic investments powered by renewable energy in order to achieve as the regional hub for smart and sustainable manufacturing.

Before concluding his speech, President Marcos stressed the trade and investment policy tools in place through the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, which aims to enable regional economic integration agenda.

“I am hopeful that this will be complemented by other policy tools that will enhance Philippines-Australia supply chain partnerships and facilitate greater foreign direct investments. So in conclusion, let me reiterate our gratitude for your presence and active engagement in this forum,” he said.

“The members of my economic team will provide the support needed by your businesses for investments to continuously grow and prosper. Together with you as our Strategic Partner, we can make investments happen in the Philippines,” he added.

President Marcos expressed confidence that the relationships forged during the forum “will contribute significantly to the economic vibrancy” of both the Philippines and Australia.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH to pursue climate action, calls for support from developed nations](#)

The Philippines will continue to pursue just and equitable climate action in its multilateral engagements to build resilience and adapt to the changing weather, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. said in an address in Australia on Monday.

Speaking at the Lowy Institute, President Marcos said the countries in the Indo-Pacific region cannot build resilience without addressing the threat posed by climate change.

“We will continue to pursue just and equitable climate action in all our multilateral engagements, including in the context of the Loss and Damage Fund Board. Developed countries have a responsibility to support vulnerable countries in climate adaptation and mitigation,” Marcos said in his keynote address.

“We will also continue to pursue our climate action strategy, a pillar of which is our robust commitment to a just energy transition,” he added.

The Philippines is a member of the “Loss and Damage” Board and vowed to advocate for the prioritization of addressing biodiversity destruction and species loss in climate-change vulnerable countries.

But he stressed that “developed countries have a responsibility to support vulnerable countries in climate adaptation and mitigation.”

He added that climate change is a deadly challenge that threatens the very survival of millions, especially those in the small island developing states in the Pacific, saying the Filipino people share this vulnerability.

“The Filipino people share this vulnerability with our kin in the Pacific Island States. For us, the time to talk about ifs and whens has long since passed, it is here and it is now. We expect responsible states and partners to do more and they must do that now,” he said.

PTV

[PBBM secures P86-B investment deals in Australia visit – DTI](#)

By: Brian Jules Campued

At least 12 business deals amounting to P86 billion or US\$1.53 billion have been secured by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. during the Philippine Business Forum on the sidelines of his participation in the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit in Melbourne on Monday.

Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Alfredo Pascual remarked that the business engagements are expected to boost investment relations between the Philippines and Australia, ultimately contributing to the country's economic growth.

"These agreements signify our unwavering commitment to excellence and fruitful partnerships spanning diverse sectors such as renewable energy, waste-to-energy technology, organic recycling technology, countryside housing initiatives, the establishment of data center, manufacturing of health technology solutions, and digital health services," Secretary Pascual said, as quoted by Malacañang.

The 12 business deals consist of 10 memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between Filipino and Australian business leaders and two letters of intent (LOIs) from Australian business leaders who intend to invest in the Philippines.

Among the MOUs and LOIs are the following:

- Development, design, construction, commissioning, and funding of a Tier-3 Data Center with a capacity of 30 megawatts (MW) to 40 MW and a land area of about 16 hectares in the Poro Point Freeport Zone
- Expansion of Next-Generation Battery Manufacturing in the Philippines
- Deployment of decarbonization solutions comprising orchestration of renewable energy, storage, and e-mobility to New Clark City Stadium and other Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) sites
- Collaborative partnership on the development of an electric transportation framework throughout the properties associated with BCDA in the Philippines
- Construction of housing units for the Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino and/or the Countryside Housing Initiatives through the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development
- Establishment of collection centers and a recycling facility for plastic waste in the Philippines
- Manufacturing of portable, affordable, and accessible Automated External Defibrillator (AED) solutions

- Distribution of portable, affordable, and accessible AED solutions
- Collaboration between the National Development Company and an Australian company for the transfer of its waste-to-energy technology to the Philippines that converts biowaste to green fuel
- Establishment of Southeast Asia Biosecurity Institute, focused on developing a robust biosecurity supply chains across the region
- Development of a Biomass Fueled (Thorium Pellets) Simple-high-Temperature Gas-cooled Power Plant (STGR20 V) with a 40MW base load power to deliver safe, sustainable, affordable, carbon-neutral, green base-load energy in the Philippines
- Development of digital health services with a particular focus on artificial intelligence and machine learning

In his speech during the forum, President Marcos urged Australian business leaders to consider investing in the Philippines as it is an ideal destination for complementation in both manufacturing and services.

“I invite esteemed Australian businesses to consider the Philippines as a reliable partner that can support your expansion and operations. Let us embark on a journey of strengthened economic ties, mutual growth, and shared success,” Marcos added.

