



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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### ABS CBN

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By: Juliet Seva

The world celebrates Earth Month every April. Leaders and organizations use this time to raise awareness on matters concerning the planet—a task that influencer and environmentalist Celine Murillo does even on regular days.

### MANILA BULLETIN

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## **PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

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By: Brian James Lu

Last year, during his visit to Washington in the United States, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. stated that his administration is looking into the possibility of tapping nuclear power to address the energy needs of the Philippines. PBBM is not eyeing the likes of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP), but a “cutting-edge” micro-nuclear fuel technology that promotes the use of microreactors. According to the Department of Energy (DOE), microreactors are compact reactors that will be small enough to transport by truck.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **'Tax incentives for e-motorcycles to boost shift to EVs - expert'**

By: Kristina Maralit

Granting tax incentives to e-motorcycles would result in the reduction of carbon emissions, the Department of Energy (DoE) said on Monday.

## **CCC IN THE NEWS:**

## **DAILY TRIBUNE**

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The Climate Change Commission emphasized the need to “future-proof our children in the midst of climate change” during the conference on “Children Displaced in a Changing Climate: Preparing for a Future Already Underway.”

### **More than wastelands: Recognizing the hidden powers of wetlands**

By: Secretary Robert Borje

Wetlands are among the most intriguing yet underrated ecological systems on our planet. While conversations about conservation often revolve around mountains, forests, and oceans, wetlands are frequently overlooked.

### **Scholarship to beef up ranks of women environmental stewards**

Women leaders in climate action are being offered scholarships on climate change and disaster risk management course under a program of the Climate Change Commission (CCC), Office of Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda and the Asian Institute of Management (AIM).

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**POLITIKO**

### **[Nat'l Adaptation Plans 'Critical Baselines' To Enhance Climate Adaptation, Support: Borje](#)**

By: Prince Golez

National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) are critical enablers to enhance adaptation and foster climate resilience, Climate Change Commission (CCC) Secretary Robert Borje said.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **ABS CBN**

### **[Get to know Celine Murillo, the ‘green-fluencer’ championing love for nature with online videos](#)**

By: Juliet Seva

The world celebrates Earth Month every April. Leaders and organizations use this time to raise awareness on matters concerning the planet—a task that influencer and environmentalist Celine Murillo does even on regular days.

With her husband Dennis Murillo and their campervan named Eli, Celine tours the Philippines on a mission to explore the country and share interesting lessons about the environment.

The environmentalist couple’s YouTube channel, which has over 15,000 subscribers, feature mini documentaries about wildlife, educational videos on biodiversity, a series about various waterfalls in the country, their road trip stories, and favorite nature photos.

Celine, who also has nearly 700,000 Tiktok and Facebook followers, hopes that her work could help viewers reconnect with nature and live in harmony with it – which she said is the “first big step” in preventing ecological crises from getting worse.

“We humans are part of the natural world. I think we have forgotten this simple fact. Whatever we do to the environment and other creatures will eventually come back to us, as evident in the triple ecological crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. All are human-induced, essentially karma,” she said.

Celine also banks on her videos to shed light on various environmental issues.

In her “Overnight in Masungi Georeserve” vlog with her husband, Celine shared their encounters with Masungi microsnail, Kalinga narrowmouth toad, and Botel Gecko in the park. She also called for the protection of the conservation area following reports that some groups were claiming it.

Other videos by the couple explain the differences between endemic and exotic species, the characteristics of country’s largest flower, and the wildlife and plants on peso bills.

## **A WORK OF LOVE**

When asked about her personal favorite among their videos, Celine said it’s hard to pick just one.

“Every single one is a love offering. There are some more memorable ones because of what happened during the encounter or in the course of filming. Like with the second episode of the #SaribuhaySaSalapi series featuring Kapa-kapa or *Medinilla magnifica* and with my most favorite flowering tree, Malabulak or *Bombax ceiba*,” she said.

She shared how seeing kapa-kapa, a rare flower, during her visit to the Makiling Botanic Gardens surprised her and made her run and cheer “like a fan seeing their idol.” She also described how she cried after seeing the vibrant red Malabulak tree stand out against the green foliage and blue sky.

Even after Earth month, the Murillo couple will brave high mountains, cold waters, and long hours of adventure to produce entertaining and educational videos that they hope could inspire others to protect the only planet we call home.

Just as Celine likes to put it, “When we love something, we do everything in service of its welfare.”

