



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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### [FAO: IPCC report highlights critical need to transform agrifood systems](#)

Transforming agrifood systems is essential to adapt to human-caused climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) said following the release of the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **[Asia-Pacific unlikely to hit SDG targets by 2030 — ESCAP](#)**

By: Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson

THE ASIA-PACIFIC region would likely miss 90% of its sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) said.

## **CLIMATE HOME NEWS**

### **[Nations fight to be called climate vulnerable in IPCC report](#)**

By: Isabella Kaminski

Government negotiators fought bitterly last week over which groups and regions are defined as particularly vulnerable to climate change in the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

## **CNN**

### **[Global water crisis could ‘spiral out of control’ due to overconsumption and climate change, UN report warns](#)**

By: Sana Noor Haq

The world is facing a looming global water crisis that threatens to “spiral out of control” as increased demand for water and the intensifying impacts of the climate crisis put huge pressure on water resources, a UN report has warned.

## **DW AKADEMIE**

### **[Israelis, Palestinians, Arabs jointly tackle climate change](#)**

By: Jennifer Holleis

A new US-led initiative brings together Palestinians, Israelis and Arab states to address climate change in the region. Building trust and funding joint projects remain challenging.

## **JORDAN NEWS**

### **[Jordan's climate action plan and the road to COP28](#)**

By: HAmzeh S. Al-Alayani

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## **PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

### **[Accelerate action on global water crisis](#)**

By: Poul Due Jensen

Climate change is now well established as one of the most pressing issues of our time, with the most evident impact felt through our relationship with water. Rising temperatures and changing weather patterns continue to disrupt the water cycle around the world, impacting societies, ecosystems, and economies through unpredictable water availability and quality.

### **[Miss Philippines Earth candidates show beauty can be eco-friendly](#)**

The Miss Philippines Earth pageant has been promoting environmental awareness for more than two decades now, pursued the green movement even before it a become a byword and blazing the trail for many other competitions espousing similar causes. Its candidates, dubbed “beauties for a cause,” are also pushing for more sustainable ways of achieving beauty.

## **REUTERS**

### **[Comment: And now for the good news from the IPCC report, the 1.5C target is still viable](#)**

By: Owen Gaffney and Johan Falk

The latest mammoth climate assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) arrives at a remarkably positive conclusion.

## **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

### **[Drought, floods and sickness: Key takeaways from UN's water report](#)**

By: Amélie Bottolier-Depois

Billions of people experience water-related issues on a daily basis—from contaminated drinking water, to droughts and floods—with a UN report warning Tuesday that the risk of a global crisis is "imminent."

### **[Forests, forest-dependent communities critical to climate action — group](#)**

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Investing in the restoration and protection of forests is a critical component in strategies to mitigate climate change and adapt with its increasing risks, the Forest Foundation Philippines (FFP) said Tuesday.

## **CCC IN THE NEWS:**

### **JOURNAL**

### **[DENR vows to continue leading PH fight vs the impacts of climate change](#)**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has vowed to continue leading the fight against the impacts of climate change and to ensure that the Philippines will fulfill its climate commitments.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **BUSINESS MIRROR**

### **[FAO: IPCC report highlights critical need to transform agrifood systems](#)**

Transforming agrifood systems is essential to adapt to human-caused climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) said following the release of the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The Synthesis Report, the last of the Sixth Assessment report cycle, done in a collaborative effort between governments and scientists from all over the world, confirmed that human activities, mainly through emissions of greenhouse gases, have unequivocally caused global warming. These include unsustainable energy use, land use and land-use change, as well as consumption and production patterns.

The report underlined that 22 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions right now come from agriculture, forestry, and land use.

The synthesis also painted a clear way ahead, underscoring that the solution lies in climate-resilient development and holistic measures to adapt to climate change that also reduce or avoid greenhouse emissions.

“Agriculture and food security are already threatened by climate change, in particular in Small Island Developing States, Least Developed Countries and Land-Locked Countries, affecting the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, pastoralists, forest-dependent people, fishers, Indigenous Peoples and women,” said FAO Deputy Director-General Maria Helena Semedo.

“We need to act now at scale. Building sustainable and resilient agrifood systems is fundamental to tackling the climate crisis, food insecurity and biodiversity loss.”

#### **Climate action through agri**

Indeed, the IPCC scientists highlighted with high confidence that many agriculture, forestry and land use options provide adaptation and mitigation benefits that could be upscaled in the near term across most regions.

For example, they said conservation, improved management, and restoration of forests and other ecosystems offer the largest opportunity to counteract the economic damages caused by climate-related disasters.

Examples of effective adaptation options include cultivar improvements, on-farm, water management and storage, soil moisture conservation, irrigation, agroforestry, community-based adaptation, farm and landscape level diversification in agriculture and sustainable land management.

The IPCC also noted the importance of integrated approaches to meet multiple objectives, including food security, and underscores that shifting to healthy diets and reducing food waste, along with sustainable agriculture, can reduce impacts on ecosystems and free up land for reforestation and biodiversity restoration.

The synthesis also pointed out that while climate change policies and laws have improved, policy coverage remains limited in some sectors such as agriculture, and the barriers preventing the implementation of mitigation measures in agriculture, forestry and other land use sectors are financial, institutional and governance-related.

“The report shows how agriculture can be central to climate action. It highlights that Agriculture is already impacted by climate change, showing that its adaptation is urgent to ensure food security and nutrition leaving no one behind,” Semedo said.

“Agriculture including crop and livestock production, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, offers solutions that contribute to both adaptation and mitigation.”

The synthesis further highlighted how central water is to all sectors for their adaptation. In this context, FAO supports integrated water resources management to face water-related challenges in the context of climate change.

