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AL JAZEERA

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By: Karim Elgendy

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BBC

[Climate change: Is the UK on track to meet its targets?](#)

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BUSINESS WORLD

[BSP looking to ease SBL rules to help boost sustainable financing](#)

By: Keisha B. Ta-asan

THE BANGKO SENTRAL ng Pilipinas (BSP) may relax its regulations to encourage Philippine banks to finance sustainable initiatives, as this could help drive the country towards net zero emissions.

[Danish fund awarded first 100%-foreign RE contracts](#)

By: Sheldeen Joy Talavera

DENMARK's Copenhagen Infrastructure New Markets Fund (CINMF) on Thursday signed agreements to develop three offshore wind sites, becoming the first company to obtain concessions after the renewable energy (RE) industry was opened up to full foreign ownership.

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By: Revin Mikhael D. Ochave

THE Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said it is seeking to establish the Philippines as a production hub for battery manufacturing for electric vehicles (EV), to tap the country's mineral reserves.

CNN PHILIPPINES

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The proposed establishment of a \$250-million waste-to-energy facility in Clark, Pampanga gained the support of the country's environment chief and the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) to avert a possible garbage crisis.

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Lake Montbel is a shimmering, turquoise lake, stretching across 1,400 acres of southwest France, in the foothills of the Pyrenees – a haven for wildlife, a vital source of irrigation for farmers and water for local rivers, and a tourist paradise. But after the driest winter in more than six decades, it is a shadow of its former self.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

[Ticking climate time bomb](#)

EXPERTS all around the globe have time and again aired the warning that the world faces massive environmental and economic problems which are all induced by global warming and climate change.

MANILA BULLETIN

[MGreen, Vena Energy start solar project commercial operation](#)

By: Myrna M. Velasco

MGen Renewable Energy, Inc. (MGreen), a unit under the Manila Electric Company (Meralco) group; and Vena Energy have reached commercial operation date (COD); for their 68-megawatt solar farm project in Currimao, Ilocos Norte.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[83.3-MW Currimao-2 solar project boosts PH renewable energy share](#)

By: Leilanie Adriano

The town of Currimao in Ilocos Norte beamed with pride on Thursday as it began hosting a multi-million solar energy plant now ready to begin commercial operations.

[Warm, humid weather to prevail across PH](#)

By: Ma. Cristina Arayata

Warm and humid weather will prevail across the archipelago, the weather bureau said Thursday.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Australian parliament approves emissions caps on big polluters](#)

Breakthrough climate laws passed by Australia on Thursday will target the nation's worst polluters, forcing coal mines and oil refineries to curb emissions by about five percent each year.

[Coast Guard: 60% of oil spill-hit shorelines cleaned up](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Responders and volunteers have so far cleaned up 60% of the oil spill-affected coastlines more than a month since tanker MT Princess Empress sank off Oriental Mindoro, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reported on Thursday.

[\[Opinion\] Wanted: 'Climate warriors'](#)

By: Marichu Villanueva

As the United Nations (UN) winds down the observance of the International Women's Month, activities to mark April as the Earth Month kicked off last Saturday. With the ceremonial switching off simultaneously of all electric lights, the resulting darkness simulated efforts to help cool down Planet Earth from the effects of the global warming.

[UN adopts landmark resolution on climate justice](#)

By: Amélie Bottolier-Depois

The UN General Assembly took a major step towards urgent global climate action Wednesday as members adopted a resolution calling for the world body's top court to outline nations' legal obligations related to curbing warming.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DWIZ

[PGHGIMRS lead agencies pinulong ng Climate Change Commission](#)

By: Gilbert Pardez

Pinulong ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) ang mga Philippine Greenhouse Gas Inventory Management and Reporting System (PGHGIMRS) lead agencies.

IBC 13

[Earth Hour 2023](#)

By: Ralph Lopez

Sa pakikiisa ng marami sa isinagawang Earth Hour o isang oras na pagpatay ng ilaw nitong Sabado, iniulat mismo ng Department of Energy na aabot sa 62.69 MW na kuryente ang natipid sa buong bansa.

POLITIKO

[Climate body wants more funds for nature-based projects](#)

By: Prince Golez

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is pushing for increased funding for nature-based solutions.

THE GLOBAL DAILY MIRROR

[CCC, UNDP to hike financing for nature-based solutions](#)

By: Denisse Osorio

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the United Nations Development Programme-Philippines (UNDP Philippines) collaboratively launched a project Wednesday aimed to increase private sector investments for gender-responsive and nature-based solutions.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

AL JAZEERA

[We need decisive climate action, can COP28 deliver?](#)

By: Karim Elgendy

On March 20, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its synthesis report, a summary of seven years of climate science, that once again emphasised the grave threat humanity faces from climate change.

The report concludes that even with the most ambitious greenhouse gas emission reductions, global warming is expected to overshoot the 1.5 degrees Celsius limit set by the Paris Agreement as early as 2030. Temperature increases are expected to reach 1.6C, before falling back below the critical threshold. For this “best case” scenario to take place global emissions must peak by 2025, drop by at least 43 percent by 2030, and reach net zero carbon by the middle of the century.

Yet, we cannot achieve this goal with the current policies we have in place at the national and international levels. In fact, if we do not radically change our approach to the climate crisis, we are on track for a 2.8C increase by the end of the century. On this trajectory, we will not only see increased frequency and severity of heatwaves, droughts and other extreme weather events but will also risk dangerous runaway climate change.

To avoid climate chaos, the world urgently needs to scale up climate action. The upcoming 28th United Nations Conference of Parties (COP28), which will take place in Dubai in December, offers perhaps one of the last opportunities to do that.

There are several issues on the agenda of the two-week summit, including a review of the Paris Agreement, an agreement on a global goal for climate adaptation, and the establishment of a finance facility for loss and damage due to climate change. But COP28 has the potential to achieve even more than that; it can become a watershed where COP meetings transition from multilateral negotiations to bold decision-making to advance climate action.

This promise could only be fulfilled if COP28 avoids getting mired in a debate over the role of fossil fuels in the global energy transition that leads to another impasse over a phaseout.

As the COP28 host, the United Arab Emirates can play a major role in steering the outcome of the conference towards a breakthrough that charts a new way forward.

Some have questioned whether a major oil exporter can lead the way in climate negotiations with the urgency they deserve. But a quick look at the Emirati climate policies can perhaps provide more context and clarity.

The UAE has pursued an unorthodox approach of fully decarbonising and diversifying its economy while exporting every drop of oil it can. It has also aimed to shift its domestic energy mix towards renewable and nuclear energy sources, which conveniently releases more oil for export. Export revenues, in turn, are to be channelled towards funding the economic transition, including investments in renewable energy projects around the world.

The UAE is voluntarily targeting carbon neutrality by 2050 – in addition to making a modest carbon reduction commitment under the Paris Agreement. Yet simultaneously, its Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) is working to increase its production capacity by another 19 percent by 2027. It argues that it should be one of the last-standing producers since its production has one of the lowest costs and carbon footprints.

This paradox is best captured by the UAE's choice of Sultan Al Jaber to preside over COP28. While being a bona fide climate pioneer and the chairman of the UAE's renewable energy investment company, Masdar, Dr Al Jaber is also the current head of ADNOC.

