



NEWS ROUNDUP

24 MARCH 2023 [08:00 am]

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[Marcos says Philippines facing 'water crisis,' creates water management office](#)

By: Raffy Cabristante

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday said the Philippines is facing a water crisis, as he announced the creation of an office of water management to deal with the country's water supply problem.

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By: Jonathan Mayuga

The Philippines is ready to commit to a global water sector resilience agenda that ensures a reliable and equitable access to safe water sanitation, improved health, and gender equality.

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By: Anna Felicia Bajo

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By: Beatrice Pinlac

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By: Kris Crismundo

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By: Filane Mikee Cervantes

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Thursday expressed hope for an enhanced cooperation with Chile and Qatar, particularly in the areas of disaster response, climate change adaptation, energy security and revenue mobilization.

PTV

[Marcos wants vital role of modern technology in utilizing water management in PH](#)

By: Katrina Gracia Consebido

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday, March 23, said he wants to use modern technology and strategies to efficiently manage water resources in the country to provide clean and affordable water for Filipinos.

SUNSTAR

[DENR 6 led river and mangrove cleanup, celebrates IDF and WWD 2023](#)

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources led a river and mangrove cleanup on March 21, 2023, at the Iloilo River Esplanade 4 in time for the double celebration of the International Day of Forests (March 21) and World Water Day (March 22).

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THE Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in Manukan, Zamboanga del Norte, in collaboration with the municipal government of Roxas of the same province, planted a total of 100 Narra seedlings in a tree planting activity, an official said Thursday, March 23, 2023.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[93% of Pinoys experienced impact of climate change – SWS](#)

By: Janvic Mateo

Nine in every 10 Filipinos have personally experienced the impacts of climate change in the past three years, a survey conducted by Social Weather Stations (SWS) showed.

[PAGASA issues El Niño Watch; public urged to conserve water](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

State meteorologists on Thursday issued an El Niño Watch, indicating the increased likelihood that the weather phenomenon characterized by warming ocean temperatures will develop in the first third quarter of 2023.

[PAGASA launches tool to monitor extreme rainfall](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

State weather bureau PAGASA on Thursday launched a web-based platform to monitor extreme rainfall events, which can help decision makers and the general public mitigate disasters.

UNITED NATIONS

[UN chief calls on EU to help world get 'back on track'](#)

In a joint press encounter with the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, Mr. Guterres appealed for EU leaders to help the world “get back on track” towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at a time when progress in so many parts of the world had been reversed.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

Marcos says Philippines facing 'water crisis,' creates water management office

By: Raffy Cabristante

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday said the Philippines is facing a water crisis, as he announced the creation of an office of water management to deal with the country's water supply problem.

During the 6th Water Philippines Conference and Exposition in Pasay City, Marcos said the Philippines needs to emulate best practices in water management from other countries to address the water crisis.

"These are the kinds of thinking that we have to apply to the Philippines because of the crisis we are facing and how debilitating it will be to the entire economy, to entire society if our water supply problem continues to get greater," Marcos said.

He also lamented that despite the existence of the water supply crisis, it was something that "we have continually postponed."

"We all know the Philippines is not a dry place, and why do we not have enough water?" he also said.

The President noted that through the creation of an office of water management, the government could make a "more cohesive policy" in addressing the water crisis.

Marcos' executive order creating the office of water management will stand until bills seeking to create a Department of Water Management are signed into law.

As of writing, a copy of the said executive order has yet to be made available.

"When they say water is life, it's not just a cliché. It's a truism, and it's something we must always keep in mind," Marcos also said.

He noted the example of Israel, which he said has an "excellent water management" despite being a desert country.

"I spent some time in Israel and I saw how they treat the water, because water is very scarce, they live in the desert. Nevertheless, they are able to collect the water during the rainy season, whatever is available, they put fish in it to grow fish. When the summer comes, they take it out, take out the water, harvest the fish, and then that goes to irrigation efforts."

"So in essence, they use water three times. Every bit of fresh water is used always more than once," Marcos said.

He thanked those who organized and attended the water conference in Pasay City, which he said was "a necessary and urgent step towards achieving our collective aim of attaining water security."

Marcos's pronouncements came after parts of Metro Manila and Cavite dealt with water interruptions due to an increased turbidity of water in the Laguna Lake.

he event also came a day after World Water Day, an annual observance set by the United Nations on March 22 to highlight the importance of fresh water.

In a statement, Sen. Grace Poe said the creation of a water management office is "most welcome while the bills in Congress are being threshed out."