## **FAO strategy**

FAO said it is already working towards the report’s recommendations, including fostering climate resilience and adaptation in the agrifood sector.

The FAO Strategy on Climate Change looks beyond food production by considering crops and livestock, forests, fisheries and aquaculture and related value chains, livelihoods, biodiversity and ecosystems in a holistic manner, as well as embracing the indispensable role of women, youth and Indigenous Peoples, as essential agents of change.

It considers different contexts and realities, including rural, peri-urban and urban areas, and supporting countries, as appropriate, in designing, revising and implementing

agrifood systems related parts of their country-driven commitments and plans, including nationally determined contributions (NDCs), national adaptation plans (NAPs), nationally appropriate mitigation actions, long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies, disaster risk reduction plans and other related targets and commitments.

Moreover, the Strategy considers different dimensions of risk, including the risk of non-acting, systemic risks, climate and environmental risk reduction, the specific needs and capacities of people and communities in vulnerable situations and integrating climate risk management in FAO's areas of work.

FAO also works as a delivery partner for the Green Climate Fund (GFC), the world's largest climate fund mandated to support developing countries to raise and achieve the ambition of their national climate plans.

Since becoming partners in 2016, FAO and the GCF have been scaling up climate investments in high-impact projects that make the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors more efficient, inclusive, sustainable and resilient to climate change. The portfolio now exceeds over 1 billion.

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **Asia-Pacific unlikely to hit SDG targets by 2030 — ESCAP**

By: Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson

THE ASIA-PACIFIC region would likely miss 90% of its sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) said.

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, undersecretary general of the United Nations and executive secretary of ESCAP, said the region should have made at least 50% of the progress needed to achieve the targets by this year, which is the midpoint toward 2030.

“The overall progress is less than 15% or one-third of what is needed. Based on current trends, achieving the SDGs will take several more decades,” she said at a virtual forum discussing ESCAP’s “Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2023” on Wednesday.

In the Asia-Pacific region, the average overall progress toward achieving the 17 SDGs only reached 14.4% in 2022, from 4.4% in 2007.

However, at its current pace, the region is seen to miss 90% of the 118 measurable targets by 2030 “unless efforts are multiplied,” ESCAP said.

“The rate of progress is slowing down. We expect to achieve the SDGs in another 42 years,” ESCAP Statistics Division Director Rachael Joanne Beaven said.

One of five SDG targets are regressing and need a “complete trend reversal,” ESCAP said.

Of the 17 SDGs, the region has made the most progress on affordable and clean energy (SDG 7) and industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9).

“We see good progress on SDG 7 and SDG 9, but we can also see that we’re not on track to achieve any of the 17 goals by 2030. Progress is too slow and stagnant, especially in SDG 13, where the region is moving in the wrong direction,” Ms. Beaven said.

SDG 13 or climate action “continues to regress and must be given priority to reverse negative trends,” according to the report.



“Progress towards climate action is slipping away. The region is both a victim of the impact of climate change and a perpetrator of climate change, with a responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” ESCAP said.

Asia-Pacific countries are not on track to meet greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, it added.

The lack of progress for SDG 13 was also mainly seen in countries in special situations, namely least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states.

“These countries have been making efforts to advance the sustainable development agenda with assistance from international development partners. However, given the unique vulnerabilities of these countries, it is crucial that targeted assistance is provided,” according to the report.

On the other hand, ESCAP said the region has reversed regressing trends in SDGs such as decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), reduced inequalities (SDG 10) and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17).

“Despite the slow pace of progress in the region overall, there are areas where some countries have made faster progress,” it added.

Ms. Beaven also noted that 70% of pace leaders in the region are countries in special situations.

ESCAP cited several countries that have made better progress than the regional average since 2015. The Philippines is the only country that has bested the regional average for SDG 12 or responsible consumption and production.

China and Myanmar were the top countries beating regional average for SDG 2 (zero hunger), while Bangladesh, Bhutan and Cambodia led the region in SDG 4 (quality education).

“We see countries are outperforming in certain goals. (However), gender equality (SDG 5) and climate action (SDG 13) have no countries outperforming the average regional pace of progress,” Ms. Beaven said.

The coronavirus pandemic also slowed the region's progress in hitting the goals. ESCAP noted that many countries missed the chance to invest in a low-carbon recovery from the pandemic.

"We might have expected with widespread lockdowns, there would be a positive impact on the environment, but while the amount of renewable energy per capita increased between 2019 and 2021, the rate of growth was reduced from 14% in 2020 to 10% in 2021," Ms. Beaven said.

The pandemic also hurt economic growth and increased poverty in the region.

"COVID-19 had a clear negative impact on the economy. For decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), the Asia-Pacific region recorded a decrease in the growth rate of real GDP per employed person from 3.6% in 2019 to 1.3% in 2020, with the sharpest decline in Southeast Asia," it added.

While data availability for SDGs has improved since 2017, ESCAP noted that data were still insufficient for 51 of 169 targets.

"Between 2017 and 2022, the number of indicators with sufficient data doubled but the momentum of increasing data has slowed down. To bridge the data gaps, poor and rich countries alike must demonstrate their commitments to SDG monitoring in particular for SDGs 5 and 16," Ms. Beaven said.

The Philippines was among the countries with sufficient data for more than 63% of the indicators, along with Armenia, Georgia, Indonesia and Thailand.

"Despite the slow pace of progress overall, there are good examples of data-oriented initiatives to achieve the SDGs," Ms. Alisjahbana said. "Countries in the region are increasingly using data to inform decision making."