Yet, there is nothing in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to suggest that such an unorthodox approach is in breach of the UAE's responsibilities as a signatory. Despite their exceptionally high emissions per capita, the UAE and its regional neighbours are considered developing countries bearing little responsibility for historic emissions.

The UNFCCC's recognition of different national responsibilities for climate change and capacities for action allows developing countries to make modest emission reduction commitments in recognition of their need for economic development. The fact that the UAE is a major oil producer makes little difference, as fossil fuels are considered traded goods and their emissions are accounted for where they are burned.

In approaching its COP presidency, however, the UAE can go beyond its responsibilities as a UNFCCC signatory and demonstrate that it is a climate pioneer. Implementing the goals of the Paris Agreement requires leadership that addresses challenges impartially and delivers breakthroughs to unlock climate action.

The UAE can and must use its growing diplomacy and financial firepower to drive decarbonisation and strengthen emissions reduction targets globally ahead of the

summit. It can also leverage its influence in the Middle East not just to raise awareness of climate change impacts but also to catalyse regional climate collaboration.

It should also not shy away from tackling the issue of fossil fuel phaseouts. The latest IPCC Assessment Report concludes that 47 percent of human-related CO₂ emissions are caused by oil and gas. The Synthesis Report notes that future emissions from existing fossil fuel infrastructure already exceed the remaining carbon budget for limiting warming to 1.5C and casts doubt on emerging technologies, such as carbon capture and storage, being able to reduce CO₂ levels.

At COP27, 80 nations called for phasing out fossil fuels. If these demands are repeated in Dubai, they must be considered for the summit's final decision. The COP hosts could use their convening power to lead a voluntary coalition on halting new oil and gas explorations in line with the IPCC's and the International Energy Agency's recommendations.

The UAE and COP28 participants must also avoid repeating the mistakes of previous COPs. The last thing the climate crisis needs is another round of negotiations where climate ambitions are dragged down by narrow national interests.

The time left to halt dangerous climate change is rapidly running out. The decisions we make this decade will determine the future of humanity. Our response to this historic responsibility demands that we rise to the occasion with a bolder energy transition and redoubled efforts, not half measures and promises of future technologies. COP28 can be the venue where the world decides to follow the science and accelerate climate action.

BBC

[Climate change: Is the UK on track to meet its targets?](#)

The UK has pledged to reduce its greenhouse-gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Net zero means a country takes as much of these climate-changing gases - such as carbon dioxide - out of the atmosphere as it puts in.

The UK's target is important to meet its commitments under the 2015 Paris climate agreement in which governments agreed to try to limit global temperature rises to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels.

However, in July 2022, the High Court ruled that the government's net zero strategy failed to outline policies that would enable it to meet the target. As a result the government published a new plan.

Currently, less than 40% of the UK's required emissions reductions are supported by proven policies and sufficient funding, according to the Climate Action Tracker website.

So, what progress is the government making?

The government says all of the UK's electricity will come from clean sources by 2035.

The government is expecting a 40-60% rise in demand for electricity by 2035, for example due to the electrification of transport. This means taking the carbon emissions out of electricity generation is important.

UK governments have been relatively successful in cutting emissions from electricity generation. These fell by 73.4% between 1990 and 2021.

This is largely due to a substantial reduction in electricity generated from coal - the dirtiest fossil fuel - from 40% in 2012 to less than 2% last year.

The proportion of electricity generated by renewables has grown to around 40% in the last few years, up from just over 10% a decade ago. Fossil fuels - mainly natural gas - still generate about 40% of UK electricity. The remainder comes from nuclear power and imports.

The government has set ambitious targets to accelerate the expansion of low carbon energy to reduce reliance on natural gas. These include increasing offshore wind capacity five-fold by 2030 and approving up to eight new nuclear reactors.

A report by the National Audit Office warned that the lack of a clear delivery plan risked the UK not meeting its 2035 carbon-free electricity target. But the UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) recently emphasised that it is still possible if delivery is significantly ramped up.

However, the government has opened a new licensing round for companies to explore for oil and gas in the North Sea for wider energy production, not limited to electricity. The International Energy Agency warns this would go against climate agreements.

Direct emissions from buildings account for about 17% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, mainly due to burning fossil fuels for heating.

The government committed to installing 600,000 heat pumps a year by 2028 to replace gas boilers. Heat pumps use electricity rather than gas, and are three times more efficient than a boiler. The government is offering grants of £5,000 to help homeowners install a heat pump.

However, in February 2023, the Lords Climate Change Committee described this scheme as "seriously failing". Currently, only 50,000 heat pumps are installed annually, meaning the government's 600,000 target is "very unlikely to be met".

Insulation is one of the most effective ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from housing. It prevents the loss of heat, meaning less energy is wasted trying to maintain the house's temperature.

However, the UK has some of the least energy-efficient homes in Europe. In June, the CCC said there was a "shocking gap in policy for better insulated homes".

In response, in November 2022 the government announced a new £1bn scheme, called ECO+, to improve insulation in UK homes. This is due to come into effect in April 2023. But critics say it doesn't go far enough.

In March 2023 the government rebranded it as the Great British Insulation Scheme, to help insulate 300,000 of the poorest performing homes.

Transport accounted for just over a quarter of UK emissions in 2021, making it the largest emitting sector.

The government says no new petrol and diesel cars will be sold from 2030.

By 2028, it wants 52% of car sales to be electric. In 2021, 11.6% of car sales were electric. The CCC says that this is ahead of schedule and that the market is "currently growing well".

To meet higher demand, the government wants 300,000 publicly-accessible charging points by 2030. This represents more than a ten-fold increase from present levels. It has pledged over £350m to fund charging infrastructure.

In June 2022, the government announced it was ending grants for electric cars, saying the payment was having "little effect on rapidly accelerating sales".

In March 2022, it pledged £200m for nearly 1000 new electric and hydrogen buses, and is consulting on an earlier phase-out date of non-zero-emissions buses between 2025 and 2032.

And it aims to remove all diesel-only trains by 2040, but the CCC says it needs a clearer plan to achieve this.

It has promised to double cycling rates from 2013 levels by 2025, and build a "world-class" cycling network by 2040. It has spent £338m on walking and cycling infrastructure in England

Flying makes up about 7% of overall UK emissions, and shipping about 3%.

The UK published its strategy for delivering net zero aviation by 2050 in July 2022.

It was criticised for relying too much on technologies such as sustainable fuels and zero emissions aircraft that do not yet exist. It also relies on the development of ways to remove CO2 from the atmosphere to make up for remaining emissions in 2050.

As a result, the CCC said that the government should be looking at how to manage demand and not allow it to grow.

The government has announced £77m of funding to help decarbonise shipping.

Agriculture is the source of 11% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions.

The CCC said emissions from agriculture needed to be cut by 30% between 2019 and 2035.

This would require eating 20% less meat and dairy by 2030 and shifting land from agriculture to supporting trees and restoring peatlands.

The CCC criticised the government's food strategy for failing to deliver action to drive down emissions from agriculture at the required scale or pace.

The National Food Strategy independent review shows daily meat consumption in the UK has fallen by 17% in the last decade. The government has been criticised for not pushing for further behavioural change in meat consumption.

