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11 APRIL 2024 [08:00 am]

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By: Roderick Abad

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By: Jen Christensen

In 2019 alone, more than half a million people died due to a stroke linked to high and low temperatures, a new study found. With the world getting warmer due to human-made climate change, that number is expected to rise.

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DAILY TRIBUNE

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By: Pilita Clark

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GMA

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By: Simon Jessop and Kate Abnett

Governments, business leaders and development banks have two years to take action to avert far worse climate change, the UN's climate chief said on Wednesday, in a speech that warned global warming is slipping down politicians' agendas.

JOURNAL ONLINE

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In time for the celebration of World Health Day, environmental NGO BAN Toxics highlights the urgent need to address pressing climate issues of plastic pollution and global warming and how they impact public health.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

[Swiss climate policy shortcomings violated human rights, top court rules](#)

By: Gloria Dickie, Kate Abnett and Christian Levaux

Europe's top human rights court ruled on Tuesday that the Swiss government had violated the human rights of its citizens by failing to do enough to combat climate change.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Hot and humid temperatures today \(April 11\) across PH, says Pagasa](#)

By: Zacarian Sarao

The easterlies will continue to bring hot and humid temperatures across the country on Thursday, with chances of localized thunderstorms, said the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Iloilo City gets P18-M risk resiliency aid](#)

By: Perla Lena

At least 2,019 residents from 124 barangays here will benefit from the PHP18 million in funds under the Risk Resiliency Program (RRP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development Western Visayas (DSWD 6).

SUNSTAR

[Protect public health from El Niño, climate change: BAN Toxics](#)

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[PAGASA identifies 8 areas with 'dangerous' heat index on Eid'l Fitr](#)

By: Ian Laqui

Eight areas in the Philippines are expected to experience scorching temperatures up to 44 °Celsius (°C) on Eid'l Fitr, according to the latest data of state weather bureau PAGASA.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Climate Change Commission opens nominations for sustainable leadership learning program](#)

In an effort to bolster sustainable leadership in climate and disaster risk reduction, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) has announced the opening of nominations for the Sustainable Leadership Learning for Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction (SLL-CDRR) program in 2024.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS MIRROR

Government urged to address climate change to protect kids from unhealthy, disruptive heatwaves

By: Roderick Abad

As the mercury continues to rise that keeps class suspensions effective in several areas nationwide, Save the Children Philippines called on the government to address climate change that results in extreme weather condition like the El Niño.

Since last week, the heat index has peaked between 42 degrees Celsius (°C) and 44 °C. In fact, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said that such temperature levels that brought “danger category” heat were felt last April 9, 2024 in six areas of Luzon and Mindanao, such as Dagupan City, Pangasinan; Bacnotan, La Union; Tuguegarao City, Cagayan; Puerto Princesa, Palawan; Aborlan, Palawan; and Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur.

Heat index, as defined by Pagasa, refers to “a measure of the contribution that high humidity makes with abnormally high temperatures in reducing the body’s ability to cool itself.” According to this agency, 42 °C to 51 °C heat indicators are perilous as high temperatures that may cause heat cramps, exhaustion, and heat stroke during continued exposure.

Unlike adults, the bodies of children are still developing and are incapable of regulating internal body temperature, making them more prone to heat-related illnesses, asthma, allergies, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory problems.

“Educators and local authorities have been forced to make the extreme decision to shut hundreds of schools because this extreme heat means children are simply unable to concentrate in the classroom and their health is also at risk. We need to see urgent action now to limit warming to a maximum of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Failing to do this will have dramatic consequences for children’s health, safety, and wellbeing,” Save the Children Philippines Chief Executive Officer Atty. Alberto Muyot said.

Climate change battle

The long-term alteration of temperature and typical weather patterns in a place, which is commonly known as climate change, has been increasing global temperatures and has been causing unprecedented heatwaves globally, with more countries like the Philippines experiencing hotter days more frequently. Together with poverty, it threatens one-third of the world’s children, or 774 million, simultaneously.

Children and youth advocates expressed concern about the effects of climate change in their education and quality of life.

“In the previous four years, we have seen changes in the school calendar and mode of delivery owing to the pandemic and to react to the changing environment, on top of all the class suspensions due to recurrent typhoons. We’re expecting another calendar adjustment as a result of El Niño,” said Rohj Olivo, a 17-year-old climate activist.

Carla, a 15-year-old from Navotas City, recalled that she “used to walk home to save on fare,” but not now “because of the heat.” For her, commuting is hard, sidewalks are small, not to mention the weather’s really hot.

She believes that inequality exacerbates climate change’s impacts, as big nations and corporations contribute to rising temperatures, leaving those with little to struggle the most. She said: “They must be held accountable.”

According to some teachers from Eastern Samar and Cotabato City, the very high temperature felt by students in the classroom is bad for their health, focus, and the entire learning experience.

“A number of our students are suffering with colds and coughs. If the heat wave persists, we will need to adopt modular learning so that the children can wear light and stay hydrated at home,” shared teacher Geralyn.