## CLIMATE HOME NEWS

### [Nations fight to be called climate vulnerable in IPCC report](#)

By: Isabella Kaminski

Government negotiators fought bitterly last week over which groups and regions are defined as particularly vulnerable to climate change in the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Representatives of countries from an array of different regions, including Africa, Asia, Latin America and small island states, pushed to be singled out as particularly vulnerable.

Tanzania and Timor-Leste asked that the world's poorest countries, known as least developed countries (LDCs), be added to a list of impacted communities, according to a report of the meeting by think-tank IISD.

Africa and small island developing states (Sids) were nearly cut out of one section on vulnerabilities, the IISD report says, and replaced by a reference to "developing and least developed countries".

But there was a strong push from many delegates to retain them, particularly as most of those regions' representatives had already left the talks to approve the report, as they had to catch flights home from Switzerland.

Mexico and Chile wanted to add Latin America to the list of regions that are particularly vulnerable while India wanted Asia included, according to IISD's report.

The final document lists Africa, Sids, LDCs, Central and South America, Asia and the Arctic as particularly vulnerable.

The benefits of vulnerability

What makes some communities more vulnerable than others is not just physical factors like sea level rise but also social factors like poverty, governance, building standards and infrastructure.

This makes naming specific parts of the world as vulnerable a politically sensitive topic.

The inclusion of the Arctic as one of the most climate vulnerable places in the world, for example, was significant because it came just days after the US approved the hugely controversial Willow oil drilling project on Alaska's north slope.

There are various reasons for wanting to be named as vulnerable, including global recognition and better access to climate finance.

Last year's Cop27 climate talks agreed that a new fund for climate victims should be targeted at countries who are "particularly vulnerable" to climate change.

Samoan ambassador Fatumanava-o-Upolu III Dr. Pa'olelei Luteru, who chairs the association of small island states (Aosis), said making specific note of the risks to these islands was "imperative in the context of climate justice".

"The fact is that we are already facing devastating losses and damages of great magnitude, and funds we should be investing into sustainable development initiatives must be diverted to help us cope with climate change impacts," he said.

But recognising growing impacts also gives states the responsibility of acting on them.

Jörn Birkmann researches climate vulnerability at the University of Stuttgart in Germany and was coordinating lead author of one of the underlying IPCC reports.

He told Climate Home: "It seems like governments fear that if their country is not mentioned, they could receive less support (e.g. global adaptation funds),"

He added: "Or vice versa; if they are mentioned it might lead to a stigmatisation or might raise questions about the role of governance."

### Measuring vulnerability

Birkmann said studies on human vulnerability all point to the same global hotspots, particularly Africa.

But even though many governments acknowledge this, there are significant tensions when measuring and mapping human vulnerability.

"It is still difficult in [a summary for policymakers report] to name specific global regions that are more vulnerable than others," he said.

“The synthesis report is mentioning some regions, but it seems to be much easier for governments to agree on general sentences, rather than pointing to areas or countries where such deficits are evident.”

Although it misses a lot of nuance about who is vulnerable, Birkmann welcomes the fact that the report recognises global hotspots, “since the success of adaptation and resilience building also depends on the starting point communities and countries have”.

He believes adaptation strategies should not just focus on physical phenomena and climatic hazards such as storms, but also on structures and interventions that reduce human vulnerability, such as poverty reduction, education or fighting corruption – the latter being “a very controversial topic in the political arena”.

Furthermore, when new financial mechanisms for loss and damage agreed at Cop27 are being put into practice, he said it would be helpful to define adaptation goals, not just those on emission reduction.

“These goals should also take into account the very different starting points of regions/countries/communities to build resilience,” he said.” The level of human vulnerability might be such a benchmark of the different starting points.”

**CNN**

**[Global water crisis could 'spiral out of control' due to overconsumption and climate change, UN report warns](#)**

By: Sana Noor Haq

The world is facing a looming global water crisis that threatens to “spiral out of control” as increased demand for water and the intensifying impacts of the climate crisis put huge pressure on water resources, a UN report has warned.

Water use has increased by about 1% a year over the last 40 years, driven by population growth and changing consumption patterns, according to the UN World Water Development Report published Tuesday, on the eve of a major UN water summit in New York.

By 2050, the number of people in cities facing water scarcity is projected to nearly double from 930 million people in 2016 to up to 2.4 billion, the report found. Urban water demand is expected to increase by 80% by 2050.

Without action to address the problem of water scarcity, “there definitely will be a global crisis,” said Richard Connor, the report’s lead author, at a news conference to launch the report.

‘Dire consequences’

Water access is already a huge problem. Two billion people do not currently have safe drinking water and 3.6 billion lack access to safely managed sanitation, according to the report.

About 10% of the global population already lives in countries with high or critical water stress.

Urban and industrial growth and agriculture are compounding existing shortages, with agriculture alone using up 70% of the world’s water supply, Connor said.

Seasonal water scarcity is set to increase in areas where water is currently plentiful including in Central Africa, East Asia and parts of South America, the report found. Meanwhile, scarcity will worsen in the Middle East and the Sahel region in Africa, where water is already in short supply.

Extreme and prolonged droughts, made more frequent and severe by the climate crisis, are also putting pressure on ecosystems, which could have “dire consequences” for plant and animal species, the report’s authors said.

Solutions include better international cooperation to avoid conflicts over water, Connor said.

Flood and pollution control, data sharing and efforts to reduce levels of planet-heating pollution should “open the door to further collaboration and increase access to water funds,” he said.

“There is an urgent need to establish strong international mechanisms to prevent the global water crisis from spiraling out of control,” said Audrey Azoulay, the director general of UNESCO, the UN’s cultural body.

“Water is our common future, and it is essential to act together to share it equitably and manage it sustainably.”