In February 2023, the government released details of its long-awaited environmental land management schemes, replacing the EU common agricultural policy.

Trees and peatlands play important roles in removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

UK forest cover is 13%, among the lowest in Europe.

The government has pledged to end deforestation in the UK by 2030. It has an ambitious target to plant 30,000 hectares of trees a year by 2025.

However, annual tree planting has not risen above 15,000 hectares UK-wide since 2001. In June 2022, the UK forestry body warned that there was "zero chance" of the UK meeting its target.

It is estimated that only around 20% of UK peatlands are in a near-natural state, including only 1.3% in England. These damaged peatlands are responsible for 5% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, whereas healthy peatlands would take up carbon dioxide.

The government aims to restore 35,000 hectares of peatland by 2025, and will completely ban the sale of horticultural peat by 2030. However, the CCC warns this does not go far enough.

Hydrogen is a low-carbon fuel that could be used for transport, heating, power generation or energy storage.

The government says it is committed to developing the UK's low carbon hydrogen capabilities and considers it a critical part of energy security and decarbonisation. It wants to have a 10GW hydrogen production capacity by 2030.

The industry is in its infancy, and the government admits it will need "rapid and significant scale-up" in the coming years.

A recent study warned that hydrogen was less efficient and more expensive for heating homes than alternatives such as heat pumps.

The government has promised a decision on the role of hydrogen in heating by 2026. In March 2023 it announced the first winning projects from the £240m Net Zero Hydrogen Fund.

In December 2022, it launched a consultation on the potential for hydrogen transport.

The ability to capture carbon before it is released - or take it out of the atmosphere and store it - will be important if the UK is to reach net zero, to balance emissions from the continued limited use of natural gas.

The government is aiming to capture and store between 20 and 30 million tonnes of CO₂ a year by 2030.

In March 2023 it announced the first sites for storing captured carbon, which will be on Teesside.

The Chancellor recently announced £20bn in investment in carbon capture over the next 20 years. But the technology is still emerging and is expensive.

Emissions from manufacturing and construction represent about 12% of total UK emissions.

The government aims to cut emissions from manufacturing by about two-thirds by 2035.

It has awarded £34.8m of funding through the Industrial Energy Transformation Fund to help energy-intensive industries decarbonise, but critics say this is insufficient.

The government also plans to cap the amount of emissions allowed by individual sectors each year, reducing that amount over time.

But the scheme risks companies shifting production to other countries and therefore not reducing their emissions.

BUSINESS WORLD

BSP looking to ease SBL rules to help boost sustainable financing

By: Keisha B. Ta-asan

THE BANGKO SENTRAL ng Pilipinas (BSP) may relax its regulations to encourage Philippine banks to finance sustainable initiatives, as this could help drive the country towards net zero emissions.

During a forum discussion hosted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), BSP Governor Felipe M. Medalla said that with the Philippines being one of the most exposed to climate change risks, it is crucial to improve the financing of renewable energy plans in the country.

“The easiest part is to look at all the regulations on lending and see the extent they could be relaxed in favor of moving towards net zero — fully realizing, though, that you are also creating new risks,” Mr. Medalla said.

Mr. Medalla said the BSP may look into easing single borrower’s limits (SBL) for sustainable projects.

“In the past, we have lifted the single borrower’s limits for projects that are good for the country. The banks are a little bit less safe because they’re more exposed to single borrower failure, but at the same time, the country benefits as a whole,” he said.

The SBL is intended to limit credit exposure to a single client to a maximum of 30% of a bank’s net worth to minimize risks in case of default as part of the central bank’s initiatives to promote banking system stability through the adoption of sound credit risk management and regulatory capital standards.

In January, the central bank enhanced its SBL rules to encourage banks to support the financing requirements of the economy. The effectivity of the 30% single borrowers’ limit has been extended until end-June.

Mr. Medalla said the public must also realize how important it is to move towards sustainability, even though some solutions to climate change “would be painful to some.”

“In the Philippines, a survey showed the public support (green initiatives because they) realize that the Philippines is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world,” Mr. Medalla said.

“People are willing to do that for a good cause, but in addition, the economics has to be right,” he said.

He added that cleaner sources of energy should be cheaper to increase adoption because consumers tend to gravitate towards less expensive products.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said the Philippines has committed to the United Nations to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 75% between 2020 and 2030.

Under the Philippine Energy Plan, the country also targets to increase renewable energy in its energy mix to 35% by 2030, and 50% by 2040.

Meanwhile, in a report released on Thursday, the ADB said the Philippines is highly vulnerable to oil price fluctuations.

The country also ranked top five among the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries in 2020 in terms of carbon dioxide emissions, with 136 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO₂e), up 64% from 2014.

If prices for renewables decline, the country will likely shift away from nonrenewable sources, the ADB said.

It said ASEAN economies must also strengthen their role in global value chains (GVCs) by building resilience against crises, utilizing technology, and shifting to sustainable measures.

“ASEAN economies need to urgently readjust and strengthen their positions in regional and global value chains to bolster resilience against the evolving challenges they face — not least the risks of future pandemics, geopolitical instability, and climate change,” it said.

“The coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the Russian invasion of Ukraine, growing tensions between the United States and the People’s Republic of China, and climate risks exposed weaknesses across the GVC network.”

The ADB said ignoring these risks could affect the region’s GVC participation and reduce benefits from global trade.

Southeast Asia’s energy demand is expected to grow annually by around 3% to 2030, the region’s carbon dioxide emissions are projected to grow by about 35% from 2020 levels, it said.

The ADB estimates the region needs approximately \$210 billion per year to finance climate-resilient infrastructure by 2030 to avoid the loss of up to one-third of the region's gross domestic product by 2050.

Danish fund awarded first 100%-foreign RE contracts

By: Sheldeen Joy Talavera

DENMARK's Copenhagen Infrastructure New Markets Fund (CINMF) on Thursday signed agreements to develop three offshore wind sites, becoming the first company to obtain concessions after the renewable energy (RE) industry was opened up to full foreign ownership.

The sites, each covered by a Service Contract, are in Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur, with capacity projected at 1,000 megawatts (MW); Northern Samar (650 MW); and Pangasinan and La Union (350 MW).

Przermek Lupa, associate partner in Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP), which manages the fund, said the investment involved is \$5 billion, with each service contract running for 25 years.

"As the first fully foreign entity to the renewable energy sector in the Philippines, we want to grow with the country. We want to be a catalyst for deploying large volumes of capital in sustainable projects," Mr. Lupa said at the signing ceremony.

The projects are targeted to be completed within the tenure of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.

"If we can look at achieving COD (commercial operations date) by 2028, (it) means starting construction a couple of years earlier. That is the goal," he said.

He said that the company will seek to conduct its dealings with the Department of Energy as a "one-stop shop," and indicated the need to collaborate with the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines and other stakeholders.

"CIP believes that bold moves, scale, and speed (are critical in mitigating) the impacts of climate change. Of course, we know how the Philippines is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change," he said.

Energy Secretary Raphael P.M. Lotilla said the projects will help accelerate the Philippines' shift to indigenous and renewable sources of energy.

"These agreements represent an additional strategic investment and a firm commitment to strengthen the renewable energy sector, particularly the development of offshore wind," he said.