"This is a timely intervention from the Executive which will hopefully alleviate the creeping water crisis in the country... We expect that this development lays down the groundwork for a more integrated and holistic approach to the water problem," said Poe, chairperson of the Senate public services panel.

The National Water Resource Board (NWRB) earlier said that 11 million Filipino families lack access to clean water.

BUSINESS MIRROR

[DENR chief pitches call for global water sector resilience agenda at UN summit](#)

By: Jonathan Mayuga

The Philippines is ready to commit to a global water sector resilience agenda that ensures a reliable and equitable access to safe water sanitation, improved health, and gender equality.

This was affirmed by no less than the country's chief steward of the environment and natural resources, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga in a speech delivered during the ongoing United Nations 2023 Water Conference happening in New York from March 22 to 24.

According to Yulo-Loyzaga, such commitment requires the country to address not only the physical risks through engineering solutions but the ecological socioeconomic, and governance challenges we face as well, pitching that the UN water agenda prioritizes climate resilience through robust, equitable, and sustainable nature positive development pathways.

Yulo-Loyzaga further called for deeper integration of the water agenda into key agreements such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biodiversity, and the Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction.

She said such would render the water sector a globally important entry point to scaling up commitments to adaptation financing for reliable and safe water supply, management, and use.

"The Philippines commits to foster knowledge, innovation and just partnerships in watching governance, access to science and form equitable and sustainable financing and engagements with the private sector academia, multilateral development banks and other stakeholders in climate action are being strengthened while recognizing the vital importance of traditional and local knowledge," she said.

Meanwhile, the official said the Philippines is further advocating the transfer of knowledge through science, technology, engineering, and innovation that addresses the water needs of developing countries while advancing global goals.

Increased support

“IN this light, we endorse increasing support for the Global Water operator program, which addresses the vulnerabilities and capacity-building needs of water and water sanitation service providers, especially in Asia, Pacific, and Africa,” she said.

“The water sector has the opportunity to lead change and deliver transformative solutions in our quest for climate resilient and sustainable development. Let us all unleash the potential for this today to ensure that no person, no community, no ecosystem is left behind,” she said.

In her speech, the DENR chief said attaining universal, adequate and equitable access to safely managed water and sanitation services are at the core of inclusive and sustainable development.

Yulo-Loyzaga said integrated water resource management approaches that overcome barriers to water and sanitation access and improved health “are therefore imperative.”

“Moreover, risk-informed and transformative governance that increases access and affordability of safe drinking water and sanitation services must be sustained in order to advance health, livelihoods, and the dignity of all while preserving ecosystem integrity for the benefit of generations to come,” she said.

Climate change disruptions

Climate change has disrupted the world’s hydrological cycle, as extreme rainfall, and temperature changes amplify existing social vulnerabilities and threaten biodiversity.

Yulo-Loyzaga said more than ever, there is now a critical need for nexus governance for climate and disaster resilience. “One that pursues a strategic balance between supply and consumption of water for health, food, energy, and environmental security,” she added.

According to Yulo-Loyzaga, the Philippines is moving decisively in this direction.

“Our President has directed the creation of a water resource management office other than the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to achieve water security by integrating the functions of all agencies with water-related mandates,” she said.

She said the Water Resource Management Office is a first in the country’s history, and it’s aligned with new legislation creating an apex body for comprehensive water resource management.

“We are adopting an all hazards and risk-informed integrated water resource management approach to inform national level plans and actions across sectors and scales. Sector-wide guidance for universal access to safe and sufficient, affordable and sustainable water supply, sanitation and hygiene is by 2030 have been completed and the harmonization of these plans is underway,” she said.

Loyzaga added that vertical integration is being pursued to ensure alignment of local government water-related policies and actions with the Philippine Development Plan.

In establishing the National Geospatial database for natural resources, including water, the Philippines hope to achieve cross cutting development goals and improve water resource management down to the community level.

“It underpins our natural capital accounting program and establishes the physical basis of the design of water-related social and infrastructure policies and programs, which aim to ensure that no ecosystem or community is left behind,” she said.

The Philippines ranks fourth among the countries in the world most affected by water-related disasters. Approximately 20 typhoons enter the country each year, bringing torrential rain and flooding as well as waterborne diseases, extreme rainfall events and prolonged periods of drought have impacted our food, water, and energy supply between 2010 and 2019.

According to Loyzaga, damages incurred due to droughts, floods, and storms, amount to over \$10 billion water stress and insecurity remain and are threatening to move people further into poverty like other climate-vulnerable developing countries in the world.