## DW AKADEMIE

### [Israelis, Palestinians, Arabs jointly tackle climate change](#)

By: Jennifer Holleis

A new US-led initiative brings together Palestinians, Israelis and Arab states to address climate change in the region. Building trust and funding joint projects remain challenging.

The Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) region is one of the most vulnerable to climate change. It's already being hit disproportionately by rising temperatures, water scarcity and desertification. And the outlook for the future is grim.

These are all compelling reasons for experts in the region to collaborate more, say the organizers of a conference on agriculture, water and food security. The conference, which was attended by experts from Israel, the occupied Palestinian territories and several Arab and Muslim countries, aimed to develop practical programs to address regional challenges.

"So much can be done in this region by cooperating across borders," said William Wechsler, senior director of the N7 Initiative, which organized the conference held last week in the capital of the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi. The initiative promotes collaboration between Israel and Arab and Muslim nations that have signed the Abraham Accords, a deal brokered in 2020 to normalize relations between Israel and several countries, including Morocco, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

"For example, water can be made more available, food prices can be lowered, and people's lives can be made more secure," said Wechsler, listing the advantages of potential cooperations.

Wechsler believes agriculture is an ideal basis for climate change collaboration. Not only is it a field where progress can be made quickly, it could also have a big impact on people's lives across the MENA region.

"If we miss the opportunity to address climate change now, the window of opportunity will eventually close," Wechsler warned.

Despite the recent escalation of the situation in Israel and the Occupied West Bank, Wechsler believes those actively involved in tackling climate change and its effects are keen to work together.



"At the end of the day, scientists and engineers are practical people who are interested in solving problems, no matter where they are from," Wechsler told DW.

Difficult to find funding for joint projects

For conference participant Faouzi Bekkaoui, the director of Morocco's National Agricultural Research Institute, Israel has much to offer his country.

"Israeli expertise relates in particular to water usage efficiency, such as irrigation systems and developing more resilient crops and varieties," he told DW.

Morocco is among the world's most water-stressed countries, according to a World Bank 2022 report, and its agricultural sector is badly affected by the water shortage and climate change.

"Israel also made significant progress in biotechnology or genomics, and all these areas could be beneficial for Morocco, as well," he said.

But funds for joint Moroccan-Israeli projects or academic exchanges are limited. Bekkaoui has now applied to the US-based Merck Foundation, which funds projects between Israel and the Arab countries that signed the Abraham Accords, for a grant.

The region lacks a tradition of cross-border academic cooperations.

"Most national research administrations ... have limited pathways to grant research funding to foreign organizations," said Youssef Wehbe, a researcher at the National Center of Meteorology in Abu Dhabi, in a recent podcast by the Middle East Institute.

Finding funding for cross-border projects to combat climate change is even more complex. During the World Climate Summit COP26 in Glasgow in 2021, richer nations agreed to provide adaptation funds worth \$40 billion (€37.3 billion) annually for low- and middle-income countries from 2025 onwards.

But most of this finance is awarded in the form of loans for mitigation projects to reduce fossil fuel usage, such as installing solar panels or wind farms, which return a profit to lending nations, explained Wehbe.

In contrast, financing for adaptation schemes is low as they are "harder to fund and are less attractive to funding nations compared to the loan model, which returns a profit for these lending nations," Wehbe said.

He calls for more globally oriented research programs targeting climate change "to solicit ideas from the international scientific community."

#### Tackling climate change to reduce conflict

Agriculture and climate change expert Jamal Saghir, a professor at Canada's McGill University and former World Bank director, also regards collaboration across borders as the best solution.

"Regional cooperation is always a win-win situation and much better than national or bilateral projects," he told DW. "Most of the Mideast countries are not doing enough yet and climate change is much faster."

The Middle East is warming at twice the global average. This is expected to fuel competition and conflict over dwindling resources – making it essential for the region to tackle climate change and its consequences such as more migration and unrest.

However, Saghir believes the region can leapfrog these issues through technology. Here he sees Israel and the Gulf countries in a position to take a lead.

"Israeli technology is leading in desalination and irrigation and the region would benefit a lot from these methods," he said. The United Arab Emirates, beyond their thriving oil business, have also made significant investments in renewable energies, he pointed out.

"Joint collaboration will lead to new ideas in research and development, which can then be implemented by several countries," he said. "What are they waiting for? This could happen now."

#### Building a basis of trust

Tareq Abu Hamad, executive director of the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies in Israel, believes tackling climate change together with other scientists across the region could turn into "a great opportunity to build trust."

"We live in a small region that is considered as a hotspot when it comes to climate change, and we do not have any other option than cooperating with each other to deal with these challenges," he said.

Alex Plitsas, who is involved in the N7 Initiative, was struck by one scene at the conference that filled him with hope.

"The most extraordinary thing I witnessed ... in Abu Dhabi was when a male Arab diplomat from a Gulf state wearing traditional thobe & donning a kaffiyeh sat with a female Israeli entrepreneur and I late at night," he wrote on Twitter, "as they worked to figure out how to make people's lives better."

## JORDAN NEWS

### [Jordan's climate action plan and the road to COP28](#)

By: HAmzeh S. Al-Alayani

Solving climate change can requires the mobilization of all segments of society, a region-specific coalition to accelerate corporate climate action, and shaping COP28 as milestones for public-private collaboration. This is why COP28 must include policymakers, business leaders, financiers, banks, and industry experts to make the lead to a net-zero transition.

The MENA region is warming at twice the global average and is projected to be up to 4°C warmer by 2050. In face of this, regional players must increase their trust in sustainable finance, and governments must facilitate initiatives to encourage partnerships (PPPs).