“They provide a significant contribution towards a low carbon future as well as encourage the development of the local supply chain,” he added.

Danish Ambassador to the Philippines Franz-Michael Melbin said foreign investors “are more comfortable taking 100% control of projects.”

He said that the Philippines’ target capacity of 40 gigawatts will depend on the availability of sites investors are interested in.

Mr. Melbin added that red tape has been a challenge for foreign investors. “Cut the red tape and we can cut the red ribbons,” he said, referring to the ribbon-cutting ceremonies at the launch of projects.

“The government can do a lot more for foreign investment by cutting red tape,” he said.

Niels Holst, a CIP partner and head of the CINMF, was quoted as saying in a statement that the removal of foreign ownership restrictions on renewable energy projects was a “positive signal” for entry of investments.

“We believe the Philippines holds great potential for low-cost power delivery from high-quality renewable energy projects that would deliver local employment and skills,” he said.

[PHL touted as potential hub for EV battery production](#)

By: Revin Mikhael D. Ochave

THE Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said it is seeking to establish the Philippines as a production hub for battery manufacturing for electric vehicles (EV), to tap the country's mineral reserves.

"Aside from our commitment to combat climate change through the use of EVs, the DTI also aims to aggressively position the Philippines in the battery segment of the global market," Trade Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual said during his speech at the lease signing ceremony between Envirotech Vehicles and Berthaphil in Taguig City on March 28.

"Given the presence of abundant nickel and cobalt reserves, the Philippine government is consistently promoting the country as a potential manufacturing hub for battery production," he added.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau estimates that the value of metallic output rose 31.7% to P238.05 billion in 2022 as production rose.

According to Mr. Pascual, the EV industry is vital in generating more investment and employment.

"The growth and development of the EV industry is crucial in making green investments and jobs happen in the Philippines as we aim to generate stable, high-quality, and better-paying jobs for Filipinos, while achieving shared prosperity for all," Mr. Pascual said.

"We seek to create an end-to-end value chain from the mining and processing of green metals to the local manufacture of batteries, charging stations or units, and EVs," he added.

Under the EV Industry Development Act, the government and private sector are required to maintain vehicle fleets with EVs accounting for 5%.

The DTI will also recommend an EV incentive strategy for the approval of the Fiscal Incentives Review Board, akin to the Comprehensive Automotive Resurgence Strategy (CARS) program, to create an enabling business environment for the EV industry.

The CARS program, signed in 2015, seeks to improve domestic vehicle manufacturing by providing incentives. The program participants are Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. and Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp.

CNN PHILIPPINES

[DENR, BCDA back proposed \\$250-M waste-to-energy facility in Pampanga](#)

The proposed establishment of a \$250-million waste-to-energy facility in Clark, Pampanga gained the support of the country's environment chief and the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) to avert a possible garbage crisis.

Environment Secretary Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said the department wants to see similar projects as "this would mean more green investments pouring into our country."

"Apart from creating jobs, we are also looking at lengthening the lifespan of sanitary landfills and improving our environmental outlook," Loyzaga said at a recent event with Metro Clark Waste Management Corporation (MCWMC).

For BCDA President and CEO Aileen R. Zosa, the project would complement efforts to make New Clark City a "sustainable and efficient community."

"We want to ensure that our garbage is efficiently collected and disposed of," Zosa said.

MCWMC, operator of a 100-hectare disposal facility in Clark, is the project proponent, with its foreign partner Plambeck Emirates.

Once operational, it would be the country's first waste-to-energy plant.

Holger Holst of Plambeck Emirates said the country is "in the middle of a solid waste crisis" as it generates solid waste at the rate of 40,000 tons a day.

[This once-thriving lake has all but dried up. It's a story repeated across Europe as the drought deepens](#)

By: Laura Paddison

Lake Montbel is a shimmering, turquoise lake, stretching across 1,400 acres of southwest France, in the foothills of the Pyrenees – a haven for wildlife, a vital source of irrigation for farmers and water for local rivers, and a tourist paradise. But after the driest winter in more than six decades, it is a shadow of its former self.

Shrunken water levels, grounded boats, buoys resting on the cracked earth of the lake bed – current views of Lake Montbel are more reminiscent of what might be expected at the tail end of a scorching summer. Not at the end of winter.

Currently at about 28% of its capacity, water levels are less than half what is usual for this time of the year.

“In the history of the lake, created in the early 1980s, this is the first time that this situation has been so serious,” said Boris Rouquet, a farmer and the water lead for the National Federation of Farmers’ Unions in Ariège, the region where Lake Montbel is located.

The lake has faced difficult times before “but this is exceptional,” Rouquet told CNN.

This story of extremes is one that’s playing out across swaths of Europe.

While in the United States, the snow and rain that have pummeled California have helped fill reservoirs and ease unrelenting drought, winter has been far from kind to many parts of Europe.

Still reeling from last year’s blistering summer and the worst drought in 500 years, parts of the continent have experienced such low levels of snow and rain that fears are growing for what might be in store as summer approaches – and beyond.

As climate change intensifies, scientists say we can expect droughts and heatwaves to become more frequent and more severe – putting huge pressure on water resources.

Temperatures in southwest France soared to 30 degrees Celsius (86 Fahrenheit) on Wednesday, according to Météo-France, the country’s weather service. It was the hottest March day on record in the country since 1900, the agency said. And the warm start to the year is coming hand-in-hand with exceptionally low rainfall.

Between January and February, France had more than 30 consecutive days with no significant rainfall – the longest stretch since records began in 1959. Added to that, snowfall has been very low, meaning less snowmelt to recharge rivers in the spring.

More rain has fallen in March but not nearly enough. “Lake Montbel remains at an abnormally low level,” Franck Solacroup, the regional director of the Adour-Garonne Water Agency, which covers the area that includes Lake Montbel, told CNN.

Farmers like Rouquet, who rely on the lake, are having to make tough decisions on what to grow. Some have stopped planting certain crops, others have sown more cereal crops in the hope that rain will fall. Livestock farmers are worried about having enough feed for their animals, and some may even be forced to reduce their herds, Rouquet said.

“Unless the lake is filled sufficiently, farmers will not be able to irrigate, and the survival of many farms is at stake,” he said. It’s damaging farmers’ morale. “We often talk about the financial side but the human side is very affected.”

As summer approaches, the situation “does not bode well,” Solacroup said. Last year, nearly 400 municipalities in the region had restricted or disrupted drinking water supplies.

Just over the border, in Catalonia, northeast Spain, is a similar situation of parched reservoirs and thirsty crops.

Average water levels in Catalonia’s reservoirs are at about 27% and there are already some water restrictions in place.

The Sau Reservoir, about 60 miles north of Barcelona, is now only around 9% full, according to Catalan Water Agency data. As the water levels have fallen, the remnants have emerged of a centuries-old village and its church, which were flooded when the reservoir was created in the 1960s.

In mid-March, the Catalan Water Agency started removing fish in an attempt to save some of them and protect the water quality in what remains of the reservoir, which more than five million people rely on for drinking water.

“This is an extraordinary measure ... and is adopted to preserve the water quality... and be able to guarantee the population’s demands as much as possible,” the Catalan government said in a statement.