For teacher Perla, schools must prepare for El Niño by providing potable water in every classroom. In the case of their school, she noticed that the classrooms lacked enough ventilation, hence, a rising heat wave makes kids restless, unable to concentrate, and feeling ill.

“We encourage everyone at school to protect the health of both the students and the staff during this hot season. We highly urge water breaks in each lesson to keep children hydrated, keep the room well-ventilated, and avoid afternoon classes. We schedule modular lessons whenever possible, especially during peak heatwaves,” teacher Nur said.

CNN

[Extreme temperatures are tied to more than half a million stroke deaths a year. With climate change, expect more](#)

By: Jen Christensen

In 2019 alone, more than half a million people died due to a stroke linked to high and low temperatures, a new study found. With the world getting warmer due to human-made climate change, that number is expected to rise.

The study, published Wednesday in the medical journal *Neurology*, found that since 1990, the number of strokes attributable to high and low temperatures have been increasing all around the globe. Men had more strokes related to extreme temperatures than women, but it affected people across all age groups.

For this study, researchers looked at temperatures and strokes in 204 countries and territories. Researchers from Xiangya Hospital Central South University in China created a model using global data on disease, deaths and disability and climate data that captures temperatures, cloud cover and weather variables.

The study authors noted that the number of people having strokes has risen as the population ages and grows, but this doesn't account for everything. "Nonoptimal temperatures" made a difference: The number of people who had a stroke due to hot and cold temperatures grew and was significantly larger in 2019 than in 1990.

In 2019, it was low temperatures that led to the higher number of strokes. While that may sound counterintuitive for global warming, cold temperatures also come along with climate change. Warmer temperatures on land interfere with the polar vortex — the dense cold air mass around the poles — and when it is weakened, it can lead to cooler temperatures.

Right now, stroke deaths connected to extreme temperatures are disproportionately concentrated in parts of the world with with a higher levels of people living in poverty and where health care systems are fragile, like in Africa. The study said the rapid increase in stroke burden due to high temperature in Central Asia "also requires special attention."

As the planet gets warmer, the study said, the burden of strokes due to high temperature "has increased rapidly" and that number will grow "sharply" in the future.

Higher temperatures are already here. Last year was the warmest since scientists started recording global temperatures in 1850 and temperatures are expected to break more records in the near future. This March was the hottest one on record.

Dr. Mary Rice, an associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School who did not work on the new study, said its findings are significant.

“I really think that group did a very nice job of taking a global approach looking at historic data and to draw attention to a health issue that I think it’s not really getting a lot of attention,” said Rice, a pulmonologist at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. “The total burden of people who died from strokes from temperature is actually a very large number.”

Rice recently published a study in *Frontiers in Science* that found climate change is also driving an increasing number of immune-mediated diseases such as allergies, asthma, autoimmune diseases and cancers. Rice’s study suggests that multilevel mitigation actions are urgently needed to reduce emissions and to improve air quality while addressing the climate crisis.

Without immediate global action, the world is going to see a much greater burden of disease, she said.

‘It’s happening across the board’

Stroke is already a significant health problem. It is the third leading cause of disability worldwide, and one of the leading causes of death, earlier studies showed.

The new study wasn’t designed to show why extreme temperatures that come with the climate crisis seem to be causing so many strokes. Other research has shown that when temperatures are excessively hot, it’s difficult for the body to regulate and cool itself by sweating. This can lead to what doctors call a hypercoagulable state of the blood, when the blood clots easier and increases the risk of stroke. People may also become dehydrated, which can force the heart to work too hard, also increasing a person’s chance of having a stroke or heart attack.

Extreme cold temperatures also can lead someone to have a stroke. When the body is exposed to cold, it stimulates the skin’s cold receptors which triggers what’s known as the sympathetic nervous system, the network of nerves that control the body’s fight or flight response. That can cause vasoconstriction, the constriction of blood vessels in the skin, arms, and legs, leading blood pressure to spike and potentially leading to a stroke.

Dr. Ali Saad, a neurologist who's affiliated with the Climate and Health Program at the University of Colorado, said when he is already talking about this phenomenon with stroke patients and reminding them how dangerous extreme temperatures, particularly heat, can be. He said he will take their phone and add weather alerts so they are mindful of when temperatures will spike.

"I tell them 'I'm worried that you're going to overheat and there are things we can do to prevent both stroke and worsening climate change,' " Saad said.

Saad did not work on the new study, but said he hopes this latest research will grab the attention of global leaders and influence public policy.

"The fact that extreme weather, or extreme temperatures more specifically, is a risk factor for stroke is known, but what this study adds is that it's the first to examine things on a global scale," Saad said. "People, when they think of pollution or heat when it's related to health outcomes, stroke or otherwise, tend to think of low- to middle-income countries, but it's happening across the board and it's expected to get worse."

[Meteorites may be lost to Antarctic ice as climate warms, study says](#)

By: Katie Hunt

The icy plains of Antarctica are a magnet for meteorite hunters such as Maria Valdes, a research scientist at the Field Museum of Natural History and the University of Chicago. Some 1,000 space rocks are found in the region each year. Their dark hue is easy to spot in the white expanse.