When looking at Jordan we see that its GHG emissions are minuscule compared to peer countries. In 2018, Jordan's total GHG emissions were 35.81 tonnes of carbon dioxide, which represents 0.06 percent of the global total, and emissions per capita are low and decreasing and stand at 3.6. tonnes/capita.

Even with smaller emission, Jordan has established ambitious GHG emission reduction targets relative to other countries in the MENA region. It increased its commitment to reduce GHG emissions from 14 to 31 percent by 2030, with 26 percent conditional on financing and 5 percent unconditional. And the new 31 percent GHG reduction target would imply 30,291 carbon dioxide equivalent (Gg) emissions compared to 43,989 CO2 eq (Gg) under business-as-usual in 2030.

Jordan can also benefit from development and adaptation co-benefits with investments in climate change mitigation in the transport and industrial sectors could benefit it. Climate actions can create new growth opportunities through emerging green industries and environmental services.

Climate actions can create new growth opportunities through emerging green industries and environmental services.

Jordan's increased commitments are also reflected in more ambitious sector targets, such as Jordan's EV fleet reaching 8.3 percent of the country's total vehicles. Average annual CO2 emissions are expected to be 241,000 tonnes lower. Using World Bank

shadow prices for carbon, from 2022 to 2030, Jordan could save an estimated \$70 million through lower carbon emissions from the vehicular fleet.

Globally, countries need public and private sectors to meet their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). In the MENA region, companies need to catch up to the rest of the world in corporate ambition related to national sustainability efforts.

In Jordan, businesses can play a crucial role in protecting the country's economy, environment, and population from the impacts of climate change. By accelerating commitment, execution capability, and resource availability, investments in sustainability initiatives can open.

According to the World Bank Group's Country Climate and Development Report, Jordan needs \$9.5 billion in investments to move toward low-carbon development and foster a greener economy. Over 60 percent of that figure must come from the private sector (not including the Aqaba-Amman Water Desalination & Conveyance).

Improving government practices concerning public investment management and leveraging private investments, piloting innovative government support mechanisms to strengthen public-private partnerships, and scaling up State-Owned Enterprises role in financing green infrastructure and climate-responsive projects can also mobilize green finance.

Jordan's investment also need financing covering priority actions under the two strategic nexuses considered, building on the NDC priorities and including projects contributing to adaptation and resilience across the water, agriculture, energy, transport, and urban (including green buildings) waste management) sectors.

The financial sector could significantly address the financing gap to transition to a resilient, low-carbon economy. The successful implementation of the Central Bank of Jordan's Strategy for Greening in the Financial Sector can be a significant step in increasing the climate responsiveness of the financial sector in Jordan. It can also enhance climate risk management, given the large size of Jordan's financial sector and the impact of climate change on financial risks, which could spill over into the real economy.

To mobilize green finance, Jordan should take action to improve government practices concerning public investment management and leverage private investments. This can be achieved by developing a robust pipeline of climate-responsive capital investment, piloting innovative government support mechanisms, and scaling up the role of

State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in financing green infrastructure and climate-responsive projects.

Investing in climate actions in renewable energy, construction, and agri-food sectors can create job opportunities and promote sustainable economic growth.

Inclusion and engagement with young people are also crucial in shaping the new narrative that brings about the desired transformations needed to combat climate change. As today's youth are the climate leaders of tomorrow, they possess the potential and capabilities to create an enduring impact once mainstreamed.

The road to COP28 requires active participation of young people in climate action efforts to create a more sustainable future.

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

### [Accelerate action on global water crisis](#)

By: Poul Due Jensen

Climate change is now well established as one of the most pressing issues of our time, with the most evident impact felt through our relationship with water. Rising temperatures and changing weather patterns continue to disrupt the water cycle around the world, impacting societies, ecosystems, and economies through unpredictable water availability and quality.

In response, the world committed to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) six back in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda, with the aim of providing safely managed water and sanitation for all. Unfortunately, almost a decade later, we are still alarmingly off track. Globally, billions of people still lack safe water, sanitation, and handwashing facilities, while climate change continues to amplify water-related extremes around the world. Beyond its direct impacts, climate change reveals underlying vulnerabilities stemming from poor water governance, giving rise to calls for a more sustainable management of water.

In the Philippines, this is demonstrated in varying access to water across communities, with water security threatened by a range of interconnected pressures including population growth, urbanization, and increasing water pollution. This year's theme for World Water Day, "Accelerating Change," reflects the critical need for climate action to match or even exceed the pace of climate change. How do we increase the pace of transition?

This remains top-of-mind for me and other attendees at this week's United Nations 2023 Water Conference, where key decision-makers from all fronts will come together to create an agenda that "gives our world's lifeblood the commitment it deserves," as noted by UN Secretary General António Guterres. What's encouraging is that stakeholders will bring their own unique perspectives and strengths to this crucial forum. What I hope we come away with is a bold, whole-of-society approach that significantly accelerates action across governments, businesses, and the public. Governments have taken a lead with policies that provide impetus for the sustainability transition. The challenge is to ensure that decision-makers in other sectors that rely on water, or impact water management, understand and come on board too. The Paris Agreement has been a landmark initiative in the multilateral climate change process, bringing together the world's nations to support a common strategy to cut greenhouse gas emissions. It is now the leading framework for key discussions and dialogues.

While the Science Based Targets initiative mobilizes the private sector to take urgent climate action by providing guidelines on how to set ambitious targets to reduce emissions, consensus on water is proving more elusive. We need to take a similar approach to climate by building a stronger consensus on frameworks, goals, and guidelines for water, with nuances to reflect local conditions and resources. The Water Action Agenda, a main outcome of the conference, is set to accelerate progress by guiding both governments and businesses to better manage water and tackle related challenges.