He noted the presence of the Filipino business leaders as a clear manifestation that the Philippines is enhancing its regional economic integration agenda on several aspects.

On the other hand, the presence of Australian business leaders “speaks volumes about the importance of fostering robust business partnerships and collaborations” between the Philippines and Australia.

“As part of our development strategy, we are keen to explore new avenues of cooperation and foster mutually beneficial partnerships that are commercially meaningful,” Marcos told Australian business leaders.

He also highlighted the country’s commitment to purposeful reforms evident in key legislative amendments such as the Public Service Act, Foreign Investments Act, Retail Trade Liberalization Act, and the Renewable Energy Act.

Other legislative amendments include the streamlined business registration, infrastructure development, and the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program (CREATE Act), and the overhaul of fiscal incentive structures and responsive policies as well as facilitating public-private partnerships.

Marcos also cited the establishment of the Maharlika Investment Fund to finance priority projects and drive socioeconomic impact as well as green lanes for strategic investments which simplify procedures and reduce bureaucratic hurdles.

“We prioritize the ease of doing business, exemplified by efforts to simplify tax payments, streamline regulations, and showcase our unwavering support for businesses,” he added.

Meanwhile, the enactment of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Code of the Philippines, Internet Transactions Act, and the Tatak Pinoy Act will help businesses thrive in the country.

On renewable energy, Marcos said the Philippines prioritizes addressing climate change and achieving energy transition.

“I welcome the opportunity for greater cooperation on climate change and energy transition. I’m glad to see that we have made a good start here today with the agreements that we have come to, between our private sector partners,” he told business leaders.

“Aligned with our efforts on decarbonization, we are positioning ourselves as a regional hub for smart and sustainable manufacturing.”

THE MANILA TIMES

[\[Opinion\] Scientists find a melting gun in climate impacts](#)

By: Ben Kritz

One of the most challenging things about making climate science relatable to people who are not climate scientists is the difficulty in finding simple cause-and-effect examples that work within the time frame of the average person's attention span. Climate science is very good at describing causes and effects on timescales of decades, but most people do not think in those terms and have perfectly good reasons for not doing so. Thus, a completely accurate conclusion, such as "increasing sea and atmospheric temperatures are causing and will cause more frequent and stronger tropical storms," is an abstraction.

Abstractions are easy to ignore because the relevant time frame for almost all of the concerns of the average person is measured in days or weeks or months or, at most, perhaps a year or two. Information describing conditions in the year 2050 is not practically useful; information describing conditions next season or next year, however, would be. Until now, that has rarely, if ever, been possible.

That seems to have changed. In a new study published on February 28, a group of researchers from the UK's National Oceanographic Center found definitive links between ice loss in the Arctic Ocean and unusually hot, dry summer weather in Europe, which has become a regular occurrence over the past couple years and seems to be intensifying; in the summer of 2022, for example, Britain recorded a daytime temperature of 40 degrees Celsius for the first time in history.

The study, titled "European summer weather linked to North Atlantic freshwater anomalies in preceding years," was published in the journal *Weather and Climate Dynamics* and is available online.

The research gap the study sought to close was that even though it has generally taken for granted that accelerating ice loss in the Arctic is responsible for or contributes to the increased occurrence of extreme weather in mid-latitude regions, the exact mechanisms behind the phenomenon were not understood. Figuring it out would, for starters, provide clearer proof of climate change effects and, more importantly, help make those effects more usefully predictable.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Climate and China loom over ASEAN talks in Australia

By: Steven Trask

Southeast Asian leaders gather for talks in Australia on Monday, with clean energy cooperation and Beijing's aggressive stance in the South China Sea tipped to dominate discussions.

Climate change looms large on the agenda as leaders from the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) jet into Melbourne for a "special summit" with their Australian counterparts.

Southeast Asia's hunger for energy is largely fed by fossil fuels, while Australia remains one of the world's biggest exporters of gas and polluting thermal coal.

Both are increasingly eager to pivot toward renewable energy, making the most of natural blessings, such as bulging deposits of critical minerals.

"ASEAN countries need more energy if they are going to continue developing their economies," said Rahman Yaacob, a regional analyst with Australia's Lowy Institute.

"Australia could be a source of that energy."

Indonesia and the Philippines are two of the world's largest producers of nickel, a key ingredient in the production of batteries for electric cars.

Another key battery metal, lithium, is found in vast quantities scattered throughout Australia.

Jakarta and Canberra have already started exploring how they could mesh these advantages to boost electric vehicle manufacturing.

For years Australia has been trying to advance another ambitious proposal -- exporting solar power to Singapore via a massive undersea cable.

Although that project has recently hit significant financial snags, Yaacob said it remained of interest to ASEAN members.