Water is so scarce, some farmers in the region have turned to prayer. On Sunday, hundreds of residents of the mountain village of L'Espunyola, about 70 miles north of Barcelona, led a procession to appeal to Our Lady of the Torrents to bring them rain.

Italy, located in the “climate hotspot” of the Mediterranean, has also been badly affected.

In northern Italy, which experienced its worst drought for more than 70 years last summer, the mountains have very low snow levels and lakes have shrunk, including Lake Como, which is less than 18% full. Water in the Po River, which winds across the northern agricultural heartland, is running close to record lows, with certain sections are in “extreme drought.”

Farmers are feeling the strain. Rice growers predict that the amount they sow this spring will be the lowest in more than two decades, according to a survey by Enterisi, Italy's national rice institution. “April and May will be crucial because the lower rainfall in the winter months needs to be made up,” an Enterisi spokesman told CNN.

In Italy, the impacts of the climate crisis combined with aging, leaky water infrastructure are leaving the country highly vulnerable to “critical water conditions,” Simona Ramberti, of the national statistics institution Istat, told CNN.

In 2020, more than 42% of water in the system did not reach users, according to the Istat urban water census. This is equivalent to a daily loss of around 157 liters for every resident – which could have met the needs of 43 million people for a year.

Given last year's drought, in which 10 regions announced a state of emergency for water deficits, Ramberti said the current dry spell “does not bode well for the coming months.”

“We're observing a pretty special situation,” said Manuela Brunner, assistant professor in hydrology at ETH Zurich and the Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research in Davos, Switzerland.

Looking out of her office window in Davos, at an elevation of nearly 1,600 meters (5,000 feet), Brunner said she can see a sweep of brown and green grass, but very little snow. “This is the most extreme winter in terms of low snow cover,” she told CNN. “And that's that's a problem.”

Less water stored in snow means less snowmelt will reach the rivers in spring. “Snow deficits have become a more important driver of summer streamflow droughts over the last 50 years,” Brunner said.

In Switzerland, they now need long-lasting rain events, she said. “But the further we progress into the spring, the more unlikely this gets.”

Large parts of Europe are hoping for rainfall over the next few months – and a lot of it. “The coming weeks are crucial,” Andrea Toreti, a climatologist at the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre, told CNN.

While it remains hard to attribute specific events to the climate crisis, “what we observe is in line with what we expect from climate change,” Toreti said.

Last year’s summer drought in the Northern Hemisphere was made 20 times more likely by climate change, according to World Weather Attribution, a group of researchers who endeavor in near-real time to determine how much of a role the climate crisis is playing in extreme weather events.

Back in southwest France, Solacroup said the difficulties of the past year should be a warning to think about long-term adaptation, rather than just reacting to rolling crises. “The summer of 2022, which may seem exceptional, will be an average year in 2050,” he said.

The long-term changes are clear and they aren’t good, said Rouquet. “There is a link with climate change and we farmers have seen it for several years. The rain falls differently. It rains hard or not at all.”

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

Ticking climate time bomb

EXPERTS all around the globe have time and again aired the warning that the world faces massive environmental and economic problems which are all induced by global warming and climate change.

Scientists continue to warn of more extreme weather, the rapidly melting Arctic ice that contributes to rising sea levels, catastrophic typhoons, heavy rainfall and drought in some places on earth. They also said nearly half of the world's population is already vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

The latest to sound the alarm is United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres who warned that the "climate time bomb is ticking" as he urged industrialized nations to slash emissions.

Quoting recent scientific findings, the UN official said the rate of temperature rise in the last half century is the highest in 2,000 years and that concentrations of carbon dioxide are at their highest in at least 2 million years. Guterres stressed the sixth "synthesis report" from the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as "a survival guide for humanity" and urged developed countries to commit to reaching net zero emissions by the earlier date of around 2040.

The synthesis report summarized findings from three expert assessments published between 2021 and 2022 that looked at the physical science, impacts, and mitigation of climate change, and sought to guide policymakers.

The report is considered timely because under the 2015 Paris Agreement, nations are also expected to update climate pledges by 2025. As this international meeting nears, leaders and governments will need authentic and verified information on the real status of global warming and other climate change issues such as climate finance and climate justice, which shall be provided by the scientific community.

The IPCC study warns that the planet's emissions must be halved by the middle of the 2030s if the world is to have any chance of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels. This is the level of global temperature increase that is acceptable to the signatory nations of the Paris accord.

To make the necessary cuts in emissions, peoples of the world should be disciplined by their respective governments to tweak their eating habits, even as the authorities strictly adopt green energy policies and sustainable agriculture and fisheries.

It is admittedly a long way to go for nations across the globe to fulfill promises in connection with climate change mitigation, but it is well that the Philippines under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is fully committed to this worthy endeavor.

MANILA BULLETIN

[MGreen, Vena Energy start solar project commercial operation](#)

By: Myrna M. Velasco

MGen Renewable Energy, Inc. (MGreen), a unit under the Manila Electric Company (Meralco) group; and Vena Energy have reached commercial operation date (COD); for their 68-megawatt solar farm project in Currimao, Ilocos Norte.

The “Garcia 2’ solar farm facility, which is under corporate vehicle Nuevo Solar Energy Corp. (NSEC), was formally switched Thursday, last March 30, providing valuable supply addition to the Luzon grid in time for the peak demand this summer.

Meralco PowerGen Corporation (MGen) President and CEO Jaime Azurin asserted that with the completion milestone of the project, “we embark on a new chapter in our partnership with Vena Energy as we start the commercial operations of NSEC.”

He emphasized that bringing the solar farm into its commercial operations phase had always been integrated as part of the ‘shared aspiration’ of the MGen group “to provide clean and sustainable energy,” – one that is aligned toward accelerating “the country’s energy transition.”

Azurin stated their company “shall continue investing in clean and sustainable energy sources.” To date, MGreen is advancing its 1,500MW pipeline of RE projects with execution timeframe of five years.

The newly powered-up plant will be providing power supply to MPower, a licensed retail electricity supplier (RES), which is also an affiliate company of MGen under the Meralco group.

Samrinder Nehria, head of Vena Energy Philippines, indicated that “the Garcia solar project marks a significant milestone in our collective efforts towards a sustainable future, as well as Vena Energy’s renewable energy portfolio in the Philippines.”

He narrated that the completion of this partnership venture with MGen “is a testament to our joint experience and expertise to deliver this project successfully within a span of only 12 months, and we look forward to more of such collaborations in the future.”

The switch-on of the facility, which will serve as added clean energy development in Ilocos Norte – now thriving as hub of green energy facilities in the country, was also witnessed by key local leaders, including Governor Matthew Joseph Marcos Manotoc; Vice Governor Cecilia Araneta-Marcos; Currimao Mayor Edward Quilala and

Congressman Eugenio Angelo Barba of the second Congressional district of the province.

It was in 2021 when MGen had started its decarbonization journey, leaning on a stronger push for more renewable energy investments – not just on the sphere of solar farm developments; but with aspirations also for other technology deployments, including wind, hydro as well as biomass prospects.

In the solar investment space, MGen's first ever project to reach commercial operation in 2021 has been its 55MW (ac) BulacanSol project.

