



NEWS ROUNDUP

20 MARCH 2025 [08:00 am]

- PHL Endures Extreme Heat as Climate Change Intensifies
- PH ranks 3rd country in Asia for ‘unusual heat’
- PH bats for stronger multilateralism to meet climate goals
- More than 150 ‘unprecedented’ climate disasters struck world in 2024, says UN
- ‘Philippines third most heat-impacted country in Asia’

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- [Opinion] Small Steps Forward in Philippines’ Global Climate Leadership
- PH, UK strengthen cooperation on climate resilience

DAILY GUARDIAN

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By: Francis Allan L. Angelo

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THE GUARDIAN

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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By: John Leo Algo

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By: Marita Moaje

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

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By: Francis Allan L. Angelo

The Philippines experienced prolonged extreme heat between December 2024 and February 2025, with Manila among the megacities significantly affected by human-caused climate change, according to a new Climate Central analysis.

The report, *People Exposed to Climate Change: December 2024-February 2025*, found that Manila endured 69 days of temperatures classified at Climate Shift Index (CSI) level 2 or higher.

This means that for more than two-thirds of the season, the city's temperatures were at least twice as likely to occur due to human-induced climate change compared to a world without it.

Manila was one of 11 megacities worldwide to experience such conditions, joining Jakarta, Indonesia, and Lagos, Nigeria, in facing extreme heat for extended periods.

Heat Exposure in the Philippines

The seasonal temperature anomaly in Manila during the three-month period was 0.4 degrees Celsius. This placed the Philippine capital among the cities where climate change had a substantial influence on daily temperatures.

"Climate change is not a distant threat but a present reality to millions," said Kristina Dahl, vice president of science at Climate Central.

"The increasing frequency and severity of heat events around the world reveal a dangerous pattern of heat exposure that will only worsen if the burning of fossil fuel continues."

The report highlights that at least 1.8 billion people worldwide—22% of the global population—experienced climate-influenced temperatures every day from December 1, 2024, to February 28, 2025.

On February 28 alone, exposure peaked, with 3 billion people, or 37% of the global population, facing heightened temperatures.

Health and Safety Risks

Prolonged exposure to extreme heat poses serious health risks, particularly for vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing conditions.

The report defines a “risky heat day” as one where temperatures exceed 90% of historical local records from 1991-2020.

According to Climate Central, the average person globally experienced six such days during the period, with climate change contributing five of those.

Nearly 394 million people were exposed to 30 or more days of risky heat added by climate change, with the majority—74%—residing in Africa.

Urban centers, particularly in highly populated megacities like Manila, face additional challenges as heat is intensified by concrete structures, limited green spaces, and high population density.

Global Cities Under Pressure

Out of 940 cities analyzed, 287 had residents experiencing climate-driven heat for at least 30 days. Eleven megacities, home to over 210 million people, endured these conditions, highlighting the growing burden of extreme heat in urban environments.

Cities such as Saint-Denis, Reunion; Freetown, Sierra Leone; and Caracas and Barquisimeto, Venezuela, experienced 90 days at CSI level 2 or higher—the maximum recorded in the study.

Manila, Jakarta, and Tamil Nadu, India, also ranked among the megacities heavily impacted by climate change-influenced heat during this period.

The Climate Shift Index and Data Analysis

The Climate Shift Index (CSI), developed by Climate Central, quantifies the influence of climate change on daily temperatures.

A CSI level of 2 means that a specific temperature is at least twice as likely to occur due to human-caused climate change.

The report’s findings are based on daily average temperatures and ECMWF ERA5 data from December 1, 2024, to February 28, 2025.

Temperature anomalies were calculated relative to the 1991-2020 average.

Heat Trends Across Continents

In half of the 220 analyzed countries, the average person experienced daily temperatures with a strong influence of climate change for at least one-third of the season.

Approximately 84% of South America's population and 69% of Africa's population experienced 30 or more days of climate-driven heat.

Asia, including the Philippines, also recorded significant climate influence on temperatures, with cities like Jakarta and Manila affected for long periods.

In the United States, 45% of cities analyzed had normal or warmer-than-normal temperatures, with several cities in the western regions experiencing three weeks or more of CSI level 2 conditions.