GMA NEWS ONLINE

Marcos expects enhanced ties with Qatar, Chile as he greets envoys

By: Anna Felicia Bajo

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Thursday expressed hope that the Philippines' relations with Qatar and Chile would be enhanced as he received the credentials of the two countries' ambassadors to the Philippines.

At a ceremony at Malacañang Palace, Marcos receive the credentials of Ambassador Ahmed Saad Nasser Abdullah Al-Hamidi of Qatar and Ambassador Alvaro Domingo Jara Bucarey of Chile.

As he welcomed Bucarey, Marcos said the two countries could work together on various aspects including disaster response, climate change, energy security as well as enhanced government-to-government collaboration and public private partnerships (PPPs).

Marcos said the Philippines is looking at new technologies and best practices around the world to transition from traditional fossil fuels to renewables.

For his part, Bucarey told Marcos about Chile's potential for both solar and geothermal energy, adding its needs on new technologies and partners to harness such power sources.

"With solar energy we have been able to modify the energy production in Chile. And we would like to see the north of Chile... there is a lot of presence, tourism mostly but they have an immense potential for energy generation," Bucarey said.

Marcos also mentioned to Bucarey some of the new ideas and technologies that are available to both countries, noting that the Philippines needs partners to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"So I look forward to that, Mr. Ambassador, and I'm very happy that you have come as the envoy from your country and I am sure – I hope that you will get to see some of my country," the President said.

Meanwhile, Marcos also welcomed Al-Hamidi as he expressed hope that the Philippines could work closely with Qatar. He said he admires the country as it was able to transform its economy and "moved away from the traditional sources of revenue to new income sources with a very clear understanding of the future."

“I think that there are many areas that will provide us opportunities for partnership,” Marcos said.

Al-Hamidi, on the other hand, vowed that Qatar is willing to work with the Philippines in exploring some of the opportunities that the two nations have great potential through years of diplomatic relations.

Marcos also received the credentials of Ambassador Dato Abdul Malik Melvin Castelino Bin Anthony of Malaysia and Ambassador Megawati Dato Paduka Haji Manan of Brunei Darussalam.

JOURNAL ONLINE

[DENR urges companies to register EPR programs for plastic packaging waste](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is calling on enterprises to register their respective extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs following the issuance of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 11898 or the EPR Act of 2022.

The call is pursuant to a provision in the EPR Act mandating large businesses to set up their EPR programs for plastic packaging within six months after the effectivity of the law.

Specifically, the private sector is expected to submit their registration as an obliged enterprise, as a collective, or as a producer responsibility organization, in compliance with the DENR Administrative Order No. 2023-02 signed by DENR Secretary Antonia Loyzaga, which serves as the EPR's IRR issued on January 24, 2023.

RA 11898, which amended RA 9003 and took effect on August 13, 2022, places responsibility for the entire life cycle of plastic waste on its producers through the development and implementation of its EPR programs that focus on waste reduction, recovery, and diversion.

Businesses that fail to register their EPR program will be fined according to the law.

While other policy instruments target a single point in the value chain, EPR seeks to integrate signals related to the environmental characteristics of the products and production processes throughout the product chain.

The EPR tasks obliged enterprises to develop and implement a program to effectively collect plastic packaging in the country.

The implementation of the EPR Act is seen to steer the Philippines to gradually develop and transition to a circular economy as it helps address the growth of the plastic industry and the mismanagement of plastic waste.

The celebration of Zero Waste Month and 22nd anniversary of the signing of RA 9003 is themed "Stepping Up Solid Waste Management through Efficient Extended Producers' Responsibility."

The first day of the event on February 9 gathered around 400 stakeholders in the private and public sectors, non-government organizations, and development partners, sharing their initiatives and best practices and learning to support the EPR approach.

Among the partners present at the event were the Plastic Credit Exchange, Basic Environmental Systems & Technologies Inc., Coca-Cola Beverages Philippines, Inc., PETValue Philippines Corporation and the Coalition of Solid Waste Management Providers, Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS), Japan Embassy, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, United Nations Development Programme and Save Philippine Seas.

The celebration also served as a venue to start future engagement and collaboration with various organizations to enhance their respective EPR programs and to strengthen awareness of the law.

National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) Vice Chairman and PARMS founding president Crispian Lao also led the ceremonial commitment to EPR compliance by the industry sector and best practices towards efficient EPR among private organizations.