## MANILA BULLETIN

### [\[Opinion\] PH urges World Court to take action on climate change](#)

The Philippines has joined the call of members of the United Nations for the International Court of Justice (ICJ), also known as the World Court, to render an Advisory Opinion on the Obligation of States in respect to Climate Change.

Recall that the Paris Agreement, a legally binding international treaty on climate change, entered into force on Nov. 4, 2016. The Philippines was among the 196 Parties that adopted the Agreement. The parties committed to prevent the escalation of global warming that triggers strong typhoons and massive flooding — a perennial scourge experienced by the Philippines and other climate-vulnerable countries.

According to a 2023 report of Statista, a Germany-based, online global data and business intelligence platform: “(T)he Philippines was the country with the highest natural disaster risk in the world. The Pacific archipelago was given a disaster risk index (WRI) of 46.86, followed by Indonesia, with a disaster risk index of 43.5.” The WRI index is calculated by considering how exposed countries are to natural disasters together with how vulnerable they are to them.”

Various working groups composed of scientists and multi-disciplinary experts have expressed the view that “it is only possible to avoid warming of 1.5 °C (2.7 °F) or 2.0 °C (3.6 °F) if massive and immediate cuts in greenhouse gas emissions are made.” Despite dire warnings from leading newspapers of record and reputable scientific journals, there is scant indication that these are being heeded.

The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 13 on Climate Action declares unequivocally: “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy.”

The Philippines’ submission, signed by Solicitor General Menardo Guevarra and other solicitors and counsels, urged the ICJ to exercise its jurisdiction, arguing that “... the enormity of the effects of climate change and its calamitous impact on all States and peoples are doubtless confirmed by scientific consensus... This paramount concern, therefore, impels and warrants the exercise of this Court’s advisory jurisdiction...”

Furthermore, it urged the Court to “view (the issue) within the context of all people’s fundamental Right to Life from whence the Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment flows from... Any act or omission that harms or tends to harm the environment ... that may be attributable to a State which results in anthropogenic GHG

emissions over time causing climate change is a breach of a State obligation under international law.”

The submission was a joint initiative of the Office of the Solicitor General and the Department of Foreign Affairs, in consultation with the Department of Justice, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Climate Change Commission, the National Economic and Development Authority, and the University of the Philippines Law Center, among others.

The recent involvement of Pope Francis and other influential leaders in spurring concrete action to reverse the ill effects of global warming provides an auspicious backdrop to the World Court’s looming deliberations on issuing an advisory opinion. Seasoned observers believe that although such an opinion may not be legally binding, “any climate obligations it identifies would be.” The Philippines joins other climate vulnerable countries in aspiring to attain climate justice.

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## **Climate Change Could Cause Clocks To Lose A Second**

A recent study suggests that clocks may skip a second in the near future because the Earth is undergoing changes in its rotation due to factors such as climate change and geological shifts.

According to the study published in the Nature journal, there might be a necessity for clocks to skip a second, referred to as a “negative leap second,” around the year 2029.

The study warns that such changes in Earth’s rotation may necessitate adjustments in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), a standard used to set all time zones around the world, earlier than originally planned.

The implications of this adjustment extend beyond timekeeping, as it could pose an “unprecedented problem for computer network timing.”

The Earth’s rotation, typically 24 hours, is now fluctuating, prompting adjustments in leap seconds to align atomic and astronomical time.

Between 1972 and 2016, 27 leap seconds were added to compensate for the Earth’s slowing rotation. But the rate of slowing was tapering off to the point that the Earth’s rotation was actually speeding up.

However, recent observations suggest that this is being offset due to the rapid melting of ice at the poles since 1990. Melting ice shifts Earth’s mass from the poles to the bulging center, which slows the rotation.

In response, timekeepers are planning revisions to leap second standards in the 2030s to minimize frequent adjustments and maintain synchronization across various timekeeping systems.

Geological and climatic factors including oceanic tides and melting polar ice affect Earth’s rotation, delaying the need for leap second adjustments.

The accelerated melting of polar ice, a consequence of human-induced climate change, is redistributing Earth’s mass and slowing its rotation.

“If polar ice melting had not recently accelerated, this problem would occur 3 years earlier,” the study noted.

This phenomenon is “already affecting global timekeeping,” indicating the tangible impact of climate change on Earth’s rotational dynamics.

Despite a natural rotation increase, melting ice has delayed the need for a leap-second adjustment from 2026 to around 2029.