“Antarctica, a desert of ice, provides an ideal background for meteorite recovery — go to the right place, and any rock you find must have fallen from the sky,” said Valdes, who visited the region as part of an expedition team in late 2022 and early 2023 for her work at the museum’s Robert A. Pritzker Center for Meteoritics and Polar Studies. The international team found five meteorites.

“We stumbled across an enormous brown stone sitting by itself in the middle of an ice field. It was a little bit smaller than a bowling ball and quite heavy — 7.6 kg (about 17 pounds),” she said via email. “I had seen and handled so many meteorites in my career, but finding one yourself is such a different feeling.”

Formed from extraterrestrial bodies such as the moon, Mars or large asteroids, each meteorite tells a unique tale about the solar system and how it was formed. But the climate crisis threatens this trove of scientific information, according to a new study. Meteorites are disappearing into the ice, putting them out of the reach of scientists.

“As the climate continues to warm, Antarctic rocks are sinking into the ice at an increasing rate. Over time, this will make many meteorites inaccessible to scientists,” said Valdes, who wasn’t involved in the latest research. “We lose precious time capsules that hold clues to the history of our Solar System.”

As Earth warms, about 5,000 meteorites could disappear from the surface of melting ice sheets every year, according to the study published Monday in the journal *Nature Climate Change*. To date, more than 48,000 meteorites have been discovered in Antarctica, accounting for about 60% of specimens found globally.

How to find a meteorite

Meteorites, lumps of rock that fall from space through Earth’s atmosphere randomly, do not fall in an evenly scattered pattern across the frozen continent. Concentrations emerge in certain locations because of geography and weather patterns, Valdes explained.

Meteorites are particularly plentiful in blue ice fields. In these areas, a combination of ice flow processes and local weather conditions remove layers of snow and ice from the surface, exposing meteorites that were once embedded in the ice. The windblown ice tends to look blue compared with the surrounding surface snow.

“Over significant stretches of time (tens or hundreds of thousands of years) phenomenal concentrations of meteorites can develop, as high as 1 per square meter in some locations,” she said.

Researchers have identified areas of meteorite-rich blue ice mostly by luck. However, to systematize the search, Veronica Tollenaar, a doctoral researcher at Université Libre de Bruxelles in Belgium, and her colleagues used a machine-learning algorithm to create a “treasure map” of probable meteorite-rich zones, based on factors including surface temperature, surface slope, surface cover and ice flow movement.

That research, published in January 2022 in the journal *Science Advances*, identified 600 zones and suggested that 300,000 meteorites are still present at the surface of the ice sheet. Valdes said in 2023 she and her colleagues used the information to help inform their decision on exactly where to search during their expedition.

“Our experience ... indicates that so far, Tollenaar’s approach only works to a first order. Local parameters such as topography and wind directions that can redistribute meteorites from blue ice fields into local meteorite traps have to be considered as well,” Valdes said.

In the new study, co-lead author Tollenaar and her team projected the loss of meteorites under different climate change scenarios by combining climate modeling with their work from the 2022 paper.

The meteorites can sink into the ice even if temperatures are below zero degrees Celsius (32 Fahrenheit). The sun heats up the dark rock, which absorbs solar radiation more easily because of its color, which melts the surrounding ice. “With that heat, it can locally melt the ice and slowly disappear from the surface,” Tollenaar said.

Harry Zekollari, who was co-lead author along with Tollenaar on the new study, said that cold surface temperature was one of four factors linked to a potential meteorite cluster.

“It’s really important that it’s cold and if your surface temperature starts changing, even if it’s going from minus 12 C to minus 9 C, it’s crossing a magic threshold where you’re

starting to lose meteorites,” said Zekollari, an associate professor of glaciology at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

Under current policies, which the study said may result in a warming of 2.6 degrees Celsius to 2.7 degrees Celsius (4.7 F to 4.9 F) above preindustrial levels, the researchers estimated that 28% to 30% of the meteorites in Antarctica could become inaccessible. Under a high-emission scenario, the estimate increased to 76%. Only at elevations above 2,500 meters (8,202 feet) will meteorites losses be less than 50%, the study said.

Matthias van Ginneken, a research associate at the University of Kent’s Centre for Astrophysics and Planetary Science in the UK, said the work “made a lot of sense considering how global warming seems to affect Antarctica.”

However, van Ginneken, who wasn’t involved in the study, said he wished the authors had talked more about uncertainties in their model and conducted lab experiments to simulate how global warming affects meteorites, which would support the results of the algorithm.

“It is certainly worrying, but there will still be thousands of meteorites to find per year,” he said via email.

“The main worry is the logistical aspect of searching for Antarctica meteorites, which is already difficult today due to the remoteness of Antarctica. Should the results of this study prove to be true, it will force scientists to explore new areas, potentially even further away from scientific bases than those that are commonly explored. It would make this treasure trove even more inaccessible and, thus, necessitate more funding and logistical support.”