On February 10, 2023, the event showcased private sector recycling initiatives, actions on the localization of the National Plan of Action on Marine Litter by Local Government Units, and Best Practices in solid waste management by barangays.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[25 nations to join world's first green travel mart in PH](#)

By: Beatrice Pinlac

Twenty-five nations are expected to participate in the International Ecotourism Travel Mart (IETM) in the Philippines, the Department of Tourism (DOT) said Thursday.

The DOT will be co-hosting the IETM in Silang, Cavite from March 29 to April 2.

In a statement, the agency said it is set to promote the country's ecotourism destination during the IETM exhibit.

"A key event in the IETM is the two-day ecotourism forum where participants learn about best practices, do's and don'ts about authentic ecotourism to protect nature and biodiversity while ensuring that communities living around the ecotourism sites benefit from the gains of ecotourism enterprises," the DOT noted.

DOT Secretary Christina Frasco said the push for sustainability is not lip service nor a vague promise but "a way of life."

Frasco, according to the DOT, pointed to the need to give life to theories on achieving sustainability and preventing the further worsening of climate change.

Plenty of lessons from the forum and the sharing of best practices may be picked up by IETM participants, she added.

The IETM is co-presented by the Asian Ecotourism Network and the International School for Sustainable Tourism.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

3 energy firms vie for co-dev't of Tanay wind farm

By: Kris Crismundo

Three foreign and local energy companies are vying for the co-development of Alternergy's 100-megawatt (MW) Tanay wind project, the pioneer renewable power firm said in a statement Thursday.

Alternergy president Gerry Magbanua said these energy companies have expressed strong interest after the request for proposals deadline in March 2023.

The proposals were submitted to Alternergy's wholly-owned subsidiary Alternergy Tanay Wind Corp. (ATWC).

"The official letters of intent (LOI) have been received and we will proceed next to review their respective proposals to finalize the selection of our preferred equity partner," Magbanua said.

Alternergy cited the three companies that would like to co-develop the Tanay wind project – one of the world's largest energy companies based in Europe, a regional renewable energy company with a portfolio of wind and solar projects across the Asia-Pacific region, and a major domestic energy player that is part of a large Philippine conglomerate.

The Tanay wind power project is shovel-ready, has obtained major permits, and has four years of wind data.

It has also completed several technical studies, including logistics, and environmental and energy assessment, and has received height clearance approval from the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines.

The wind power project is part of Alternergy's five-year expansion plan, which includes developing up to 1,370 MW of additional wind, offshore wind, solar, and run-of-river hydropower projects.

With Alternergy's initial public offering (IPO), proceeds will fund the Tanay wind power project, as well as other projects in the pipeline.

[PBBM sees closer ties with Chile, Qatar, Brunei, Malaysia](#)

By: Filane Mikee Cervantes

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Thursday expressed hope for an enhanced cooperation with Chile and Qatar, particularly in the areas of disaster response, climate change adaptation, energy security and revenue mobilization.

Marcos made the remark as he welcomed the two countries’ new ambassadors to the Philippines -- Chilean Ambassador Alvaro Domingo Jara Bucarey and Qatar Ambassador Ahmed Saad Nasser Abdullah Al-Hamidi -- at Malacañang Palace.

Marcos, in welcoming the Chilean ambassador, said the Philippines needs partners as countries slowly redefine their economies for post-Covid and post-Ukraine scenarios.

He noted that the Philippines is looking at new technologies and best practices around the world to transition from traditional fossil fuels to renewables.

He particularly cited that while the Philippines is considered as one of the top producers of geothermal power, the country has to explore other areas as old geothermal sources start to run out.

Bucarey told Marcos that the good thing with Chile is its potential for both solar and geothermal energy.

“With solar energy we have been able to modify the energy production in Chile. And we would like to see the north of Chile... there is a lot of presence, tourism mostly but they have an immense potential for energy generation,” Bucarey said.

Marcos expressed delight for the opportunity to explore with the Chilean ambassador some of the new ideas and technologies that are available to both countries.

“So I look forward to that, Mr. Ambassador, and I’m very happy that you have come as the envoy from your country and I am sure – I hope that you will get to see some of my country,” Marcos said.

Meanwhile, Marcos, in welcoming Ambassador Al-Hamidi, said he hopes that the Philippines could work closely with the Gulf country.

He noted that it will be a great advantage to the Philippines if it can learn the best practices from Qatar, especially in the area of revenue and income generation, the President said.

“I think that there are many areas that will provide us opportunities for partnership,” he told the Qatari ambassador.