Then after the Currimao solar farm, next on its completion timeline this year will be its 75MW(ac) solar installation in Baras, Rizal.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

83.3-MW Currimao-2 solar project boosts PH renewable energy share

By: Leilanie Adriano

The town of Currimao in Ilocos Norte beamed with pride on Thursday as it began hosting a multi-million solar energy plant now ready to begin commercial operations.

In a speech during the inauguration ceremony for the 83.3-megawatt solar power project in Barangay Paguludan-Salideg, Currimao Mayor Edward Quilala said they are delighted to be part of a massive and socially-relevant project to support the government's goal of achieving a renewable energy share of 35 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2040 in the country's power mix.

"On behalf of Currimao, I would like to thank the Nuevo Solar Energy Corp. (NSEC) for having the foresight to harness solar energy and invest their resources in our small town," he said.

In 2022, MGen Renewable Energy Inc. (MGreen), the renewable energy unit of Meralco PowerGen Corp. (MGen), and leading renewable energy company in the Asia-Pacific region Vena Energy commenced construction of a bigger solar power project in Currimao town next to Vena existing 20-megawatt solar project.

In the same year, MGreen and Vena Energy entered into an agreement to form NSEC, which would undertake the development, construction, and operation of the solar project, covering about 24 hectares of forestland.

Though the various renewable energy projects in the province have no direct impact on reducing the electricity rates of households here, host communities acknowledged they continue to benefit from it through the company's corporate social responsibility projects.

Among these are job generation, reforestation, rural electrification, scholarship grants, and aid during natural disasters.

For his part, Governor Matthew Joseph Manotoc lauded the project proponents and investors as he assured the provincial government's all-out support in pushing renewable energy projects such as this.

"We are very fortunate to have you here. Rest assured that we will make it easy for you as possible to do business in the province," he said.

Vena Energy Philippines' head Samrinder Nehria also expressed hopes that through their partnership with MGreen, the project will play an important role in accelerating the energy transition in the Philippines.

Vena Energy is one of the largest independent power producers in the Asia-Pacific region, operating in Australia, Japan, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand.

Warm, humid weather to prevail across PH

By: Ma. Cristina Arayata

Warm and humid weather will prevail across the archipelago, the weather bureau said Thursday.

The country is also forecast to experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms, said Patrick del Mundo of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

Severe thunderstorms are likely over the Visayas and Mindanao and may cause flash floods or landslides, he said.

Del Mundo, meanwhile, said no low-pressure area was seen inside and outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility.

There's a slim chance for a tropical cyclone inside PAR until the weekend, he said.

Light to moderate winds and slight to moderate seas will prevail across the country, PAGASA said.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Australian parliament approves emissions caps on big polluters](#)

Breakthrough climate laws passed by Australia on Thursday will target the nation's worst polluters, forcing coal mines and oil refineries to curb emissions by about five percent each year.

Experts said the laws signalled the end of Australia's bitter "climate wars" — a decade of political brawling that has repeatedly derailed attempts to tackle climate change.

"It's the first time greenhouse gas emissions reduction has been written into Australian law," University of New South Wales sustainability expert Tommy Wiedmann said.

"That's obviously a good thing. We have a climate policy now," he told AFP.

The laws apply to 215 major industrial facilities — each producing more than 100,000 tons of greenhouse gases a year — and form the backbone of Australia's pledge to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

The government has forecast it can stop 200 million tons of carbon from being pumped into the atmosphere over the next decade.

Aluminium smelters, coal mines, oil refineries and other large polluters will be forced to cut their emissions by 4.9% each year.

The government struck a deal on the so-called Safeguard Mechanism after weeks of high-stakes bargaining with the left-wing Greens party.

The previously skeptical Greens — whose support was needed to pass the laws — agreed to back the carbon plan after persuading the government to put a hard cap on emissions.

Greens leader Adam Bandt said the move compelled oil and gas corporations to slash their emissions "for the first time ever in law".

Climate 'stalemate'

Australia's economy is fuelled by mining and coal exports — and it is among the biggest emitters of carbon dioxide, per capita, in the world.

Although many praised the laws as a crucial first step, Wiedmann warned Australia could not rest on its laurels.

"It's not enough on its own to reduce emissions and avoid dangerous climate change," he said.

"The hard decisions will come in the next few years."

Murdoch University sustainability expert Martin Brueckner said the plan ended Australia's climate "stalemate", and gave a strong signal to businesses.

"It pretty much pushes climate denialists in a corner," he told AFP.

"We had a lot of market investment uncertainty over the last 10 years under the poorly-defined climate policy.

"Having made that first policy step — as small as it may be — I think it paves the way for more progressive policies to follow."

Australia's mining industry has warned that the financial burden of compliance could lead to massive job losses.

"If we are not careful, some facilities in Australia will close," the Minerals Council of Australia said before the laws passed.

"Not only would that damage our economy and slash tens of thousands of regional jobs and billions in investment, it also would push the emissions reduction burden onto other nations that are less able or less willing to decarbonize."

Global mining giants Rio Tinto and BHP operate a number of mines and smelters that will be forced to make emissions cuts.

Australia's Climate Council has estimated that the 215 facilities are responsible for almost 30% of the country's total emissions.

Coast Guard: 60% of oil spill-hit shorelines cleaned up

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Responders and volunteers have so far cleaned up 60% of the oil spill-affected coastlines more than a month since tanker MT Princess Empress sank off Oriental Mindoro, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reported on Thursday.

“Based on our accounting yesterday, our progress was at 60%. So this is a good progress in our efforts to remove oil from the affected coastlines,” Vice Admiral Rolando Punzalan Jr., PCG’s deputy commandant for operations, told state broadcaster People’s Television Network.

In an update, the Coast Guard said it has collected 13,383 liters of oily water and 139 sacks of oil-contaminated materials during its offshore oil spill response operations.

From March 1 to 29, authorities also gathered 3,937.5 sacks and 22 drums of oil-contaminated materials in affected barangays of Naujan, Bulalacao, and Pola towns in Oriental Mindoro.

Punzalan cannot yet say how long the cleanup will last, but he stressed that their operations on the ground are in full swing.

MT Princess Empress was loaded with 800,000 liters of industrial oil when it sank off Oriental Mindoro on February 28. The vessel is still leaking oil into the sea, threatening not only the area’s rich marine biodiversity, but also disrupting the livelihoods of locals.

The vessel was found last week by a Japanese remotely operated underwater vehicle.

Accountability, transparency

Advocates of Science and Technology for the People (AGHAM) on Thursday called for accountability from the companies responsible for the oil spill, which can be considered one of the worst in the country’s history.

“Cash aid is temporary, but the ecological damage brought by the oil spill is long-term,” said Jerwin Baure, public information officer of AGHAM. The incident is threatening the Verde Island Passage, which is known for its rich marine life.

He said the vessel owner RDC Reield Marine Services and the charterer SL Harbor Bulk Terminal Corporation, a subsidiary of San Miguel Corp., should pay the affected residents and shoulder the rehabilitation of affected marine ecosystems.

Baure also called for transparency from the government on the efforts to clean up the oil and recover the sunken vessel.

“The government must be transparent on how they are going to hold the involved companies accountable to this catastrophe. An oil spill as big as this is not only a national concern but also an international one considering that it happened in a biodiversity hotspot,” he said.