This delay in the need for leap second adjustments underscores the complex relationship between environmental changes and Earth’s timekeeping systems.

Timekeepers aim to phase out leap second adjustments by 2035 to adapt to Earth’s changing dynamics and maintain precision in timekeeping amid natural and human-induced changes.

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

### [Climate change is slowing heat waves, prolonging misery](#)

Climate change is causing heat waves to slow to a crawl, exposing humans to extreme temperatures for longer than ever before, a study published in Science Advances said Friday.

While previous research has found climate change is causing heat waves to become longer, more frequent and more intense, the new paper differed by treating heat waves as distinct weather patterns that move along air currents, just as storms do.

For every decade between 1979 to 2020, researchers found heat waves slowed down by an average of five miles (eight kilometers) an hour per day.

“If a heatwave is moving slower, that means heat can stay in a region longer, so that has effects on communities,” senior author Wei Zhang of Utah State University told AFP.

The researchers divided the world into three dimensional-grid cells and defined heat waves as a million square kilometer zones where temperatures reached at least the 95th percentile of the local historical maximum temperature. They then measured their movement over time in order to determine how fast the hot air was moving.

They also used climate models to determine what the results would have looked like absent human-caused climate change, and found manmade factors loomed large.

“It’s pretty clear to us that a dominant factor here to explain this trend is anthropogenic forcing, the greenhouse gas,” said Zhang.

The changes have accelerated in particular since 1997 and in addition to human causes, weakening upper atmospheric air circulation may play a part, the paper said.

The duration of heat waves also increased, from an average of eight days at the start, to 12 days during the last five years of the study period.

“The results suggest that longer-traveling and slower-moving large contiguous heat waves will cause more devastating impacts on natural and societal systems in the future if GHG keep rising, and no effective mitigation measures are taken,” the authors wrote.

Zhang said he was worried by the disproportionate impacts on less-developed regions.

“In particular, cities that don’t have enough green infrastructure or not many cooling centers for some folks, in particular for the disadvantaged population, will be very dangerous,” he warned.

## [Stable power supply seen for summer as renewable energy plants go online](#)

By: Jordeene B. Lagare

Some power plants with a combined capacity of 300 megawatts (MW), mostly renewable energy projects, will serve as additional power supply sources to the country amid the dry spell caused by the El Niño phenomenon, the Department of Energy (DOE) said on Monday.

During the government's televised "Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon" program, Energy Assistant Secretary Mario Marasigan said some coal, solar, biomass and hydropower plants, the majority of which were located in Luzon, would go online this summer.

In a separate message, Marasigan said Unit 1 of the Mariveles coal-fired power plant in Bataan province, which could generate 150 MW, would be commissioned during the period.

According to him, several hydropower projects with aggregate capacities of around 20 MW, a geothermal (binary) project of 29 MW and solar power projects with total capacities of around 104 MW, will also be switched on.

"Based on our monitoring and assessments, we do not expect any shortage in electricity supply and the current demand has not yet reached our projected peak demand this year," Marasigan said.

### Estimated peak demand

The DOE, he added, estimated that electricity demand in the Luzon grid this year may reach a peak of 13,917 MW, an increment of 10 percent from last year's peak demand of 12,550 MW.

Peak demand in the Visayas is pegged at 2,891 MW, up by 17.6 percent from last year's 2,458 MW while in Mindanao, peak demand is anticipated to rise by 11.6 percent from 2,315 MW.

"We still have a gap of about 2,000 MW in Luzon, while in [the Visayas and Mindanao], there is still around 200 to 500 MW shortfall in the estimated peak demands this year," he added.

Furthermore, the 230-kilovolt Cebu-Negros-Panay Stage 3 interconnection project of the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP), designed to ensure the reliability and security of supply in Negros and Panay, was completed last week.

Marasigan said that with the energization of the project, the capacity to transfer power supply to and from these areas has increased to 400 MW from the previous 180 MW.

“[In the] past week, the system operator assured us the transfer capacity from Cebu to Negros is available,” he said.

On the other hand, the Mindanao-Visayas Interconnection Project which started commercial operations this year will assure enough power supply in the Visayas.

The NGCP project unified three major power grids in the country, allowing energy resource sharing as any excess power from one grid may be transmitted to another.