Al-Hamidi said his country is willing to work with the Philippines in exploring some of the opportunities that the two countries feel they have great potential through years of vibrant diplomatic relations.

Malaysia, Brunei continue helping Mindanao dev't efforts

He also welcomed Brunei's Ambassador Megawati Dato Paduka Haji Manan and Malaysian Ambassador Dato Abdul Malik Melvin Castelino Bin Anthony in Malacanang Palace, thanking the country's two Southeast Asian neighbors for helping bring stability in Mindanao.

Marcos said he remains hopeful that Brunei and Malaysia will continue supporting the development efforts in Mindanao to uplift the living condition of its people.

In welcoming Manan, Marcos said Brunei's assistance and support have been big factors to establish a successful autonomous Muslim government on the southern island of Mindanao.

“So again, I hope that Brunei continues to give our Muslim community in Southern Philippines whatever opportunities are available because that is the best way to assert that having peace is to give a good life to the people, a life that they would like to deserve,” Marcos said.

The approach that the government has taken, Marcos said, is the best formula, which is bringing as much development as quickly as possible in the area that will increase economic activity so people will have good living conditions and all the essentials to turn them away from fighting and the secessionist activity

In response to Marcos, Manan said it would certainly be Brunei's direction to increase the level of cooperation with the southern region, considering that there are certain commonalities with Brunei.

“And so we hope that we will branch out, you know, expand the existing cooperation to give some – a little bit more opportunities for the south side,” she told the President. “As Mr. President is saying, giving them more big opportunities so that they'll feel that they're more empowered in terms of uplifting their lives as well.”

The President and the Brunei ambassador also underscored the importance of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in resolving regional concerns such as the South China Sea issue and the civil unrest in Myanmar.

Marcos said ASEAN still remains the “most important mover for all of what we attempt diplomatically in terms of the conflicts that we are seeing”.

In welcoming the Malaysian ambassador, Marcos recognized Kuala Lumpur’s role in bringing peace to Southern Philippines, expecting it to continue participating in the development of the Bangsamoro region.

“It’s going to be very, very important because as long as we can provide... One of the complaints over the many, many years from the Muslim community in the Philippines was that they are underrepresented and underdeveloped. And they were absolutely right. So we are trying to fix that. We are trying to return a balance,” Marcos said.

The Malaysian ambassador said as the region gains stability, he believes that what Malaysia has done so far will sustain the progress of Mindanao.

PTV

Marcos wants vital role of modern technology in utilizing water management in PH

By: Katrina Gracia Consebido

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday, March 23, said he wants to use modern technology and strategies to efficiently manage water resources in the country to provide clean and affordable water for Filipinos.

In his speech at the 6th Edition of the Water Philippines' Conference and Exposition, he expressed his optimism as "technologies that are being used, that are being employed in terms of water treatment, in terms of water management are well-known technologies."

"The solutions that we need to formulate are out there, the technologies are out there. What has continued to change in the light of climate change is the management, the stratagems on how we manage our water," he said.

President Marcos also emphasized the significance of water in agriculture, emphasizing the effects of water scarcity on food security.

"When they say water is life, it's not just a cliché, it's a truism. And it is something that we must always keep in mind especially now. And that's why, we in the government – I just signed an executive order wherein we have created the Office of Water Management," Marcos said.

President Marcos authorized the establishment of a Water Resource Management Office (WRMO) in February to manage the country's water resources and respond to environmental threats.

The WRMO will report to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and will be in charge of developing and carrying out the Integrated Water Management Plan.

Flood mitigation

Marcos stated that flood control projects have evolved over time, noting that water can be used to generate electricity through small hydroelectric plants.

"When we used to talk a few years ago, when I was still governor, when you said water management, it generally meant flood control. And we would put dikes, we would put dams so as to be able to control the flooding," he continued.

“However, now, we must think in a very different way. Flood control, although many of the projects that the government has undertaken is categorized as flood control, these flood control projects no longer just are exclusively for that,” Marcos said.

“We take the water and we use it for irrigation, we use it for drinking water if we have a treatment plant,” he added.

The President referred to Israel’s experience, where it has been able to use the same clean water repeatedly for various uses despite having a limited water supply.

“These are the kinds of thinking that we have to apply to the Philippines because of the crisis that we are facing and how debilitating it will be to the entire economy, to the entire society if our water supply problem continues to get greater, continues to become more dependent on what we have been doing in the past,” Marcos said.