What we’ve learned from Antarctic meteorites

Meteorites discovered in the southernmost reaches of the planet have taught us a lot, said Kevin Righter, a planetary scientist at NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston in a commentary published alongside the research. He was not involved in the new study.

Scientists recognized meteorites collected in the region in 1979 and 1981 as originating from the moon, Righter noted. Before these finds, the only samples from the moon were from the Apollo and Luna landing sites. The meteorite samples have resulted in a more random and comprehensive sampling of the entire lunar surface. Other meteorites have been connected to Mars.

“All of this recent research history indicates that with continued collection, new meteorite types are likely to be found — including perhaps pieces of Mercury or Venus that might have been ejected from their surface following impacts.”

Righter, along with the study authors, called for collection efforts to be ramped up and prioritized. “If meteorites are not collected quickly enough, they will be a lost resource for present and future planetary science,” he added.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Global warming will 'decimate' G20 economies without unity: UN climate head](#)

UN climate chief Simon Stiell on Wednesday warned G20 nations their economies face decimation and they must overcome geopolitical divisions to tackle global warming.

Stiell said the climate crisis was slipping down a crowded global agenda at a time when consensus was needed on how to help developing nations pay for clean energy and respond to extreme weather.

The Group of 20 developed and developing economies including the United States, China and India faced many geopolitical challenges but this "cannot be an excuse for timidity amidst this worsening crisis", Stiell said in a London speech.

"I'll be candid: blame-shifting is not -- is not -- a strategy. Sidelining climate isn't a solution to a crisis that will decimate every G20 economy and has already started to hurt," said the executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

"The financial firepower the G20 marshaled during the global financial crisis should be marshaled again and pointed squarely at curbing runaway emissions and building resilience right now."

Brazil had hoped a gathering of G20 finance ministers it hosted in February would spotlight climate change but the meeting ended in discord over the wars in Ukraine and Gaza.

Stiell's rallying cry follows this week's announcement by Europe's climate monitor that March was the hottest on record and the tenth straight month of historic heat around the globe.

No time for talkfest

Stiell has previously said the world needed "torrents" of cash to fund the clean energy transition -- but who pays what has long been a sticking point at the UN's annual climate negotiations.

Countries at last year's talks in Dubai agreed to triple global renewables capacity this decade and "transition away" from fossil fuels but the deal lacked important details on funding.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development says wealthy nations likely provided \$100 billion in climate finance to poorer nations in 2022.

But this is far from the estimated \$2.4 trillion annually that developing countries -- excluding China -- will need to meet their climate and development needs.

Poorer countries cannot foot the bill, and have been urging reform to western-led financial institutions to ensure fairer terms and access to capital for nations the least responsible for climate change.

Stiell urged financial leaders convening at the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Washington DC next week not to let climate finance "slip between the cracks of different mandates".

"We can't afford a talkfest without clear steps forward," he said.

By early 2025, nations are to explain what steps they are taking to cut emissions in line with the Paris agreement to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial level.

But the world is nowhere near meeting this target, and emissions continued to rise in 2023.

Stiell said developing nations could not be expected to respond to the crisis when "treasury coffers are bare... new borrowing is impossible, and the wolves of poverty are at the door".

'Rise to this moment'

G20 nations were responsible for 80 percent of planet-heating emissions "and must be at the core of the solution", Stiell said.

"A quantum leap this year in climate finance is both essential and entirely achievable," he said.

"The world needs the G20 to rise to this moment."

A new report published by two advocacy groups on Tuesday found that G20 economies and multilateral lenders provided \$142 billion in funding for fossil fuel projects between 2020 and 2022.

That was almost 1.4 times the amount spent on clean energy investments over the same period, said the report by Oil Change International and Friends of the Earth US.

Stiell urged finance ministers, investors and development bankers to "shift those dollars from the energy and infrastructure of the past towards that of a cleaner, more resilient future".

In a year when dozens of nations and hundreds of millions of people are going to the polls, Stiell said "every voice matters".

"Yours have never been more important. If you want bolder climate action, now is the time to make your voices heard," he said.

FINANCIAL TIMES

[\[Opinion\] What if global emissions went down instead of up?](#)

By: Pilita Clark

Some time in the near future, perhaps as soon as this year, humans are likely to experience something that has never happened in modern history before.

For the first time, global emissions of planet-warming greenhouse gases might finally stop rising and head into long-term decline.

No one alive today has known a time like this. Nor has any other recent generation because, for most of the last 200 years, emissions have risen steadily on an upward path, interrupted only briefly when something like a financial crisis or pandemic causes a global economic shock.

The rate of this growth has been slowing globally, and emissions have now declined in more than 40 nations as countries become more energy efficient, switch from coal to cleaner gas and swap fossil fuels for renewables.

But this has yet to add up to a global fall in emissions. Once it does though, some analysts think the politics, psychology and even the financing of climate action could shift profoundly.