Climate Central is a non-advocacy, non-profit science and news organization providing authoritative information to help the public and policymakers make sound decisions about climate and energy.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[PH ranks 3rd country in Asia for 'unusual heat'](#)

By: Gillian Villanueva

The Philippines ranked third in Asia among countries with the most “unusual heat” caused by climate change within the last three months, scientists from the nonprofit group Climate Central said.

In a report released on Wednesday, scientists found that the Philippines experienced temperatures reaching Climate Shift Index (CSI) level 2, or higher for 74 days. This means temperatures during those days were most likely due to the effects of climate change.

The CSI is a system developed by Climate Central that quantifies the local influence of climate change on a country’s daily temperatures. The higher the level, the greater the influence of climate change detected.

200,000 Filipinos exposed

Through this system, scientists found that “human-caused climate change increased heat-related health risks for billions and made extreme heat events more likely around the globe.”

“During the past three months (December, January and February), the effects of human-induced climate change—mainly from burning coal, oil and methane gas—were evident in most regions of the world, particularly in the form of extreme heat,” the report stated.

The study noted that 10 out of 51 countries in Asia recorded more than 30 days of temperatures reaching CSI level 2 or higher. Brunei Darussalam ranked first with 83 days, while Maldives was second with 81.

Coming in fourth below the Philippines was Indonesia (72 days), followed by Sri Lanka (72), Timor-Leste (72), Malaysia (63), Singapore (56), Yemen (46) and Myanmar (45).

“Over the last three months, nearly 554 million people across 10 countries in Asia experienced daily average temperatures that were strongly influenced by climate change (defined as CSI 2 or higher) for at least one-third of the season (30 or more days),” Climate Central said.

The report also stated that “more than 45 million people across the continent were exposed to at least 30 risky heat days that were added by climate change.”

In the Philippines, almost 200,000 Filipinos were said to have been exposed out of the 116 million total population.

Hot Manila

Scientists also found that among the world's 38 "megacities"—those with population over 10 million—Manila was included in the 11 areas reported to have "endured heat that was strongly influenced by climate change."

The country's capital experienced 69 days of temperatures that reached CSI level 2 or higher, placing third below Lagos in Nigeria, with 89 days, and Tamil Nadu in India (81).

The Philippines also ranked eighth among Asian countries with the most number of "risky heat" days caused by climate change with two days in the last three months.

Risky heat refers to temperatures hotter than 90 percent of that observed in a local area from 1991 to 2020. "Heat-related health risks rise when temperatures climb above this local threshold," Climate Central pointed out.

Timor-Leste ranked first in Asia with the most number of risky heat days added by climate change at 22 days, while Indonesia placed second with 16.

Other countries in the list included Sri Lanka (6), Singapore (6), Malaysia (5), Brunei Darussalam (4), Maldives (4), and below the Philippines in ninth place was Cambodia (1).

In calculating the CSI, the study used data from the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts.

In total, it analyzed 220 countries and territories, as well as 940 cities around the world. Population estimates were drawn from Encyclopedia Britannica and the Gridded Population of the World collection by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH bats for stronger multilateralism to meet climate goals](#)

By: Joyce Ann L. Rocamora

An official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Wednesday underscored the need for stronger multilateral partnership and collaboration among countries to advance climate goals in the next five years.

“Of course, now we are being threatened by some country specific interest being pursued, but it is not the way we will be able to address climate change in the future,” Environment Undersecretary Analiza Rebuelta Teh said during a German Embassy-hosted climate forum in Makati City on Wednesday.

Teh explained that by 2035, Manila hopes that developed countries would have mobilized “enabling investments needed to pursue climate resilient infrastructure, nature-based solutions and community-led adaptation initiatives”.

“We can only achieve (it) through a strong, enhanced collaboration among countries,” she added.

Asian Development Bank Senior Climate Change Officer Sugar Gonzales, for her part, said the ADB is committed to responding to the climate change needs of developing countries.

She expressed shared hope that by the time the 40th UN Climate Change Conference (COP40) is convened in 2035, countries are already discussing climate outcomes and developed states are contributing to this development.

The COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan last year closed with a new goal to triple finance and help developing countries against climate disaster. It produced a breakthrough agreement that would augment climate financing from USD100 billion to USD300 billion annually by 2035.

German Ambassador to the Philippines Andreas Pfaffernoschke, in turn, assured Manila that Berlin “remains committed to continue its long standing partnership with the Philippines in the field of climate action.”