SUNSTAR

[DENR 6 led river and mangrove cleanup, celebrates IDF and WWD 2023](#)

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources led a river and mangrove cleanup on March 21, 2023, at the Iloilo River Esplanade 4 in time for the double celebration of the International Day of Forests (March 21) and World Water Day (March 22).

Cleanup volunteers involved youths from different colleges in the city and province of Iloilo and learned how to identify various wastes during the activity. Almost a hundred volunteers take part in the river and mangrove cleanup.

Staff from the Conservation and Development Division (CDD) of DENR 6 was assigned as the group leader to oversee the waste collection in every segment of Esplanade 4. A total of six segments, stretching more or less 800 meters, are covered during the cleanup. Volunteers collected 36 ½ sacks of waste with an estimated weight of 194.5 kilograms. After the activity, the City ENRO team assisted the DENR 6 with the waste disposal.

The International Day of Forests 2023 adopted the theme: “Healthy Forests for Healthy People” which underscores the basic human need and our dependence on healthy forests to keep us all fit. Meanwhile, the World Water Day theme is “Accelerating Change through Partnerships and Cooperation” which calls for everyone to take action to accelerate change to provide solutions to the ongoing challenge of the global water and sanitation crisis.

No other place within the city could be more attuned to the said celebrations than the river esplanade. After all, it is a success story after a strong collaboration from all stakeholders was forged and change was carried out.

“The government transformed the Iloilo River from a polluted one to an enhanced, clean and attractive place. Each of us plays a role, especially the youths, in cleaning up our environment, in protecting our mangrove forests,” said Assistant Regional Director for Technical Services Raul L. Lorilla.

In capping off the celebrations, the team from the Conservation and Development Division (CDD) of DENR 6 encouraged all participants to leave their handprints to create a beautiful canvas of a tree using acrylic paint. The piece of art depicts the cooperation of everyone in society, especially the youth, to take action and be part of the better change we all need.

“Like the art we have made, our doing things hand-in-hand or together, no matter how small, will create a bigger impact. We can always contribute to a better, climate change resilient society, to sustainable development with our small actions, wherever we are,” said DENR 6 Regional Executive Director Livino B. Duran.

DENR holds tree-planting activity, advocacy drive in Zamboanga del Norte

THE Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in Manukan, Zamboanga del Norte, in collaboration with the municipal government of Roxas of the same province, planted a total of 100 Narra seedlings in a tree planting activity, an official said Thursday, March 23, 2023.

Rosevirico Tan, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regional information officer, said the tree planting activity was conducted on Sunday, March 19, in Lower Irasan village, Roxas town.

The tree planting activity was participated by Pag-Asa Youth Association of the Philippines (PYAP)-Roxas Chapter members, personnel and staff of the Municipal Social and Welfare Development Office (MSWDO), members of Philippine National Police (PNP) and personnel from the local Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP).

Tan said that the tree planting activity was followed by an advocacy seminar attended by 30 youths representing the different villages of Roxas municipality.

He said the topics discussed include the salient features of Ecological Solid Waste Management (Republic Act 9003) and the importance of the forest and forestry laws.

The resource speakers were Evner Dalmacio, Reynand Balucan, and Sheena Aira Virtudes of the Monitoring and Enforcement Section (MES) of Cenro-Manukan.

The resource speakers challenged the young participants to utilize digital media to actively participate in environmental campaigns.

This way, the youth can fulfill their role in protecting and conserving the environment and natural resources, Tan said.

Tan said that leaflets and flyers were also distributed during the advocacy seminar.

They served as campaign materials that grabbed the attention of the local youth, particularly on the effects of deforestation and other destructive environmental activities.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

93% of Pinoys experienced impact of climate change – SWS

By: Janvic Mateo

Nine in every 10 Filipinos have personally experienced the impacts of climate change in the past three years, a survey conducted by Social Weather Stations (SWS) showed.

Results of the Dec. 10 to 14 survey released on Thursday showed that 93 percent of respondents said they experienced little to severe impact of climate change.

Some 17 percent said they experienced severe impact, 52 percent moderate and 24 percent little impact. Only six percent said they did not experience the impact of climate change in the past three years.

Compared to a similar survey conducted by SWS in 2017, the overall number of those who said they experienced the impact of climate change increased by six points from 87 percent (20 percent severe, 42 percent moderate and 25 percent little).

Awareness of climate change also increased from 74 percent in 2017 to 81 percent in the December 2022 survey.