“We foresee a lack of electricity in the Visayas if power generation only comes from the [area],” Marasigan said.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### Advancing sustainable energy for PH

By: Brian James Lu

Last year, during his visit to Washington in the United States, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. stated that his administration is looking into the possibility of tapping nuclear power to address the energy needs of the Philippines. PBBM is not eyeing the likes of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP), but a “cutting-edge” micro-nuclear fuel technology that promotes the use of microreactors. According to the Department of Energy (DOE), microreactors are compact reactors that will be small enough to transport by truck.

Given that the Philippines is an archipelagic nation with more than 7,000 small and large islands, I believe this is both feasible and practical. Of course, the question here is the management of nuclear waste since nuclear reactors produce waste that is radioactive and lasts thousands of years. Therefore, nuclear waste disposal is a primary concern, which is a problem among nations utilizing nuclear energy.

But why is the President so keen to promote nuclear energy in addition to the various fuels the nation already uses? The answer lies in our country’s inability to solve its power crisis. According to the Asia Development Bank (ADB), the Philippines faces three energy insecurity problems: 1) electricity demand is growing fast; 2) the supply of electricity is often short of demand; 3) there is a discrepancy in the electrification rate between cities and rural areas. The enactment of the EPIRA law, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, seems to have failed to avert a power crisis. The much-vaunted reduction in power rates did not also materialize, as electricity rates in the country are still among the highest in Southeast Asia.

Remember that right after New Year 2024, Iloilo province was put into “crisis mode” as a power outage was experienced in Panay, Guimaras, and parts of Negros Occidental for more than 20 hours. The local government unit suspended classes, affecting work in various sectors. The restoration of electricity in all parts of the province took a week. The Iloilo City mayor was so infuriated that he called on both houses of Congress to conduct an investigation.

How about the power crisis in Occidental Mindoro? Since 2023, the province has been experiencing power crisis every day lasting for as long as 20 hours. This prompted the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (Provincial Board) to put the province under a state of calamity. The lone power supplier was only providing 12 megawatts (MW) to meet the power needs of the province, far from the demand of 30 MW. At its worst, the power

supplier was operating at only 7.5 MW. The power supplier accused the National Power Corporation of not paying the fuel subsidy required for its other power plants.

In the case of Iloilo province, the power supplier and the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) were blaming each other for the massive power outages.

The economic effects of power outages are undeniable. According to the Philippine Independent Power Producers Association (PIPPA), for every five hours of no electricity, the country loses about 500 MW, which is equivalent to PHP556 million in economic losses. Combine this with that of traffic in Metro Manila and elsewhere, and you have a hefty amount of losses that are untenable for a developing country like the Philippines.

The Philippines is a net energy importer, although we produce oil, natural gas, and coal. Geothermal, hydropower, and other renewable sources account for a significant share of electricity generation. According to the United States' Energy Information Administration (EIA), in 2019, the Philippines used the following in its energy consumption: petroleum and other liquids (45 percent), coal (36 percent), natural gas (7 percent), non-hydropower renewables (7 percent), and hydroelectricity (4 percent). The Malampaya gas field is coming to an end with its expected depletion this year. It is thus expected that, with its depletion, the Philippines will rely exclusively on imported liquefied natural gas in the following years. The depletion of the Malampaya gas facility is quite unfortunate since it has been the Philippines' only source of gas since its operations started in the early 2000s.

The Philippines is far from utilizing renewable energy. According to recent data, renewable energy contributes approximately 26 percent of the country's total energy consumption. This includes various sources such as hydropower, geothermal, wind, solar, and biomass.

The world is pushing towards renewable energy adoption. The Paris Climate Agreement marks a shift towards renewable energy use with the aim of limiting the rise of global average temperatures below 2 degrees Celsius. The agreement binds nations to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels to mitigate climate change. The Philippines is a signatory, together with 174 other countries, to the Paris Climate Agreement. As such, our country must conform to the agreement. Keep in mind that the Philippines lies within the Pacific typhoon belt, enduring an average of 20 typhoons annually.

In today's quest for a sustainable source of energy, can we count on the current administration's approach to tapping nuclear energy? Perhaps the answer lies in our

desire for more alternative energy to power the growing economy. Nuclear energy may well be the key to our sustainable future.

It will take a lot of political will for the current administration to bring the country to nuclear energy levels. But in the interim, there is a need to develop renewable energy to conform with international agreements. For one, there is a need to prioritize investments in renewable energy infrastructure, including grid improvements and energy storage solutions.