“We will see in the coming weeks what the new German government will look like. But let me assure you here today that the new German government will continue its leadership role in international climate diplomacy, especially in these challenging times,” he added.

A newly-released World Meteorological Organization (WMO) report revealed that human-induced climate change reached new heights in 2024, which was likely the first calendar year to be more than 1.5°C above the pre-industrial era.

The WMO said this is the warmest year in the 175-year observational record.

THE GUARDIAN

[More than 150 'unprecedented' climate disasters struck world in 2024, says UN](#)

The devastating impacts of the climate crisis reached new heights in 2024, with scores of unprecedented heatwaves, floods and storms across the globe, according to the UN's World Meteorological Organization.

The WMO's report on 2024, the hottest year on record, sets out a trail of destruction from extreme weather that took lives, demolished buildings and ravaged vital crops. More than 800,000 people were displaced and made homeless, the highest yearly number since records began in 2008.

The report lists 151 unprecedented extreme weather events in 2024, meaning they were worse than any ever recorded in the region. Heatwaves in Japan left hundreds of thousands of people struck down by heatstroke. Soaring temperatures during heatwaves peaked at 49.9C at Carnarvon in Western Australia, 49.7C in the city of Tabas in Iran, and 48.5C in a nationwide heatwave in Mali.

Record rains in Italy led to floods, landslides and electricity blackouts; torrents destroyed thousands of homes in Senegal; and flash floods in Pakistan and Brazil caused major crop losses.

Storms were also supercharged by global heating in 2024, with an unprecedented six typhoons in under a month hitting the Philippines. Hurricane Helene was the strongest ever recorded to strike the Big Bend region of Florida in the US, while Vietnam was hit by Super Typhoon Yagi, affecting 3.6 million people. Many more unprecedented events will have passed unrecorded.

The world is already deep into the climate crisis, with the WMO report saying that for the first time, the 10 hottest years on record all occurred in the last decade. However, global carbon emissions have continued to rise, which will bring even worse impacts. Experts were particularly critical of the purge of climate scientists and programmes by the US president, Donald Trump, saying that ignoring reality left ordinary people paying the price.

"Leaders must step up – seizing the benefits of cheap, clean renewables for their people and economies – with new national climate plans due this year," said the UN secretary general, António Guterres.

Dr Luke Parsons, of the Nature Conservancy, said: "Every year, we venture further into uncharted territory, with 2024 the hottest year modern human society has ever experienced. Yet the coming decade is expected to be even hotter, pushing us deeper into this unprecedented climate."

Previous research determining the role of the climate crisis in what are now unnatural disasters has shown that at least 550 heatwaves, floods, storms, droughts and wildfires had been made significantly more severe or more frequent by global heating.

Dr Brenda Ekwurzel, of the Union of Concerned Scientists, condemned the Trump administration's deletion of online climate information. "Attempts to hide climate science from the public will not stop us from feeling the dire impacts of climate change," she said. "This report underscores the urgency of world leaders meeting the moment, not slashing environmental protections and federal disaster aid, sacrificing public health for the fossil fuel industry's private profit, and gutting agencies that help form the scientific underpinnings of our global climate knowledge."

"Global warming continues unabated, exactly as predicted correctly since the 1980s, [and] millions of people are increasingly suffering the consequences," said Prof Stefan Rahmstorf, of the Potsdam Institute for Climate in Germany. "We can only stop the warming trend by getting out of fossil fuels fast."

"We have the solutions – but what stops us is the disinformation campaigns and lobby power of the fossil fuel industry," Rahmstorf added. "Ignoring reality, denying the laws of physics and silencing scientists can only lead to harm, and ordinary people will pay the price for that."

Dr Davide Faranda, from ClimaMeter, said: "Every fraction of a degree matters. The choices we make today will determine the severity of climate impacts in the years to come."

The WMO secretary general, Prof Celeste Saulo, said the report was a wake-up call about the rising risks to lives and livelihoods. "In response, WMO and the global community are intensifying efforts to strengthen early warning systems and climate services to help society be more resilient to extreme weather," she said. "Only half of all countries have adequate early warning systems – this must change." She stressed that investment in weather, water and climate services was more important than ever.

The Trump administration has sacked 1300 staff from the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, one of the world's leading weather and climate watchdogs, and 1,000 more are threatened. Experts estimate that every \$1 spent on climate resilience saves \$13 in damages and clean-up costs.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

['Philippines third most heat-impacted country in Asia'](#)

By: Bella Cariaso

The Philippines is the third most heat-impacted country in Asia, based on nonprofit Climate Central's report.