"One of the areas they may look at is Australia exporting clean energy," he said. "There have been conversations about this with Singapore in the past."

Territorial disputes

Maritime security -- and China's increasingly aggressive behaviour in the South China Sea -- figures to be one of the summit's other major focal points.

Territorial disputes in the vital trade corridor have escalated in recent months, with Beijing baring its teeth in areas also claimed by ASEAN members such as the Philippines and Vietnam.

Close US ally Australia is meanwhile eager to blunt China's rising influence in the wider Asia-Pacific region.

"The summit may look to express concerns about the stability and security of the maritime domain," said Yaacob.

"If all 10 members are willing to issue a statement jointly, it shows they are concerned about the situation."

ASEAN has long been criticised as a toothless talk fest, with divided members reluctant to throw their combined heft behind sensitive security matters.

Political upheaval

The forum has in recent times ramped up engagement with middle powers such as Australia and Japan, steadfast US allies with a more confrontational stance on China.

The Melbourne summit marks 50 years since Australia became ASEAN's first dialogue partner.

It comes at a time of significant political change within the bloc.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo will leave office by October after 10 years in power, while long-serving Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong is slated to stand down soon after.

Myanmar sent a senior diplomat to an ASEAN summit earlier this year -- the first time it was represented in more than two years.

ASEAN's 10 member states are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and Myanmar.

Although Myanmar remains a member, political representatives and military leaders from its ruling junta have been banned from high-level meetings.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Meralco engages in dialogue with Climate Change Commission to advance sustainability commitment](#)

The Manila Electric Company (Meralco) recently held a dialogue with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) Philippines, underscoring its ongoing commitment to drive sustainability initiatives and bolster the country's transition towards a greener future.

Seen in the photo (from L-R) are CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, Meralco Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Ronnie L. Aperoch, Meralco First Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer Raymond B. Ravelo, Meralco Vice President and Head of Facilities and Safety Management Jerry B. Lao, and CCC Executive Assistant Raul Villegas. The meeting took place at Meralco's headquarters in Pasig City.

"As one of the largest players in the power industry here in the country, we are conscious of the impact of our business on the environment and we are one with the government in mitigating the risk of global warming attributed to carbon emissions and other chemicals produced during power generation and distribution," Mr. Aperoch said.

During the engagement, Meralco executives also showcased the distribution utility's electric vehicles and charging stations, along with its digital laboratory—the Powertech Innovation and eXperience Lab (PIXL). These initiatives underscore Meralco's dedication to leveraging innovative technologies for improved customer service and more sustainable business operations.

Deeply rooted in the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals, Meralco established in 2019 its overarching sustainability agenda, 'Powering the Good Life', which is supported by four pillars: Power, Planet, People, and Prosperity.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Senator to provide disaster resilience scholarships with CCC, AIM](#)

By: Wilnard Bacelonia

The office of Senator Loren Legarda has forged a partnership with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) to grant full scholarship to candidates for Executive Master in Disaster Risk and Crisis Management (EMDRCM) program.

The Sustainable Leadership Learning for Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction (SLL-CDRR) scholarship program will provide full financial support to outstanding students enrolled in the EMDRCM program starting June 26.

“This program embodies our commitment to forging collaborative partnerships with institutions like AIM, which are pioneers in shaping future leaders,” Legarda said in a news release on Monday.

“By joining forces, we aim to advance the national climate agenda. We also aim to cultivate transformative leaders capable of professionalizing disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM), climate change adaptation (CCA), and building resilient communities,” she added.

The CCC will lead the selection process, prioritizing candidates with backgrounds and expertise in climate change and disaster risk management who are working in the national government agencies mandated with climate change and disaster resilience, DRRM officers in local government units, women leaders for CCA, leaders from indigenous groups, and sustainability and inclusivity champions.

Recognizing the urgency of addressing climate change impacts, the CCC acknowledges the need for collective action and the crucial role of academic institutions in advancing climate science and sustainable solutions through capacity and knowledge building.

“Our comprehensive program, integrated into AIM's Executive Master in Disaster Risk and Management program, aims to empower present and future champions of disaster and climate resilience. This initiative caters to a wide range of stakeholders, including practitioners, and policy and decision-makers,” CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje said.

The partnership is seen to strengthen each party's commitment to sustainable development which underscores the urgent need for innovative solutions to address climate challenges on a global scale.

“Partnering with Senator Legarda and CCC on this impactful initiative aligns perfectly with AIM's mission of empowering future leaders for sustainable development. Through this collaboration, we can equip leaders to tackle climate challenges and pave the way for a more resilient future,” AIM president and dean, Professor Jikyeong Kang, said.

The SLL-CDRR scholarship program will formally launched Tuesday in Makati City.

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