[\[Opinion\] Wanted: 'Climate warriors'](#)

By: Marichu Villanueva

As the United Nations (UN) winds down the observance of the International Women's Month, activities to mark April as the Earth Month kicked off last Saturday. With the ceremonial switching off simultaneously of all electric lights, the resulting darkness simulated efforts to help cool down Planet Earth from the effects of the global warming.

The UN has been supporting the "Earth Hour" campaign initiated by the World Wide Fund for Nature starting in 2007. Since then, the "Earth Hour" is observed every last Saturday of March each year to encourage individuals, communities, and businesses to turn off non-essential electric lights for 60 minutes only, or one hour.

Like the rest of other countries that participated in this annual event, electric lights all over the Philippines were turned off from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. last March 25. On the Earth Hour website, the WWF for Nature declares: "Earth Hour aims to increase awareness and (to) spark global conversations on protecting nature, tackling the climate crisis, and working together to shape a brighter future for us all." Through this, the WWF credits the "Earth Hour" campaign as having led to other global actions related to curbing climate change.

In a video statement released last Saturday, President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. (PBBM) exhorted every Filipino throughout the country to participate and support the Earth Hour. "It only takes 60 minutes to do good for our future. 60 minutes to take notice and commit to saving Mother Nature to be united and take action," the President cited. "Because together, nothing is impossible. Let's switch off and give mother nature 60 minutes to breathe," the Chief Executive made this impassioned appeal.

At the Kapihan sa Manila Bay news forum last Wednesday, Senate president pro tempore Loren Legarda welcomed the "Earth Hour" report of the Department of Energy (DOE) that it generated as much as 62.69 megawatts (MW) of electricity/power saved. "The Earth Hour symbolizes and simply reminds us to commune with Mother Earth," enthused Sen.Legarda, a UN champion for Climate Change initiatives.

Since 2008, the Philippines has been a participant to this global campaign to save the Planet Earth. The electricity savings in this year's "Earth Hour" in the Philippines, however, were lower than the 65.32 MW recorded last year by the DOE.

"Those savings (in electricity use) are equivalent to like building a new power plant. (But) It is just a drop in the bucket," Sen.Legarda mused.

A staunch supporter of environment-friendly supply of electricity from Renewable Energy (RE) sources like solar and wind-powered electric plants, Sen. Legarda underscored much more could be done to reduce the carbon footprints and greenhouse emissions as among the causes of the global warming.

Like her mother who walks the talk, the Senator's eldest son, Leandro Leviste is actively engaged in RE and founded Solar Philippines in 2013. It is now Southeast Asia's largest solar company and integrated solar developer, and power generator that boasts of selling cheap, reliable and universally accessible electricity. The Senator declined to talk or comment about her son's private business pursuits but she oozes the mother's pride to a son's achievements.

Sen. Legarda authored the landmark law on Climate Change under Republic Act (RA) 9729. It became a law in 2007 when many people could not care more on the subject of climate change. On her fourth term at the Senate (with breaks in between terms) and now a veteran lawmaker, she last guested at the Kapihan sa Manila Bay in July, 2021 when she was Deputy Speaker at the House of Representatives from the lone congressional district of her home province Antique.

She showed off to media the simple ways any one of us can put into practice a lot of household and even activities at the work places that can help reduce land, water and air pollution, all of which contribute to global warming and climate change. For one, she cited, refrain from using non-biodegradable plastics. If not avoidable, she pointed to do a waste segregation to separate garbage bins for recycable plastics and food leftovers that can be turned into non-chemical fertilizers for plants.

"In a sense, these things are really commonsense only," Sen. Legarda quipped.

An international advocate also for disaster risk reduction and resiliency measures, Sen. Legarda principally authored and sponsored a number of other Congress-approved laws in the protection of the country's environment, mandated nature conservation measures and the preservation of the Philippine culture and heritage, among her legislative output as a prolific lawmaker.

She called out for the stricter, if not the widest implementation of the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2000 (RA 9275); the Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 (RA 9003); among these laws. She conceded there are more than enough laws already in place but have been little and hardly implemented laws. She cited as an example RA 6716 that took effect since 1989 mandating various agencies of the national government as well as the local government units (LGUs) to develop rainwater collectors and harvesting facilities.

Sen.Legarda practically begged: “Let’s make all our laws work.”

The UN General Assembly on Wednesday adopted by consensus a Resolution calling the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to lay out the State obligations of countries in protecting Earth’s climate and the legal consequences they face if they don’t. As the world body’s top court, the Resolution – cosponsored by more than 130 Member States, including the Philippines – ”would assist the General Assembly, the UN and Member States to take the bolder and stronger climate action that our world so desperately needs.”

Sen.Legarda could not agree more. She vows to include in the proposed law to revive the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) that will develop “climate warriors” among the Filipino youth. After all, she is a Reserve Officer in the Philippine Air Force as Colonel.

[UN adopts landmark resolution on climate justice](#)

By: Amélie Bottolier-Depois

The UN General Assembly took a major step towards urgent global climate action Wednesday as members adopted a resolution calling for the world body's top court to outline nations' legal obligations related to curbing warming.

Cheers rang out as the measure—hailed as a victory for the climate justice movement which hopes it will increase pressure on polluting countries failing to address the global warming emergency—was greenlighted by consensus.

Pushed for years by Vanuatu, a small archipelago whose future is threatened by rising sea levels, and by Pacific islander youth, the resolution asks the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to lay out nations' obligations for protecting Earth's climate, and the legal consequences they face if they don't.

"Together, you are making history," United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said, emphasizing that even if non-binding, an ICJ opinion "would assist the General Assembly, the UN and member states to take the bolder and stronger climate action that our world so desperately needs."

Ultimately co-sponsored by more than 130 member states, the resolution had been widely expected to be approved.

"Today we have witnessed a win for climate justice of epic proportions," said Vanuatu Prime Minister Ishmael Kalsakau, whose country was ravaged by two powerful cyclones earlier this month.

It is "a win for people and communities across the world that are at the frontlines of the climate crisis," said Lavetanalagi Seru, regional policy coordinator for the Pacific Islands Climate Action Network.

The government of Vanuatu started lobbying for the measure in 2021, after a campaign initiated by a group of students from a Fiji university in 2019.

The adoption comes at a critical moment days after the UN's IPCC panel of climate experts warned global average temperatures could reach 1.5 C above pre-industrial levels by 2030-2035, underlining the need for drastic action this decade.

'Most important'

While nations have no legal obligation under the 2015 Paris Agreement to meet emission reduction targets, the new resolution's backers hope other instruments,

including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, could offer pathways for enforcement.

"This resolution centers human rights and intergenerational equity when addressing climate change—two critical points that have been missing from much of the dominant discourse," Shaina Sadai of the Union for Concerned Scientists advocacy group told AFP.

Describing the new resolution as "the most important global move since the Paris Agreement feels accurate," Sadai said, adding it was a critical next step for lending guidance to "lawsuits being brought in courts around the world."

The adoption comes the same day cases opened before the European Court of Human Rights against France and Switzerland over alleged failings to protect the environment, marking the first time governments are in the court's dock for alleged climate change inaction.