Thirty-seven of 51 Asian countries experienced abnormal warming, averaging 0.6 degrees Celsius above historical norms, researchers noted.

"The Philippines is ranked as the third highest country in Asia with the most unusual heat added by climate change," the report said.

"The Philippines is ranked as the eighth highest country in Asia with risky heat days added by climate change, with two additional days," it said.

Risky heat days occur when temperatures become hotter than 90 percent of local temperatures recorded from 1991 to 2020, as defined in the study.

Almost 394 million people experienced over 30 extra days of life-threatening heat due to climate change, the study conducted from December 2024 to February this year showed.

Climate change is intensifying the extreme heat exposure of people worldwide, with severe consequences to health, economies and ecosystems, the report noted.

At least one in five people globally were exposed to higher temperatures influenced by climate change every day, it added.

"The increasing frequency and severity of heat events reveal a dangerous pattern of exposure that will only worsen if fossil fuel burning continues," said Climate Central vice president of science Kristina Dahl.

Meanwhile, the World Meteorological Organization's State of the Climate Report has confirmed that 2024 was the hottest year on record and first to exceed 1.5 percent above pre-industrial levels.

The average annual global temperature in 2024 was 1.55 degrees Celsius above the 1850 to 1900 average, the hottest year in recorded history, the reported noted.

"This beats the previous record set just a year before in 2023 of 1.45 degrees Celsius above the 1850 to 1900 average," it said.

All of the hottest 10 years on record occurred in the past ten years, from 2015 to 2024, the report said.

“The oceans were hotter in 2024 than in any year on record. Over the past eight years, each year has set a new record for ocean heat content,” it said.

“Sea levels reached a record high in 2024. In the last three years – 2022 to 2024 – there was the largest glacier loss on record. Extreme weather events in 2024 led to the highest number of new displaced people since 2008 with 824,500 people,” it added.

At least 151 unprecedented extreme weather events were recorded in 2024, the report noted.

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[\[Opinion\] Small Steps Forward in Philippines' Global Climate Leadership](#)

By: John Leo Algo

After what we observed at the 2024 UN climate negotiations (COP29), it looks like the Philippines' leadership in global climate governance is starting to trend in the right direction once again.

While the negotiations on a new global finance goal to support the climate actions of developing nations ended in an alarmingly disappointing note, the efforts of the country's negotiators and staff deserve praise for holding their ground for most of the conference in a way that others did not.

The Philippines was one of the strongest voices calling for loss and damage (L&D) to be part of the new global finance goal (known in short as the NCQG). This is not only aligned with the country's position as host of the Board of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD); it also comes on the heels of Filipino communities being hit by six storms in under a month.

Unfortunately, the urgency of scaling up L&D finance was only acknowledged in the final decision text, being viewed as not on the same level as adaptation or mitigation. This is just the tip of the iceberg of how uneventful COP29 ended up being in terms of spurring meaningful progress for global climate action.

It is painfully obvious that the climate COP process requires a significant overhaul, as developed countries are exploiting outdated parts of global treaties to avoid accountability and giving the finance and support owed to nations like the Philippines.

Yet that does not discount the significance of the multilateral approach itself; as all countries are affected by the climate crisis but in different ways and with varying resources to respond, they all should fairly and equitably participate in the global decision-making process.

The outcomes of last year's climate talks in Dubai, including the supposed beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era and the creation of the FRLD that were hailed as significant victories, all seem like a distant memory. Negotiations on almost every major issue discussed in Baku ended up with no progress or being delayed until next year, with a main exception being on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement that concerns carbon markets.

While climate COPs keep ending up with delayed progress, the impacts of the climate crisis do not due to the pollutive actions of developed countries and fossil fuel corporations. It is a reality that we were reminded of yet again recently, despite the denial of some local industry talking heads.

With this context, the Philippine government is placed in strategic positions to set the tone for global climate policies that could also boost its national strategies. Aside from the FRLD, government officials also have a presence in the governance of key global climate bodies such as the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Committee, and the Warsaw International Mechanism.

It is also seeking sources of finance outside of public finance. This is why it is high on using carbon markets to urgently deliver this support, which is good news for most of domestic businesses and a cause for concern and skepticism by the non-government (NGO) sector.