As well, the private sector must “walk the talk” and embed water stewardship in their businesses, by leveraging innovation and collaboration to achieve collective change. One approach is advancing water reuse and recycling so that wastewater is effectively treated to a quality that makes it safe to feed back into our water cycles. A leader in this area is Danish multinational brewer Carlsberg, which aims to cut its water use by half by 2030. In its production facility in Fredericia, Denmark, Carlsberg has developed a total water management treatment plant with consultants, universities, and technology providers like Grundfos. The onsite facility purifies used process water from being used for mainly cleaning purposes to drinking water quality, sending 90 percent of it back to the brewery to be reused as process water.

The public also has a big role to play in accelerating change. More than just driving home the message about climate change and highlighting the importance of strength in numbers, it must mobilize on climate action. Aided by data and knowledge shared by key stakeholders, the public can take more informed and effective individual action. In the Philippines, initiatives like the British Geological Survey’s Philippine Groundwater Outlook project, which piloted borehole sensors in Pampanga province and Iloilo City, provide residents with access to automated and real-time monitoring of groundwater levels and quality to encourage shared responsibility in water management.

While the SDG drawn up in 2015 have yet to be fully realized, it’s crucial that we don’t lose momentum. World Water Day reminds us that by channeling the efforts of government, business, and individuals toward addressing the water crisis, we can be the change we want to see, and collectively close the gaps in other global challenges.



## Miss Philippines Earth candidates show beauty can be eco-friendly

The Miss Philippines Earth pageant has been promoting environmental awareness for more than two decades now, pursued the green movement even before it became a byword and blazing the trail for many other competitions espousing similar causes. Its candidates, dubbed “beauties for a cause,” are also pushing for more sustainable ways of achieving beauty.

“When you are promoting the causes of a pageant just like the Miss Philippines Earth, which is climate change amelioration and education, you have to be able to present yourself the best way possible,” Yllana Marie Aduana from Siniloan, Laguna, told the Inquirer when the candidates graced the grand launch of a skin care clinic branch in Quezon City on March 19.

“As a candidate, you are promoting a green cause. So you have to pair up yourself with a brand that is not only taking, but also giving back to the planet and to the people,” continued the pageant veteran and returning Miss Philippines Earth delegate. She was a runner-up in the virtual competition held in 2021, and was later crowned Miss FIT Philippines in the same year. She was also proclaimed “Face of Binibini” at the 2022 Binibining Pilipinas pageant where she finished in the Top 12.

Architect Cea de Jesus from Taguig City carries the principles she learned in school. “We were taught that the beauty of the environment must always be reflected in the beauty of the built environment, and that also stems to the beauty of ourselves. So we must also be inspired by the beauty of the environment,” she shared.

“There are so many services, so many products right now that are eco-friendly. So the only way forward is up to technology, through different aesthetic systems, eco beauty without causing more environmental degradation,” she continued.

For her part, Kerri Reilly from Mangatarem, Pangasinan, related the pursuit of beauty as a form of self-love and added, “if you can’t love yourself first, how are you gonna show your love towards the environment? The environment’s been there for you since the very beginning, and they’re to heal you as well.”

Lasil Relevo from Balayan, Batangas, offered a more introspective approach. “I think that beauty comes from the inside, so I think that we should all take care of our mental health before physically. And I think that we can make beauty as eco-friendly as possible if we partner up with a brand,” she explained.

For Naoimi Henave from Dasmariñas City, beauty queens should be more conscious. “A lot of us use a lot of beauty products, for example removing makeup, there’s a lot of waste that comes from that. Being responsible in how we take those resources and how we dispose and recycle and how we practice green actions is important because we represent something,” she said.

“We are a role models to a lot of people. By being responsible, by sticking to our words, I think that is important that we represent the true value, the true advocacy of the Miss Philippines Earth pageant,” continued the 19-year-old student.

The five ladies are among the 31 aspirants in the 2023 Miss Philippines Earth pageant. The winner will represent the country in the 2023 Miss Earth pageant which will be held in Vietnam later this year.

## REUTERS

### [Comment: And now for the good news from the IPCC report, the 1.5C target is still viable](#)

By: Owen Gaffney and Johan Falk

The latest mammoth climate assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) arrives at a remarkably positive conclusion.

To be sure, the report states in no uncertain terms that humans have permanently changed the planet, that climate change is already killing people, destroying nature and making the world poorer. What's more, the final report also warns that governments are way, way off-target on their commitment to stabilize temperature rises to 1.5C, which is needed to ensure a liveable future on Earth.

And yet there's good news. The 1.5C target is still viable. The world's leading scientists conclude that all the solutions to halve emissions by 2030 – from wind and solar energy to electric vehicles and heat pumps – are here already. No new research needed. And these solutions are scalable; they can be deployed rapidly. And, most importantly, they are all affordable.

This next decade must see the fastest economic and energy transformation in history, but it also can see that transformation.

For energy, the cheapest way to transform is massive investment in scaling up wind and solar and cutting wasteful methane emissions from coal, oil and gas. And, of course, use energy more efficiently. Solar is now the cheapest form of electricity in history. This fact alone should spur rapid deployment. This is not a burden; this is a business opportunity.

For cities, which make up 70% of emissions, this means electric vehicles, public transport and more bike lanes. This is not a burden on societies; it will make cities quieter and cleaner too, and people will be healthier.

For land and food, this means reducing meat consumption, healthy diets and reduced food waste. Rather than a cost, these changes will save money. And, of course, we need to manage forests better, stop deforestation and store carbon in soils through regenerative agriculture.