Although ICJ opinions are not binding, they carry significant legal and moral weight, and are often taken into account by national courts.

'Bigger than our fears'

Vanuatu and supporters hope the forthcoming ICJ opinion, expected in about two years, will encourage governments to accelerate their action.

The enthusiasm however is not universal.

"I see scenarios where this request would be counterproductive," Benoit Mayer, a specialist in international law at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, told AFP.

He warned of a possible "disaster scenario," if the ICJ opinion is "clear and precise, but contrary to what the supporters of the request wanted."

Although no country objected to the resolution's consensus adoption, the United States and China, the world's two largest emitters, were not co-sponsors.

"We have serious concerns that this process could complicate our collective efforts and will not bring us closer to achieving these shared goals," said US representative Nicholas Hill, stressing he prefers diplomacy to "a judicial process" he warned could accentuate disagreements.

The resolution notably asks the ICJ to clarify "legal consequences" for states which "have caused significant harm to the climate system and other parts of the environment."

It specifically asks the court to weigh obligations to "small island developing States," which are "particularly vulnerable" to climate change, as well as obligations to future generations.

During negotiations on the Paris Agreement, US diplomats secured the addition of language specifying that the text "does not involve or provide a basis for any liability or compensation."

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DWIZ

[PGHGIMRS lead agencies pinulong ng Climate Change Commission](#)

By: Gilbert Pardez

Pinulong ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) ang mga Philippine Greenhouse Gas Inventory Management and Reporting System (PGHGIMRS) lead agencies.

Ayon kay CCC Deputy Executive Director Romell Antonio Cuenca, isinagawa ang aktibidad upang maisapinal ang 2015 at 2020 National Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory.

Sa ilalim ng Executive Order No. 174 series of 2014, nilikha ang PGHGIMRS upang bumalangkas ng GHG inventory management at reporting system katuwang ang mga kinauukulang ahensya para sa paghahanda ng bansa laban sa pabago-bagong klima.

“Our sustained convergences like what we do today are instrumental in producing quality reports that are accurate, complete, and reflective of the prevailing national circumstances, as well as the needs and priorities of our focus sectors,” wika ni Cuenca.

Ang unang quarterly meeting ngayong taon ay nakatuon sa mga nalalabi pang hakbang sa pagsasakatuparan ng 2015 at 2020 National GHG inventories.

Sa pangunguna ng CCC, ang PGHGIMRS meeting, ay dinaluhan ng lahat ng member agencies, kabilang ang Department of Agriculture, Philippine Statistics Authority, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Energy, at Department of Transportation.

IBC 13

Earth Hour 2023

By: Ralph Lopez

Sa pakikiisa ng marami sa isinagawang Earth Hour o isang oras na pagpatay ng ilaw nitong Sabado, iniulat mismo ng Department of Energy na aabot sa 62.69 MW na kuryente ang natipid sa buong bansa.

Pero hindi lamang pagtitipid ng kuryente ang layunin ng Earth Hour. Isa itong taunang pagkilos para tugunan ang mahabang panahon na problema sa climate change.

POLITIKO

[Climate body wants more funds for nature-based projects](#)

By: Prince Golez

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is pushing for increased funding for nature-based solutions.

In a news release Thursday, the CCC expressed its support for the United Nations Development Programme-Philippines (UNDP Philippines) project, which aims to accelerate private sector investments in gender-responsive and nature-based solutions to enable a just transition to a low-emissions and climate resilient future.

“We recognize the immense value in nature-based solutions, but increased financing, especially from the private sector, must flow in for nature-based projects and programs—and more urgently, considering the rate of destruction of our natural wealth from climate impacts and other factors,” said Commissioner Rachel Anne Herrera.

Herrera also emphasized the potential of nature-based solutions to enhance adaptive capacities against climate impacts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Meanwhile, Environment Secretary Ma. Antonio Yulo-Loyzaga, also President’s Representative to the CCC, noted her department’s efforts in forest protection, watershed and wetland management, and restoration and protection of marine and coastal resources.

“We have a challenging task ahead, but we’re optimistic that we can deliver a lasting impact on our communities and on our country as a whole. We are, therefore, partners with you in fostering this new effort and working with key stakeholders to unlock financing for climate and disaster resilience,” said Yulo-Loyzaga.

Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno said his department has built a sustainable finance ecosystem to synergize public and private investments in green projects, and that its roadmap sets the guiding principles that will create an environment conducive to greater policies in the Philippines.

“There is a strong appetite for green investments among the investment community, and we are keen on strengthening our policies on climate financing to complement its wide array of initiatives. We launched today a unique project that offers gender-responsive, nature-based solutions for climate-resilient technologies, practices, and approaches,” according to him.

For her part, UNDP Resident Representative Dr. Selva Ramachandran explained that the “initiative recognizes the big task of bringing nature-based solutions at the very core of public and private sector investments and decision-making processes,” and that it aims to contribute “to seeing the results of nature-based solutions for climate through public-private partnership.”

The project, funded by the Canadian government, will be implemented by the Department of Finance, CCC, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Securities and Exchange Commission Philippines, and Public-Private Partnership Center. The project’s implementation period is from 2022 to 2025.

THE GLOBAL DAILY MIRROR

[CCC, UNDP to hike financing for nature-based solutions](#)

By: Denisse Osorio

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the United Nations Development Programme-Philippines (UNDP Philippines) collaboratively launched a project Wednesday aimed to increase private sector investments for gender-responsive and nature-based solutions.

"We recognize the immense value in nature-based solutions, but increased financing, especially from the private sector, must flow in for nature-based projects and programs—and more urgently, considering the rate of destruction of our natural wealth from climate impacts and other factors," said CCC Commissioner Rachel Anne Herrera.

Entitled "Accelerating Green and Climate Finance in the Philippines: Nature-Based Solutions," the project will also show the potential of nature-based solutions in enhancing adaptive capacities against climate impacts and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Environment Secretary and Presidential Representative to the CCC Ma. Antonio Yulo-Loyzaga highlighted the support the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have been giving to nature-based solutions in combating climate change, specifically in forest protection, watershed and wetland management, and restoration and protection of marine and coastal resources.

"We're optimistic that we can deliver a lasting impact on our communities and on our country as a whole. We are, therefore, partners with you in fostering this new effort and working with key stakeholders to unlock financing for climate and disaster resilience," Yulo-Loyzaga added.

The Department of Finance (DOF) has also contributed in fostering green projects by building a sustainable finance ecosystem to synergise public and private investments, which will pave the way for greater policies in the country.

"There is a strong appetite for green investments among the investment community, and we are keen on strengthening our policies on climate financing to complement its wide array of initiatives. We launched today a unique project that offers gender-responsive, nature-based solutions for climate-resilient technologies, practices, and approaches," Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno said.

The “initiative recognizes the big task of bringing nature-based solutions at the very core of public and private sector investments and decision-making processes,” and that it aims to contribute “to seeing the results of nature-based solutions for climate through public-private partnership,” Resident Representative of the UNDP Dr. Selva Ramachandran explained.

Consistent with the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, the project seeks to contribute to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, and the achievement of the country’s Nationally Determined Contribution, the Philippines Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and other related policies and programmes. It also aims to enhance resilience and environmental security for Filipino women and vulnerable communities in the Philippines.

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