Did we improve from last year?

The lack of guarantees for social and environmental safeguards is one of the main issues for NGOs and community representatives in a few dialogues with Philippine government officials, including some that took place at the sidelines of COP29.

This becomes an even bigger concern with the low global finance goal set in Baku; with not enough from public finance by developed countries, expect the Philippine government to lean harder on using carbon markets to access much-needed support for implementing adaptation and mitigation projects.

The discourse on carbon markets is bound to continue at the national and local levels for at least the next few years, with the non-government sector remaining firm on the inclusion of said safeguards that protect human rights and the well-being of communities and ecosystems.

Nonetheless, there has been one small improvement in the consultation held this year in preparation for COP29. For the first time in years, government agencies presented the draft positions it would carry at the negotiating table before the conference itself. Positions on the likes of adaptation, mitigation, finance, and just transition were presented to non-government representatives, an improvement in transparency and in compliance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Climate Change Act.

Based on the series of government-NGO dialogues last year during the Dubai negotiations, the process is underway for institutionalizing a platform for inputs of civil society and community representatives to be accounted for in national climate governance. This is an initiative of the Climate Change Commission, as part of its mandate as an autonomous and independent lead in coordinating climate policies and programs by government agencies.

Of course, there remain significant inclusivity issues that need to be addressed. These issues are rooted in factors such as the working dynamics between government agencies, the pro-business outlook of the agency higher-ups and much of the policy direction, and mistaken perceptions about the NGO sector.

More open dialogues with Philippine negotiators and consultations set not just days before succeeding climate conferences must also take place, aligned with the Climate Change Act and the imperative of a “whole-of-society” approach.

With 2025 set to be a defining year for global and Philippine climate action, it is a must for the government to match its seemingly growing leadership at the global level with decision-making mechanisms at the domestic level to ensure that no one is left behind.

There is a lot of room for improvement, but for the first time in years, there are signs that we may be ready to go in the right direction.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH, UK strengthen cooperation on climate resilience](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Philippines and the United Kingdom have reaffirmed their commitment to climate resilience, net zero goals, and sustainable development to enhance collaboration ahead of the 30th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change scheduled in November this year.

In a news release on Wednesday, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) said the two countries reinforced their adherence to urgent climate action, adaptation and resilience, and cooperation at the 5th UK-Philippines Climate Change and Environment Dialogue held on March 12, 2025.

CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director, Secretary Robert E.A. Borje emphasized the importance of global cooperation and strategic partnerships in addressing the climate crisis.

"Strong bilateral partnerships are a bedrock of meaningful climate action. This dialogue marks an important milestone in reinforcing our shared goals for mitigation, adaptation, and ecological action. Working together will unlock new opportunities towards our goal of becoming a low-carbon, resilient country," he said.

He said the discussions between the Philippines and the UK focused on mobilizing climate finance, advancing sustainable development, and strengthening adaptation measures to help the country transition toward a low-carbon, climate-resilient future.

CCC Commissioner Rachel Anne Herrera, meanwhile, reaffirmed the Philippines' commitment to enhancing its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), emphasizing the need to harmonize economic growth, energy security, and climate action.

She also stressed the need for technical and financial support to accelerate emission reductions in energy, transport, agriculture, industry, waste, and forestry while strengthening local adaptation strategies.

"Our NDC update prioritizes industrial potential and energy security while striving for a climate-resilient future. This is why enhanced support from developed nations is crucial in maximizing our contributions to global climate efforts," she said.

Herrera also highlighted the structured process of updating NDC 3.0, emphasizing inclusivity, collaboration, and the role of development partners in mobilizing technical and funding support.

She underscored the importance of setting ambitious yet realistic climate targets that balance economic growth, energy security, and resilience-building efforts.

British Ambassador Laure Beaufilet, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of sustained UK-Philippines collaboration in tackling climate challenges.

"This is a time to celebrate all that we've achieved together. Climate action has been a personal priority for the President and is at the heart of our foreign policy—setting the agenda and mechanisms for transparency and accountability," she said.

Meanwhile, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga, the Philippines official representative to the CCC, highlighted the Philippines' and the UK's shared responsibility as large ocean nations in building a roadmap to resilience.

"Together, we are building a roadmap to resilience—aligning key priorities, setting measurable outcomes, and ensuring coordinated leadership in this critical race against climate change," she said.

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