I have to say this thought did not occur to me in November, when research emerged showing that if today's green energy growth trends continue, and if gases such as methane are cut, there is a 70 per cent chance that global emissions will start falling in 2024, making 2023 the year they peaked.

Then I started running into people like economist Nat Keohane, a former Obama White House adviser who is now president of the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions think-tank.

He is remarkably bullish about the impact of a global emissions decline. "I think that would be an extraordinarily powerful political and psychological moment," he told me, adding that it could broaden the base of support for climate action in several ways.

First, it would be empowering because it would show that the fight against global warming was winnable, not a futile, pointless quest. I agree.

Second, a decline would offer concrete evidence that demand for fossil fuels was more fragile than appreciated, and competition in the global clean energy race more robust.

Keohane thinks this could shift the behaviour of governments, boardrooms and investors because it would make fossil fuel investments look more like a dead end, and green investments a competitive necessity.

I think this is possible too, but it would require a shift in the remorselessly short-termist thinking of investors, especially if the pace of emission declines was slow.

Also, those of us who live in countries like the UK, where emissions have nearly halved since 1990, know governments can easily use such achievements as an excuse to take their feet off the emissions-cutting accelerator.

As prime minister Rishi Sunak said last year, “it cannot be right” to burden working people with policies to cut emissions when “we’re so far ahead of every other country in the world”.

So would a global fall in emissions stop this line of argument?

Maybe not, but it would still dent the popular idea that it is pointless to virtuously cut emissions when China, the biggest emitter by far, is doing virtually nothing.

That’s because a global fall would be driven by drops in China, where surging wind and solar power growth has led some analysts to suggest fossil fuels are on the brink of structural decline in the power sector.

This, plus the prospect of soaring electric car sales dampening Chinese oil demand, are two reasons why the authors of the November research concluded a peak in emissions may be nearer than thought.

Their research has limitations, such as the assumption that emissions come down relatively smoothly across the world.

In practice, they might recede in China, the US and EU while Russia doubles down on fossil fuels, says one of the authors, Professor Joeri Rogelj, a frequent contributor to reports by the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Also, even if emissions do start waning this year or next, they are unlikely to fall 43 per cent by 2030 from 2019 levels, which is what the Panel says is needed to keep the Paris Agreement's 1.5C temperature goal within reach.

In other words, a global peak in emissions will be a big turning point, but not nearly enough to contain warming now hitting levels never recorded before. Years of steep and prolonged falls will be needed after that.

This is a big ask and, ultimately, no one knows for sure what sorts of behavioural shifts a peak might drive. But in a world of deepening climate gloom, any sign of hope is surely welcome.

GMA

[UN climate chief says two years to save the planet](#)

By: Simon Jessop and Kate Abnett

Governments, business leaders and development banks have two years to take action to avert far worse climate change, the UN's climate chief said on Wednesday, in a speech that warned global warming is slipping down politicians' agendas.

Scientists say halving climate-damaging greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 is crucial to stop a rise in temperatures of more than 1.5 Celsius that would unleash more extreme weather and heat.

Yet last year, the world's energy-related CO2 emissions increased to a record high. Current commitments to fight climate change would barely cut global emissions at all by 2030.

Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change said the next two years are "essential in saving our planet."

"We still have a chance to make greenhouse gas emissions tumble, with a new generation of national climate plans. But we need these stronger plans, now," he said.

Speaking at an event at the Chatham House think-tank in London, Stiell said the Group of 20 leading economic powers—together, responsible for 80% of global emissions—urgently needed to step up.

The main task for this year's UN climate negotiations is for countries to agree on a new target for climate finance to support developing countries struggling to invest in shifting away from fossil fuels and fighting climate change.

Stiell said more climate finance should be delivered through debt relief, cheaper financing for poorer countries, new sources of international finance such as a tax on shipping emissions, and reforms at the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, which hold their annual Spring Meetings this month.

"Every day finance ministers, CEOs, investors, and climate bankers and development bankers direct trillions of dollars. It's time to shift those dollars," he said.

As well as more funding to the World Bank's International Development Association, Stiell urged an overhaul of its capital requirements and expansion of its use of Climate

Resilient Debt Clauses, which suspends debt repayments in the event of natural disasters.

In a bumper year for elections around the world—with voters going to the polls from India, to South Africa and the United States—Stiell warned too often climate action was "slipping down cabinet agendas."

Politicians from Republican frontrunner Donald Trump in the United States, to far-right parties seeking gains in the EU's upcoming election, have pushed back on climate policies as they court voters.

Protect public health from El Niño and climate change; address plastic pollution – BAN Toxics

In time for the celebration of World Health Day, environmental NGO BAN Toxics highlights the urgent need to address pressing climate issues of plastic pollution and global warming and how they impact public health.

“As the country contends with dangerous heat index levels resulting from human-induced climate change compounded by the warming influence of the naturally occurring El Niño phenomenon, we also face intensified health risks posed by plastic pollution. A warming climate diminishes the properties of plastics, accelerates their aging, heightens the risk of microplastics, and the release of hazardous substances,” Jam Lorenzo, BAN Toxics Policy Development and Research Officer said.