An official from the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) once stated that the main electricity highways from Luzon to Visayas are completely congested. I think that perhaps if these lines are not congested, just like the EDSA traffic, then we can see an improvement in the delivery of energy in every home and industry.

## THE MANILA TIMES

### 'Tax incentives for e-motorcycles to boost shift to EVs - expert'

By: Kristina Maralit

Granting tax incentives to e-motorcycles would result in the reduction of carbon emissions, the Department of Energy (DoE) said on Monday.

DoE science research specialist Andre Reyes said that e-motorcycles are crucial in assisting the country's shift to electric vehicles, since transportation continues to be a major source of carbon emissions.

Reyes was referring to the need to expand Executive Order No. 12 series of 2023, which grants tax breaks to several types of EVs.

Under EO 12, different types of EVs have received tax breaks. However, e-motorcycles are still subject to a 30 percent tariff rate.

"This proposed coverage expansion will send a clear price signal for consumers to switch to EVs, which are more efficient and cheaper to run per kilometer, and assist in energy self-sufficiency," Reyes said in a public hearing on EO 12 revision.

Data from the DoE showed that using e-motorcycles helps avoid around 8.5 kilograms of carbon dioxide compared to internal combustion engine (ICE) motorcycles.

Using e-motorcycles is also more efficient, as they only cost P0.34 and save 1.72 liters of fuel per kilometer compared to their ICE counterpart, which burns P1.20 per kilometer.

The energy department wants to increase the country's EV fleet by 50%, or an additional 2.4 million units.

The Statista Research Department said that motorcycles accounted for 7.81 million registered vehicles in the country in 2022, making them the most popular vehicles.

The transportation sector alone was responsible for emitting 35.42 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2022, which contributed to climate change, data from Statista showed.

Stakeholders have been advocating for tax cuts to facilitate the mainstreaming of e-motorcycles, noting their significant contribution to the environment once riders shift to EVs.

The compulsory review of EO No. 12 rolled out on March 13, a little over a year since the circular was issued.

The Tariff Commission and the National Economic Development Agency are the lead agencies in the review. Recommendations gathered from the public hearings will be submitted to the Office of the President.

EO No. 12 was enacted to complement the Electric Vehicle Industry Development Act to create an industry for EVs in the country and help reduce carbon emissions, in compliance with the Philippines' commitment to the Paris Agreement. It modifies the tariff rates for EVs to help mainstream their use among Filipinos.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### DAILY TRIBUNE

#### [Future-proofing children against climate change needed](#)

The Climate Change Commission emphasized the need to “future-proof our children in the midst of climate change” during the conference on “Children Displaced in a Changing Climate: Preparing for a Future Already Underway.”

Participating in discussions aimed at establishing a common vision to prevent and prepare for the increasing displacement of children in the context of climate change, CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje shared the Philippines’ experience as the “country adopts a whole-of-country and whole-of-society approach in developing policies geared towards low-carbon, climate-resilient, and sustainable development.”

A joint report of the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, supported by the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation, identified floods, storms, droughts, and wildfires as the most common weather-related hazards leading to the largest number of displacements.

The report also stated children’s heightened vulnerability to climate and environmental shocks compared to adults.

“The Philippines acknowledges the urgency of taking more concrete actions and optimizing opportunities to transition to a more climate-smart and climate-resilient pathway,” Borje said.

He outlined the following concrete actions: catalyzing data to determine necessary support of displaced individuals especially children; ramping up efforts in championing the welfare of children amid threats of displacement due to climate crisis; and championing human-centered interventions to address the social impacts of climate change.

As we transform our children from victims to victors, Borje encouraged the delegates to not just provide mere answers but concrete solutions.

“It is our responsibility to provide concrete and evidence-based actions to ensure a sustainable world for our future generations. Our actions and initiatives count as means to save lives, protect our livelihoods and secure our future,” he said.

## More than wastelands: Recognizing the hidden powers of wetlands

By: Secretary Robert Borje

Wetlands are among the most intriguing yet underrated ecological systems on our planet. While conversations about conservation often revolve around mountains, forests, and oceans, wetlands are frequently overlooked.

This raises the question: What exactly are wetlands, and why are they important?

Broadly speaking, wetlands are ecosystems centered around bodies of water, which may occur naturally or be human made. According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, wetlands encompass a variety of ecosystems with varying water dynamics, from static to flowing bodies of water. Some wetlands have water year-round, while others receive water seasonally. In a nutshell, wetlands refer to any piece of land with waterlogged soil.