The solutions outlined by IPCC are either cheaper than things that burn fossil fuels, or the cost is easily affordable at just \$100 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> or less. And each year the solutions become more affordable as we follow Wright's Law, which states that as production doubles the costs of production fall rapidly.

The IPCC points out that halving global emissions will undoubtedly be disruptive. There will be winners and losers. That is why we created the Exponential Roadmap Initiative to bring together the most innovative companies to drive the disruption and transformation of every sector of the economy.

We believe there is little value in haggling with oil companies and the coal industry. Henry Ford didn't strike a deal with horse stables to enable the success of his legendary Model T. Similarly, we want to accelerate the change in demand away from fossil fuels through new products, new supply chains and greater efficiency. And we're committed to sharing that knowledge with others.

The key to rapid change is to identify the feedback loops where behaviour change and political, economic and technological shifts create self-reinforcing cycles, driving ever-greater action and a green race to the top that crushes emissions.

Politicians need to act to accelerate the disruptive trajectory. In the U.S., the Inflation Reduction Act has already spurred action and has the potential to lower emissions by up to 40%. Europe now needs to offer similar incentives to remain competitive. This will set up another feedback loop, driving prices of electric vehicles down, driving up sales, bringing prices down further.

But forces are in play that are putting the brakes on. Fossil-fuel subsidies reached a record \$1 trillion as a result of Russia's attack on Ukraine and the resulting energy crisis. IPCC authors say making fossil fuels more expensive by removing subsidies could reduce greenhouse gases by up to 10%.

And we need to connect investors to the people building the future. In a jittery economic climate, the investment community is desperate for long-term safe investments providing a strong return year on year. What better than energy security and mass transportation.

Everyone needs energy and efficient transportation. More needs to be done to connect the mega infrastructure projects to investors, and more needs to be done to reduce red tape to make these projects happen.

This is the last time we will hear from the IPCC while they prepare for the seventh assessment report, slated for publication towards the end of the decade. By then we will know whether 1.5C is alive or dead.

But there is good news in that, too: For decades, the climate conversation focused on long time horizons that meant little to businesses and politicians alike. Now, with 2030 within sight as the first crucial milestone in the race to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, we have a time frame to which we can all relate.

We have the science base and the solutions we need to seize this brief window of opportunity to give our own and future generations a stable planet.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### [Drought, floods and sickness: Key takeaways from UN's water report](#)

By: Amélie Bottolier-Depois

Billions of people experience water-related issues on a daily basis—from contaminated drinking water, to droughts and floods—with a UN report warning Tuesday that the risk of a global crisis is "imminent."

Here are some key takeaways from the UN Water forum, which published its report as the first major conference on the issue in nearly a half-century is set to get underway Wednesday in New York.

#### Shortages

Global water consumption has increased by about 1 percent per year over the past four decades.

To meet that growing demand, humans have been tapping more and more into groundwater, resulting in the depletion of between 100-200 cubic kilometers (26-52 trillion gallons) of reserves each year.

About 10 percent of the world's population lives in a country where water stress (the ratio of water use to water availability) is considered "high or critical," creating significant impacts on its availability for personal needs.

And according to a report issued Monday by the IPCC—a UN panel of climate experts—"roughly half of the world's population currently experience severe water scarcity for at least part of the year."

The World Bank estimates that climate change-exacerbated water shortages could cost some regions up to six percent of GDP by 2050 due to impacts on agriculture, health, income, and potentially forced migration or even conflict.

#### Cities v. agriculture

Agriculture makes up more than 70 percent of global water usage, but as city populations have continued to grow, "water allocation from agriculture to urban centers has become a common strategy to meet freshwater needs," the UN said.

But that's not likely to be enough. The number of urban residents threatened by water scarcity is expected to rise from 933 million in 2016 to between 1.7 and 2.4 billion in 2050, according to UN-Water, which projects that India will experience the most severe effects.

### Natural disasters

As the planet warms, humidity in the atmosphere increases by about seven percent with each additional degree Celsius. That in turn leads to more rainfall, which is more intense and less regular.

Between 2000 and 2019, floods are estimated to have caused \$650 billion in damage, affected 1.7 million people and caused more than 100,000 deaths, according to the report.

Warming also intensifies and raises the frequencies of droughts, which over the same period affected 1.4 million people and caused \$130 billion in damage.

Together, droughts and floods account for more than three-quarters of the natural disasters impacting humans.

### Sanitation and hygiene

In 2020, over one in four people around the globe still lacked access to safe drinking water, while 3.6 billion (46 percent of the population) lacked access to safely managed sanitation services, including the nearly 500 million who must resort to "open defecation."

In addition, more than 40 percent of domestic wastewater was not treated safely before being released into the environment in 2020.

Twenty-nine percent of the world's population (2.3 billion people) lacked basic hygiene services, including 670 million without any handwashing facilities.

At least two billion people drink water which has been contaminated with feces—which can contribute to the spread of diseases such as cholera, dysentery and polio.

In 2019, 1.4 million deaths are estimated to have been caused by the lack of adequate sanitation and hygiene services.

Worries are also growing over other kinds of pollutants, such as chemicals and pharmaceutical drugs, pesticides, or plastics and nanomaterials.

### Ecosystem damage

Pollutants are also threatening freshwater ecosystems, which are particularly affected by agricultural runoff.

These fragile ecosystems are "among the most threatened in the world," the report says, while highlighting the disappearance of more than 85 percent of wetlands.

"The loss of environmental services and biodiversity is expected to continue as natural landscapes are lost to cultivated land," the report says, noting that these transitions can result in the emission of greenhouse gases.