“In addition to health risks associated with El Niño, such as heatstroke and vector-borne diseases like malaria, dengue fever, and Lyme disease, as well as respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses due to air quality, we must also address serious health risks posed by plastics. These include cancer, endocrine disruption leading to reproductive, growth, and cognitive impairments. Toxic chemical additives in plastics are known to have persistent and bioaccumulative health impacts. Experiments on microplastics indicate exposure can result in toxic effects such as oxidative stress, metabolic disorders, immune responses, neurotoxicity, as well as reproductive and developmental toxicity,” Lorenzo elaborated.

“Research indicates that rising temperatures and heat alter the characteristics of plastics, thus, driving the demand for more plastics and waste. Conversely, the overproduction of the plastic industry has been acknowledged as a significant emitter of greenhouse gasses, which then exacerbates climate change. This self-reinforcing cycle, as highlighted by scientists, constitutes a vicious cycle that warrants utmost attention and decisive measures to disrupt the cycle,” Lorenzo added.

The environmental group urges policymakers to prioritize implementing a comprehensive national ban on single-use plastics and other non-essential and problematic plastic products. They also call for establishing targets to cap and phase down virgin plastic production to address the reduction of plastic waste. “Given the current limitations of our waste management capacity, which cannot handle the plastic waste crisis effectively, there is an urgent need to address this issue to prevent further profound harms to human health and the environment.”

The Philippines is estimated to have produced nearly 5 billion kilograms of mismanaged plastic waste, a quantity expected to double to 9 billion kilograms by 2040 without

additional interventions. Despite the enactment of the Extended Producer Responsibility law in 2023, which serves as the primary legal framework addressing plastic pollution, BAN Toxics advocates for regulatory strengthening. The organization believes a framework to combat plastic pollution must encompass the entire lifecycle of plastics, starting from the extraction of raw materials, rather than solely focusing on the end-of-life phase.

“As global warming and plastic production, use, and waste intensify hand-in-hand, the country remains at a critical juncture, disproportionately vulnerable to the impact of these global challenges. On this World Health Day, we advocate for a holistic and systemic change approach to protect the health, welfare, livelihoods, and the environment.”

BAN Toxics has been participating in international negotiations for a legally binding international law aimed at reducing plastic pollution worldwide, and covering the full lifecycle of plastic. “To reverse the tide of plastic pollution, we advocate for a global plastics treaty that stipulates ambitious and binding reduction in plastic production of countries. We want to push forward the point that plastic is pollution from the moment of fossil fuel extraction,” Lorenzo said in a final statement.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

[Swiss climate policy shortcomings violated human rights, top court rules](#)

By: Gloria Dickie, Kate Abnett and Christian Levaux

Europe's top human rights court ruled on Tuesday that the Swiss government had violated the human rights of its citizens by failing to do enough to combat climate change.

The European Court of Human Rights's (ECtHR) decision on the case brought by more than 2,000 elderly Swiss women set a precedent that will resonate across Europe and beyond for how courts deal with a growing trend of climate litigation.

But in a sign of the complexities of climate litigation, the court rejected two similar climate-related cases, one brought by a group of six Portuguese young people against 32 European governments and another by a former mayor of a low-lying French coastal town.

The Swiss women, known as KlimaSeniorinnen, argued their government's climate inaction put them at risk of dying during heatwaves.

In her ruling, Court President Siofra O'Leary said the Swiss government had failed to meet targets for cutting greenhouse gas emissions and that there had been gaps in its domestic regulatory framework.

"It is clear that future generations are likely to bear an increasingly severe burden of the consequences of present failures and omissions to combat climate change," O'Leary said.

One of KlimaSeniorinnen leaders, Rosmarie Wydler-Wälti said she was struggling to grasp the full extent of the decision.

"We keep asking our lawyers, 'Is that right?'. And they tell us 'it's the most you could have had. The biggest victory possible'."

A spokesperson for the Swiss Energy Ministry reacted to the ruling by saying: "We're on a good path. We're doing a lot."

CLIMATE LITIGATION ON THE RISE

The cases before the 17-judge panel in Strasbourg, France, are among the increasing number of climate lawsuits brought by communities against governments that hinge on human rights law.

The European Commission said it took note of the ruling.

“Regardless of the legal arguments, what these cases do is they remind us of the high importance and urgency which our citizens attach to climate action.” a Commission spokesman said.

Global civic movement Avaaz said the court’s Swiss ruling had opened a new chapter in climate litigation.

“(It) sets a crucial legally binding precedent serving as a blueprint for how to successfully sue your own government over climate failures,” Ruth Delbaere, legal campaigns director at Avaaz, said.

The verdicts, which cannot be appealed, could compel the Swiss federal government to take greater action on reducing emissions, including revising its 2030 emissions reductions targets to get in line with the Paris Agreement goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit).

In the case brought by the Portuguese youngsters, the court ruled that while a state’s greenhouse gas emissions may have an adverse impact on people living outside its borders, it did not justify prosecuting a case across multiple jurisdictions. It also noted that the young people had not exhausted legal avenues within Portugal’s national courts before coming to the ECtHR.