Some 76 percent of the respondents believed that humanity could do something to stop or slow down climate change if everyone really tried, while 23 percent said it is beyond humanity's control.

A large majority of 88 percent also agreed that people like themselves can do something to reduce climate risk.

Solutions

Most of the respondents in the recent survey are aware of various solutions that can be taken to reduce the impact of climate change, including saving energy (95 percent), planting trees in the right places and protecting forests (95 percent) and walking, cycling or taking public transportation (93 percent), reducing, reusing, repairing and recycling (91 percent) and throwing away less food (86 percent).

SWS then asked those who were aware of each solution if their family does them to reduce the impact of climate change.

Engagement was highest in terms of saving energy (88 percent doing, seven percent might do, four percent does not do), followed by walking, cycling or taking public transportation (81 percent doing, 13 percent might, six percent not).

It was followed by throwing away less food (75 percent doing, 14 percent might, 11 percent not), reducing, reusing, repairing and recycling (74 percent doing, 17 percent might, eight percent not) and planting trees and protecting forests (63 percent doing, 24 percent might, 13 percent not).

The survey had 1,200 adult respondents and an error margin of plus/minus 2.8 percent.

El Niño by Q3

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said that there is an increased probability of El Niño phenomenon setting in by the third quarter this year.

PAGASA has raised the alert level to El Niño Watch as the probability of occurrence has reached 55 percent or more.

El Niño will likely develop from July to September 2023, following a transition from the current neutral conditions in the phenomenon's southern oscillation.

Ana Solis, chief of PAGASA climate prediction and monitoring section, said that recent conditions show that the El Niño phenomenon could last until the first few months of 2024.

El Niño, which increases the likelihood of below-normal rainfall conditions, is characterized by unusually warmer than average sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific.

The phenomenon could bring negative impacts such as dry spells and droughts in some areas of the country, with forecasters expecting early impact on Visayas and Mindanao.

PAGASA administrator Vincent Malano urged farmers and government agencies to prepare and get ready for the possible adverse effects of El Niño.

Caritas for renewable

Meanwhile, Caritas Philippines vowed to work for Catholic schools and church buildings to shift to the use of renewable energy.

In a statement issued yesterday, Caritas Philippines and Social Action Network committed itself into working toward eight goals in line with its call to “Declare Climate Emergency Now of the Rights of Nature (RoN) Movement.”

Since 1988 the Catholic Church has already been saying that the country was in peril and asked the government and civic and church leaders to save our “beautiful land.” However, 35 years later, they are still making the same appeal.

Over the years, the country has seen and experienced the effects of climate change such as the rise in sea levels three times the world average, destruction of naturally rich ecosystems, and forests steadily vanishing. Typhoons, while less in number, have become more destructive.

“We cannot be business as usual. While we have institutionalized programs on agroecology, invested millions in natural farming, and strengthened our advocacies on environmental protection, we feel that these are still not enough. More intentional and synodal actions need to be in place to mitigate climate impacts, especially in vulnerable communities,” the group said.

[PAGASA issues El Niño Watch; public urged to conserve water](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

State meteorologists on Thursday issued an El Niño Watch, indicating the increased likelihood that the weather phenomenon characterized by warming ocean temperatures will develop in the first third quarter of 2023.

An El Niño Watch is issued when conditions are favorable for the development of El Niño within the next six months and the probability is above 55% and above.

In a briefing, PAGASA said that El Niño "will likely develop in July-August-September 2023 season and may persist until 2024."

El Niño increases the likelihood of below-normal rainfall conditions, which could lead to dry spells and droughts in some areas of the Philippines.

However, above-normal rainfall conditions may be also experienced in the western part of the country during the southwest monsoon (habagat) season

The neutral phase of El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) — or the recurring climate pattern across the tropical Pacific — is currently happening and will continue until June.

The last El Niño event in the country occurred from the last quarter of 2018 to the third quarter of 2019.

El Niño preps

El Niño can deplete water supplies and cause significant losses in agricultural production.

In 2019, Metro Manila and neighboring provinces experienced water shortage as the El Niño contributed to a massive decline in rainfall. The damage brought by the phenomenon to agriculture reached around \$8 billion.

"We have a window for anticipation. One good anticipatory action is capturing what is available during the rainy season," Thelma Cinco, weather services chief of PAGASA's climatology and agrometeorology division, said in a briefing on Thursday.