### Major investments needed

While it is difficult to put a precise number on how much investment would be needed to achieve the UN's sixth "Sustainable Development Goal" of ensuring access to clean water and sanitation for all by 2030, a study cited by the report estimates that it would cost more than \$1 trillion per year.

Just providing safe drinking water by 2030 would require a tripling of current investment levels, the report says.



## [Forests, forest-dependent communities critical to climate action — group](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Investing in the restoration and protection of forests is a critical component in strategies to mitigate climate change and adapt with its increasing risks, the Forest Foundation Philippines (FFP) said Tuesday.

Forests are widely recognized for their potential in mitigating the impacts of climate change by absorbing and storing planet-heating carbon dioxide.

But forests and trees do much more than that: They ensure water supply, regulate water flow, and protect communities from the impacts of heavy rainfall and strong cyclones.

“Forests will help reduce risks due to climate change and contribute to the resilience of forest-dependent communities by enhancing livelihoods, providing critical ecosystem services, or being shelters during times of storms,” FFP executive director Jose Andres Canivel said Tuesday on the International Day of Forests.

“Despite all those benefits, unfortunately, the Philippines continues to lose most of its forests and forest cover,” he added.

Anthropogenic causes, including large-scale logging and land conversion, are primarily driving forest loss.

The country’s forest cover went down to only 6.8 million hectares in 2010 from 17 million hectares in 1934.

Of the country’s total forestlands, only 6.8 million hectares remain forested as of 2010. This was a significant drop from the 1934 forest cover

Deforestation is compounded by the impacts of the climate crisis such as floods, landslides and storm surges.

New results framework

FFP on Tuesday launched its 2023 to 2026 results framework, a four-year program that will empower organizations and individuals to protect and sustainably manage forests for land productivity, water and biodiversity.

The initiative also aims to improve forest-related climate action.

The framework will also continue the foundation's grant program to conserve and protect critical forest landscapes such as the Sierra Madre, Palawan, Samar and Leyte and Mindanao.

Guided by the new results framework, FFP and its partners will seek to achieve the following outcomes: enhanced forested landscapes, improved multi-stakeholder engagement, strengthened cross-sectoral partnerships, and enhanced knowledge management.

"We aim that with the projects that we support, we'll be able to demonstrate forest conservation actions that will develop communities or conservation actions that will have impacts on their lives, and on climate adaptation and community resilience," Canivel said.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### JOURNAL

#### [DENR vows to continue leading PH fight vs the impacts of climate change](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has vowed to continue leading the fight against the impacts of climate change and to ensure that the Philippines will fulfill its climate commitments.

“The DENR will continue to do our part in leading and accelerating climate action and in enhancing the integrity of ecosystems,” Environment Secretary Antonia Loyzaga said in a speech read by Undersecretary for Field Operations-Luzon, Visayas and the Environment Juan Miguel Cuna during the 4th Philippine Environment Summit on February 21.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., Chairman of the Climate Change Commission (CCC), had designated Loyzaga as his representative. The CCC is the lead policy-making government body on climate change.

“As the designated representative of the President to the Commission, we will focus on accelerating and completing the work that has been long outstanding for us to deliver on our international commitments,” Loyzaga said.

“Among these are the National GHG (Greenhouse Gas) Inventory, National Adaptation Plan and its Financing Plan, NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) National Implementation Plan, and the local climate change action plans of our LGUs (local government units),” she pointed out.

According to Loyzaga, the Philippines needs to have “ecosystems-based, ridge-to-reef approaches” that can enhance ecosystems, prevent disasters, and mitigate the impacts of hazards.

“We must explore how nature-based solutions can address the food-water-energy security outcomes we aim to achieve,” Loyzaga stressed.

She added, “The DENR is naturally at the forefront of climate action due to our mandate of conserving, protecting, managing, restoring, and regenerating our country’s environment and natural resources. The Philippines is also increasingly becoming a

model in the region for our whole-of-society approach in disaster risk reduction and climate action.”

Loyzaga noted that several climate plans are in place to accelerate and complete the work of delivering the country’s international commitments.

The Philippines submitted its NDC to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in April 2021, pledging a projected reduction and avoidance of greenhouse gas emissions of 75 percent for the period of 2020–2030, of which 2.71 percent is unconditional and 72.29 percent is conditional.

The Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR), chaired by the DENR, also adopted a resolution in January 2021 entitled “Adopting the Principles of Sustainable Consumption and Production, Towards Regulation and Phaseout of Single-Use Plastics and a Responsible Transition to the Use of Environment-Friendly Products”.

This resolution further strengthens the Philippine Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production, and supports the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal No. 12 on Responsible Consumption and Production, as well as AmBisyon Natin 2040.

Through the newly enacted Republic Act 11898 or the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act of 2022 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, the country is gradually transitioning to a circular economy where plastic waste reduction, recovery, and recycling in the private sector will be scaled up.

The World Risk Index 2022, developed by the UN University Institute for Environment and Human Security, ranked the Philippines first among 193 countries in terms of exposure to natural hazards.

Loyzaga explained that this vulnerability is closely tied to exposure brought on by the country’s development trajectory, which has been marked by unequal social protection and a disregard for how ecosystems maintain communities.

The DENR chief also emphasized that protecting the country’s environment and natural resources is not the government’s work alone, but entails everyone’s cooperation to ensure the quality of life of future generations.

With the theme “Caring for Earth: Scaling Up Solutions to the Climate Emergency,” the 4th Philippine Environment Summit was organized by the DENR in partnership with

Green Convergence for Safe Food, Healthy Environment, and Sustainable Economy to strengthen multisectoral environmental initiatives and promote cooperation between the academic, business, local government, non-governmental, and youth sectors through the exchange of knowledge and best practices.

**=END=**