“I really hoped that we would win against all the countries so obviously,” Sofia Oliveira, one of the Portuguese teens, said in a statement.

“But the most important thing is that the Court has said in the Swiss women’s case that governments must cut their emissions more to protect human rights. So, their win is a win for us too and a win for everyone.”

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Hot and humid temperatures today \(April 11\) across PH, says Pagasa](#)

By: Zacarian Sarao

The easterlies will continue to bring hot and humid temperatures across the country on Thursday, with chances of localized thunderstorms, said the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

“The easterlies continue to prevail throughout our entire country, thus the entire country will experience fair weather but hot noon times,” said Weather Forecaster Chenel Dominguez.

“There are chances of localized thunderstorms especially in the afternoon and evening, particularly in the eastern sections of the country,” she added.

No LPAs, storms

No low pressure areas or storms, meanwhile, are currently being monitored by Pagasa within the Philippine area of responsibility.

Pagasa said the temperature range in key cities/areas across the country for Wednesday will be:

- Metro Manila: 24 to 35 degrees Celsius
- Baguio City: 18 to 24 degrees Celsius
- Laoag City: 26 to 34 degrees Celsius
- Tuguegarao: 25 to 36 degrees Celsius
- Legazpi City: 25 to 33 degrees Celsius
- Puerto Princesa City: 26 to 34 degrees Celsius
- Tagaytay: 23 to 33 degrees Celsius
- Kalayaan Islands: 26 to 34 degrees Celsius
- Iloilo City: 27 to 33 degrees Celsius
- Cebu: 26 to 33 degrees Celsius
- Tacloban City: 26 to 32 degrees Celsius
- Cagayan De Oro City: 24 to 32 degrees Celsius
- Zamboanga City: 25 to 34 degrees Celsius
- Davao City: 24 to 34 degrees Celsius

No gale warning is currently in effect over the country’s surrounding coasts and in-land seas.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Iloilo City gets P18-M risk resiliency aid](#)

By: Perla Lena

At least 2,019 residents from 124 barangays here will benefit from the PHP18 million in funds under the Risk Resiliency Program (RRP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development Western Visayas (DSWD 6).

The “Project LAWA at BINHI” (Local Adaptation to Water Access and Breaking Insufficiency through Nutritious Harvest for the Impoverished) will be implemented through cash-for-training and work (CFTW) focusing on water sufficiency and food security.

“RRP-CFTW is a proactive intervention and sustainable solution to combat hunger, alleviate poverty, and decrease the economic vulnerability of the communities by addressing food security and water scarcity exacerbated by climate change and disasters,” said the city government in a release on Friday.

The city government, represented by Mayor Jerry Treñas and DSWD 6 by its regional director lawyer Carmelo Nochete, signed the memorandum of agreement at the city mayor’s office on April 4.

“The DSWD’s support is a big help, especially with the present dry season wherein water and food security are in need,” Treñas said.

City Social Welfare and Development Office head Teresa Gelogo said beneficiaries will have to undergo three-day learning and development sessions on climate change adaptation and mitigation followed by their 15 days of cash-for-work.

They will be engaged in container gardening and tree planting in target areas such as in JPT Ediscape communal gardens and Day Care Centers across the city.

They will be planting resilient crops and vegetables and fruit-bearing trees, which can augment the city’s supplemental feeding program, while they will be encouraged to have communal and container gardening in their respective backyards and communities.

They will also construct small farm reservoirs, repair and rehabilitate water harvesting facilities, diversify water supplies, repair multipurpose water infrastructures, and other activities supporting water sufficiency.

It will end with a two-day training on strategies for sustaining the project.

For the entire 20 days, they will get paid PHP450 per day.

SUNSTAR

[Protect public health from El Niño, climate change: BAN Toxics](#)

In time for the celebration of World Health Day, environmental NGO BAN Toxics highlights the urgent need to address pressing climate issues of plastic pollution and global warming and how they impact public health.

"As the country contends with dangerous heat index levels resulting from human-induced climate change compounded by the warming influence of the naturally occurring El Niño phenomenon, we also face intensified health risks posed by plastic pollution.

A warming climate diminishes the properties of plastics, accelerates their aging, heightens the risk of microplastics, and the release of hazardous substances," Jam Lorenzo, BAN Toxics Policy Development and Research Officer said.

"In addition to health risks associated with El Niño, such as heatstroke and vector-borne diseases like malaria, dengue fever, and Lyme disease, as well as respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses due to air quality, we must also address serious health risks posed by plastics. These include cancer, endocrine disruption leading to reproductive, growth, and cognitive impairments.

Toxic chemical additives in plastics are known to have persistent and bioaccumulative health impacts. Experiments on microplastics indicate exposure can result in toxic effects such as oxidative stress, metabolic disorders, immune responses, neurotoxicity, as well as reproductive and developmental toxicity," Lorenzo elaborated.