PAGASA officials also advised Filipinos to do the following measures to conserve water:

- Use a glass of water when brushing teeth

- Water plants in the morning or in the evening
- Take a bath in five minutes tops
- Use a bucket of water and a rag to wash your car or bike
- Only use washing machine when it's fully-loaded
- Use water basins when washing dishes by hand
- Collect rain water

The state weather bureau on Tuesday declared the start of the dry season, which is expected to last until May.

El Niño, habagat, cyclones

Ana Liza Solis, chief of PAGASA's climate monitoring and prediction section, said that climate change affected the frequency and intensity of El Niño events.

"In the year 2000, strong El Niño events happened every 15 years. But after 2000, strong El Niño events occurred in five to seven years," she said.

According to Solis, the southwest monsoon or habagat can be enhanced during El Niño.

Solis said that some of the strong tropical cyclones that may develop during El Niño may recurve or not enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility. But if cyclones approach the country, their winds and rains are likely to be more intense.

How many tropical cyclones are expected this year?

- April – 0 to 1
- May – 1 to 2
- June – 1 to 2
- July – 2 to 3
- August – 2 to 3
- September – 2 to 3

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[PAGASA launches tool to monitor extreme rainfall](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

State weather bureau PAGASA on Thursday launched a web-based platform to monitor extreme rainfall events, which can help decision makers and the general public mitigate disasters.

PAGASA launched Satellite Rainfall Extremes Monitor (SatREx) during the celebration of the National Meteorological Day.

“Determining whether extreme rainfall is occurring at any given time and location is of utmost importance for mitigating disasters in highly-vulnerable countries like the Philippines,” the agency said.

The Philippines is one of the countries most at risk from the impacts of climate change such as strong cyclones, droughts and sea level rise, with poor and rural communities bearing the brunt of disasters.

SatREx provides satellite rainfall estimates observed in the past few hours and days in a particular location anywhere in the archipelago. The estimates were derived from the Global Satellite Mapping of Precipitation provided by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency.

“We translated information from that dataset, we extracted them, and used them for providing near-real-time rainfall estimates. We translate such kinds of observed rainfall relative to historical rainfall data and determine areas with possibility of flooding,” said Dr. Marcelino Villafuerte II, chief of impact assessment and applications section of PAGASA’s Climatology and Agrometeorology Division.

The National Meteorological Day is celebrated concurrently with the World Meteorological Day.

This year’s World Meteorological Day theme is the future of weather, climate and water across generations.

UNITED NATIONS

UN chief calls on EU to help world get ‘back on track’

In a joint press encounter with the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, Mr. Guterres appealed for EU leaders to help the world “get back on track” towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at a time when progress in so many parts of the world had been reversed.

Acceleration and reform

“We need an acceleration agenda,” he said.

Mr. Guterres also highlighted the need for financial system reforms and urgent climate action.

He said the Russian invasion of Ukraine is causing “tremendous suffering” to the Ukrainian people, but also having a “huge impact” around the world.

The Secretary-General today attended a session with the members of the European Council in Brussels.

‘Timely opportunity’

In a readout of his closed door session with European Council members – the body that forms part of the executive of the European Union alongside the European Commission – The Spokesperson’s Office said on behalf of the UN chief that it had provided a “timely opportunity to discuss pressing global matters”.

Mr. Guterres thanked the European Union for its strong support of the UN and multilateralism overall, calling for greater cooperation in implementing his ‘Our Common Agenda’ blueprint, and next year’s Summit of the Future.

On Ukraine, he stressed the need for a “just peace” in line with the UN Charter, international law overall, and the General Assembly’s resolution.

“He provided an update on enhancing global food security through the Black Sea Grain Initiative and efforts to facilitate the exports of Russian food and fertilizers”, commending all EU citizens who had shown solidarity with the millions of Ukrainian refugees who have left the war zone.

Keeping 1.5 alive

On climate change, Mr. Guterres stressed the importance of his agenda to accelerate specific actions from all parties to implement recommendations of Monday's IPCC report, "to keep the 1.5-degree limit alive."

"He welcomed the European Green Deal as a significant step in this direction and encouraged the EU to scale up its financial and technological cooperation with emerging and developing economies to close the emissions gap and deliver climate justice in the form of green jobs, strengthening adaptation, implementing the loss and damage fund, and protecting vulnerable communities everywhere."

The Secretary-General expressed concerns about the "perfect storm" facing many developing countries from the COVID crisis, and cost of living crisis stemming from the invasion of Ukraine and accelerating climate change.

He underlined the importance of putting in place measures for a more equitable economic and financial system, including through banking reform, more effective debt relief, and an SDG stimulus.

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