There are three categories of wetlands in the Philippines: inland, coastal and marine areas, and human-made. Inland wetlands include marshes, peatlands, floodplains, rivers and lakes, while coastal and marine wetlands comprise saltmarshes, mangroves, and intertidal mudflats. Human-made wetlands include dams, reservoirs, rice paddies, ponds, lagoons, and wastewater treatment systems.

Despite their often-overlooked status, wetlands provide numerous benefits for ecosystems and humanity. They support various socio-economic activities such as agriculture, aquaculture, tourism and recreation.

More importantly, wetlands act as natural carbon sinks, absorbing land-based carbon and helping regulate greenhouse gas emissions and temperature in surrounding areas while at the same time producing oxygen.

Moreover, wetlands offer other ecosystem services such as flood control, groundwater replenishment, water purification, and sediment and nutrient retention. They are vital biodiversity hubs, hosting 40 percent of all animal and plant species.

Wetlands, however, are frequently viewed as wastelands and are subject to destruction for land-use conversion or dumping. Alarmingly, wetlands are disappearing at a rate three times faster than that of our forests.

According to the United Nations, over 35 percent of the world's wetlands have disappeared since 1970. If we don't do something and this trend continues, the majority of all wetlands will be lost, along with the lives that thrived within them.

In the Philippines, there are roughly 314 wetlands distributed around the country. Many of these wetlands are found in Luzon and Mindanao, with fewer in Visayas. Wetlands in the country include lagoons, seagrass beds, mangroves, rivers, estuaries, mudflats, lakes, swamps, and cave hydrological systems. Like most wetlands, however, they are at risk of disappearing forever due to several factors, including climate change and human activities. Under the worst-case scenario, there would be a 51 percent reduction in the Philippines' coastal wetlands by 2100.

The world, including the Philippines, cannot afford to lose wetlands because they have the capacity to act as carbon sinks and flood regulators. This is especially true for the Philippines, which experiences the harshest effects of climate change, including storms and droughts.

In the face of intensifying climate change impacts, wetlands play a crucial role in both mitigating climate change by sequestering carbon in their soils and adapting to changing conditions by regulating flow.

Wetlands act as natural carbon sinks, absorbing land-based carbon and helping regulate greenhouse gas emissions and temperature.

Given the vital roles wetlands play in carbon storage and food regulation, it is surprising that people don't discuss protecting them more. Recognizing the importance of wetlands in mitigating climate change impacts, efforts are being made to conserve and protect them. Particularly, Sustainable Development Goal 15 aims to protect, restore, and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, including wetlands.

The Climate Change Commission is committed to preserving Philippine wetlands through policymaking and implementation. Identified in the Philippine National Adaptation Plan are the strategies aimed at safeguarding, nurturing, restoring, financing, and sustaining natural assets like our wetlands.

Rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems, as outlined in the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, is another step towards protecting wetlands and enhancing their ecosystem services.

Currently, the Philippines has over eight wetlands that are under the protection of Ramsar Convention, which provides the framework for effective conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. These include the Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary; Naujan Lake National Park; Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park; Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area; Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area; Sasmoan Pampanga Coastal Wetlands; Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary; and Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park.

These sites showcase the Philippine government's sustainable conservation efforts.

However, more research, planning, and policies are needed to ensure the long-term preservation of wetlands.

Wetlands are not wastelands but vital reservoirs crucial to our planet's well-being. Beyond their ability to host diverse wildlife, wetlands serve as guardians of biodiversity, natural water purifiers, and potent carbon sinks. By recognizing and protecting their hidden powers, we pave the way for a harmonious coexistence with nature and ensure a legacy of ecological richness for future generations.

## Scholarship to beef up ranks of women environmental stewards

Women leaders in climate action are being offered scholarships on climate change and disaster risk management course under a program of the Climate Change Commission (CCC), Office of Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda and the Asian Institute of Management (AIM).

Nine of 18 scholarship grants for Sustainable Leadership Learning for Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction (SLL-CDRR), to be provided through the Executive Masters in Disaster Risk and Crisis Management program (EMDRCM), would be reserved for women, according to the Philippine News Agency.

The CCC, Legarda and AIM recognize the indispensable role of women in environmental stewardship and community resilience. Also, the impact of disasters is felt disproportionately, with women bearing most of the brunt.