"Research indicates that rising temperatures and heat alter the characteristics of plastics, thus, driving the demand for more plastics and waste.

Conversely, the overproduction of the plastic industry has been acknowledged as a significant emitter of greenhouse gasses, which then exacerbates climate change.

This self-reinforcing cycle, as highlighted by scientists, constitutes a vicious cycle that warrants utmost attention and decisive measures to disrupt the cycle," Lorenzo added.

The environmental group urges policymakers to prioritize implementing a comprehensive national ban on single-use plastics and other non-essential and problematic plastic products.

They also call for establishing targets to cap and phase down virgin plastic production to address the reduction of plastic waste.

“Given the current limitations of our waste management capacity, which cannot handle the plastic waste crisis effectively, there is an urgent need to address this issue to prevent further profound harms to human health and the environment.”

The Philippines is estimated to have produced nearly 5 billion kilograms of mismanaged plastic waste, a quantity expected to double to 9 billion kilograms by 2040 without additional interventions.

Despite the enactment of the Extended Producer Responsibility law in 2023, which serves as the primary legal framework addressing plastic pollution, BAN Toxics advocates for regulatory strengthening.

The organization believes a framework to combat plastic pollution must encompass the entire lifecycle of plastics, starting from the extraction of raw materials, rather than solely focusing on the end-of-life phase.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[PAGASA identifies 8 areas with 'dangerous' heat index on Eid'l Fitr](#)

By: Ian Laqui

Eight areas in the Philippines are expected to experience scorching temperatures up to 44 °Celsius (°C) on Eid'l Fitr, according to the latest data of state weather bureau PAGASA.

The agency's latest heat index bulletin said the eight areas will be under the "danger" classification, with temperatures ranging from 42°C to 44°C.

The following areas are under the danger classification:

- Dagupan City, Pangasinan - 44 °C
- Puerto Princesa City, Palawan - 43°C
- Aborlan, Palawan - 43°C
- Bacnotan, La Union - 42°C
- San Jose, Occidental Mindoro - 42°C
- Roxas City, Capiz - 42°C
- Guiuan, Eastern Samar - 42°C
- Cotabato City, Maguindanao - 42°C

Meanwhile, most parts of the country are under the "extreme caution" classification, with temperatures ranging from 33°C to 41°C.

The heat index, also referred to as the apparent temperature, factors in both relative humidity and the actual air temperature, providing a measure of how hot it feels.

PAGASA has issued a warning under the "danger" classification as temperatures soar between 42°C to 51°C. The agency warned that individuals are at risk of heat-related ailments such as heat cramps or heat exhaustion under the scorching heat.

To avoid potential complications from the extreme heat, the state weather bureau advised limiting outdoor activities, staying hydrated, and scheduling daily activities for cooler times later in the day.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Climate Change Commission opens nominations for sustainable leadership learning program](#)

In an effort to bolster sustainable leadership in climate and disaster risk reduction, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) has announced the opening of nominations for the Sustainable Leadership Learning for Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction (SLL-CDRR) program in 2024.

The SLL-CDRR is a collaboration between the CCC, Office of Senator Loren Legarda, and Asian Institute of Management (AIM). The scholarship program aims to enable selected candidates to enroll in the Executive Master in Disaster Risk and Crisis Management (EMDRCM) program.

This initiative aims to equip leaders with the skills and knowledge to effectively address the challenges posed by climate change and natural disasters, and be able to use them for the betterment of their communities, i.e., better adaptation and risk management plans.

Scholarship awardees will be expected to pursue specialization in CCAM and DRRM and produce scholastic outputs aligned with CCC's policy priorities, including the National Climate Change Action Plan. This involves addressing thematic priority areas such as food security, water sufficiency, ecosystem and environmental stability, and human security.

To ensure diversity and strategic representation, the CCC is particularly encouraging applications from underrepresented sectors of society. These include Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officers in local government units, women leaders in climate emergency response, leaders from indigenous groups, and sustainability champions in national government agencies.

In line with the commitment to gender parity, at least 50 percent of the scholarship slots will be dedicated to women.

Eligible applicants must possess a strong background in climate change adaptation and mitigation (CCAM) and disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM). They should also be government employees holding permanent status with at least five years of

continuous service, and preferably with supervisory or management experience. Additionally, applicants must not be more than 55 years old upon application.

Interested candidates may submit the necessary documentary requirements, including a Letter of Motivation, Official Nomination Letter, and other supporting documents, to the Asian Institute of Management via email at emdrbcm@aim.edu. The nomination period is open until 20 April 2024.

The CCC's Selection and Nomination Committee will conduct the primary screening of applicants. Successful nominees will undergo further admission procedures facilitated by AIM.

The EMDRCM program offers a comprehensive 18-month master's curriculum focusing on disaster and crisis management approaches in the Asian Region. It equips students with theoretical foundations and practical applications necessary for effective disaster risk and crisis management.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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For inquiries, interested parties may contact the CCC through email at sll.cdrr@climate.gov.ph or by phone at (+632) 8420 5515.

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