In 2021, Typhoon Odette affected approximately four million women and girls of reproductive age in 13 provinces, prompting the United Nations Population Fund Philippines to call for urgent donations for the affected women and young girls.

“Women in fragile areas often bear the brunt of climate change impacts. Their unique perspectives and experiences are indispensable in addressing these dimensions and ensuring equitable solutions,” Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda said.

CCC, Senator Loren Legarda and AIM partner to bolster women leaders in climate action.

“The SLL-CDRR program is a strategic investment in human capital, enabling the shift from fragility to agility and changing the climate change narrative from victim to victor. Through this, women, in particular, will no longer be seen as vulnerable; instead, they will be part of the story, actively contributing to the solutions to climate change,” CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje said.

The SLL-CDRR program will enable recipients to pursue specialization in Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCAM) and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM), aligning their scholastic outputs with the policy priorities of the CCC, including the National Climate Change Action Plan and the draft National Adaptation Plan.

scholarship program will provide full financial support to outstanding students enrolled in the EMDRCM program starting 29 June.

Eligible for the scholarship are national government personnel focused on CCAM and DRRM, DRRM officers in local government units, leaders from indigenous groups and sustainability and inclusivity champions. Successful candidates selected by the CCC will be awarded a full scholarship covering program and tuition fees, with additional support for participation in required in-person campus activities.

“With each scholar receiving this scholarship, we believe very firmly, we’re taking one step closer to the solution we’re seeking in terms of a future defined by resilience, sustainability, and resolve,” Professor Jikyeong Kang, AIM president said.

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### [CCC, Legarda, AIM Partner To Bolster Women's Role In Climate Action](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has partnered with the Office of Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda and the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) to bolster women's leadership in climate change and disaster resilience through Sustainable Leadership Learning for Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction (SLL-CDRR).

Through the collaboration of CCC, Office of Senator Legarda and AIM, scholarships will be provided through the Executive Masters in Disaster Risk and Crisis Management (EMDRCM) program to 18 individuals, with at least half of the slots allotted for women.

Recognizing the indispensable role of women in environmental stewardship and community resilience, the SLL-CDRR program promotes an inclusive approach to addressing climate challenges.

The impact of disasters is felt disproportionately, with women bearing most of the brunt.

In 2021, Typhoon Odette affected approximately four million women and girls of reproductive age in 13 provinces, prompting the United Nations Population Fund Philippines to call for urgent donations for the affected women and young girls.

Among them, an estimated 162,000 are pregnant, with 24,000 likely to experience complications. Furthermore, an estimated 470,000 women in affected areas lacked access to family planning information and services, exacerbating existing challenges such as gender-based violence.

"Women in fragile areas often bear the brunt of climate change impacts. Their unique perspectives and experiences are indispensable in addressing these dimensions and ensuring equitable solutions," Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda said in a news release on Wednesday.

While prioritizing women, the program welcomes a diverse range of qualified individuals, including:

- National government personnel focused on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCAM) and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM)
- DRRM officers in local government units
- Leaders from indigenous groups
- Sustainability and inclusivity champions

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## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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## POLITIKO

### [Nat'l Adaptation Plans 'Critical Baselines' To Enhance Climate Adaptation, Support: Borje](#)

By: Prince Golez

National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) are critical enablers to enhance adaptation and foster climate resilience, Climate Change Commission (CCC) Secretary Robert Borje said.

During the recent Adaptation Forum 2024 held in Germany, Borje emphasized the need to strengthen collaboration and accelerate delivery of support for the adaptation interventions of developing countries.

He also highlighted the urgent need for immediate financial, capacity, and technological assistance.

“National Adaptation Plans are critical baselines for individual and collective efforts of Parties,” the CCC official said.

“Towards the achievement of the global goal on adaptation and the new global climate resilience objectives, we must drive developing nations towards NAP formulation and implementation,” he added.

Borje reiterated that support for the whole NAP process must be provided, with least to no conditionalities, and in the most urgent manner.

“We must make data and information more available and accessible, and ensure that developing nations are provided with the capacity to analyze data to determine fit-for-purpose adaptation measures. Support must be provided to enable developing nations to formulate NAPs with least domestic budget and resource implication as possible,” he furthered.

The NAP process includes risk assessment, planning and development, implementation, and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning.

According to the NAP Central, 53 developing countries have submitted their NAPs, which accounts for only 25 percent of all developing country Parties under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.

The Philippines is currently finalizing its first NAP, developed based on a whole-of-nation and whole-of-society approach.

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