



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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By: Sundy Locus

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### MANILA BULLETIN

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## [\[Opinion\] Reflections on the climate crisis](#)

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## [Will your city make the sustainability cut?](#)

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Your local politician would like you to believe they're doing everything they can to make your city clean and green—but are their efforts going to make a real impact, apart from delivering empty promises and campaign-worthy soundbytes?

## **PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

## [World ocean surface temperature reaches new record high](#)

By: Cristina Eloisa Baclig

As countries continue to find ways to tackle the devastating impacts of climate change, new data showed that the world's ocean surface temperature has hit a new record-high—which scientists warned could lead to higher risks of extreme weather.

## **PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY**

### **[La Union town gets solid waste management tech from DOST](#)**

By: Hilda Austria

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### **[Legarda urges public support in implementing environmental laws](#)**

By: Leonel Abasola

Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda on Thursday urged the public to fully cooperate with the government in implementing ecological laws to attain sustainable life.

### **[PBBM looks forward to Temasek climate change mitigation programs](#)**

By: Filane Mikee Cervantes

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday said he looks forward to future projects proposed by Singapore's Temasek Foundation to mitigate climate change and improve food security in the country.

## **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

### **[Only 67% of households have access to running water – SWS](#)**

By: Janvic Mateo

Amid a looming water crisis in the country, results of a recent survey released on Thursday found that only seven in every 10 households in the Philippines have access to running water.

### **[Rains to continue as Amang weakens](#)**

By: Romina Cabrera

Tropical Depression Amang has weakened into a low-pressure area (LPA) but will continue to bring scattered rains over the country today, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

## **CCC IN THE NEWS:**

### **THE MANILA TIMES**

#### **[CCC: PH should use more e-jeepneys](#)**

By: Kristina Maralit

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) expressed support for President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s renewable energy and multimodal transportation system goals.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **GMA NEWS ONLINE**

### **Manalo: PH-US 2+2 opens channels for stronger trade, investment ties**

By: Sundy Locus

The high-level meeting in Washington of Philippine and US foreign affairs and defense officials has also opened new channels for stronger bilateral trade and investment relations, Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo said Thursday.

Manalo thus remarked after he and Defense officer in charge Carlito Galvez met US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to boost the countries' political and military engagement.

“The 2+2 meeting, which was the first to be held in seven years, opened new channels for improving the scale and depth of the bilateral partnership in trade and investments,” Manalo said in a statement.

He said the meeting gave due importance to the priority of President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. “to modernize infrastructure, achieve food security and promote energy security while transitioning to clean energy.”

Manalo said the countries agreed to reinforce their partnership “with a new focus on a strong long-term economic partnership that has dividends for the Philippines’ upward economic trajectory as a middle-income economy”.

“This refocusing takes into account the stakes of communities in the relationship, as well as our responsibilities with respect to climate change and environment,” Manalo said.

A joint statement was issued by the Philippines and the US following the meeting where they voiced their strong objections to the unlawful maritime claims, militarization of reclaimed features, and threatening and provocative activities in the SCS, including the recent attempts of the People’s Republic of China to disrupt the Philippines' lawful operations at and around Second Thomas Shoal and the repeated massing of PRC maritime militia vessels at several sites within the Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone.

China for its part, expressed “serious concern” and “strong dissatisfaction” over heir statements, saying it “distorts and smears China’s legitimate maritime law enforcement actions” in the disputed waters.

Apart from peace and security, other issues discussed in the meeting are climate-smart technologies and policies, climate finance, green metals, clean energy transition and de-carbonization strategies, critical infrastructure, and new technologies for ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation.

Established in 2012, the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue is a policy-level dialogue for advancing alliance-related priorities. It is co-chaired by the Secretaries of the Philippine Departments of Foreign Affairs and National Defense and the U.S. Departments of State and Defense.

The 2+2 was first convened on April 30, 2012. It was followed on January 12, 2016.

## MANILA BULLETIN

### [ELEVENTH HOUR — The economic and climate benefits of renewable energy](#)

By: Climate Reality Project

Harnessing power from renewable energy (RE) through the government's Green Energy Option Program (GEOP) reduces at least 10 percent of electricity costs and advances the sustainability goals of businesses in the country.

This was revealed by representatives of Globe Telecom, Inc. and Arthaland during the virtual sessions of The Climate Reality Project Philippines' "REalTalk: A Movement Building Workshop on Renewable Energy" held in March.

REalTalk was launched last year as part of The Climate Reality Project Philippines' RE Energize PH program, which is supported by the Tara Climate Foundation. This year's workshop focused on raising energy literacy and building a movement on just RE transition with a special focus on GEOP.

Regional workshops, organized in partnership with AktivAsia, are scheduled for the year to train and mobilize REalTalk participants in engaging and influencing more entities to switch to 100 percent RE through GEOP.

More cases of power savings from renewables

"As of March 2023, we have 12 sites registered under GEOP with a target additional of seven sites by the fourth quarter of 2023. This provided Globe Telecom, Inc. with at least 10 percent savings versus the distribution utility's all-in cost," said Raymond Aguilar, VP for Enterprise Risk and Corporate Property Management of Globe Telecom Inc.

The GEOP is a mechanism that allows end-users with a monthly average peak demand of 100 kilowatts and above the choice to switch from a distribution utility to source 100 percent of power directly from a renewable energy supplier.

Monica Tagalag, from the Independent Electricity Market Operator of the Philippines (IEMOP), which facilitates the registration and switching process of participants, reported that a total of 233 GEOP switchers and 17 RE suppliers are participating in the program.

“With GEOP, the cost of electricity is lower than market rates, yielding operational savings. It encourages higher occupancy rates as the building becomes more attractive to tenants. GEOP also helps businesses achieve net zero by 2030,” said Kristina Samantha Pobre, sustainability manager of Arthaland, which developed Arya Residences, an RE-powered condominium in Taguig registered in GEOP.

#### Cheapest generating costs offered by renewables

The baseload power paradigm continues to dominate the energy sector, prioritizing coal power plants to meet the minimum daily power demand of consumers. However, its inflexibility requires support from peaking power plants (mostly diesel) to respond to sudden load demand changes.

Global market price volatility and expensive importation costs of fossil fuels, like coal and diesel, are additional costs shouldered by consumers. Engr. Alberto Dalusung III, Energy Transition advisor of the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC), said that generation cost is the largest component of our electricity bill, which includes the weighted average costs of electricity sold by suppliers to the distribution utility.

“Find out exactly how much we are paying, and why are we paying so much by understanding who the electricity suppliers of our distribution utility are. As consumers, we have the right to demand the generation cost breakdown from the distribution utility,” said Dalusung.

Jephraim Manansala, ICSC’s chief data scientist, recommended shifting to a variable generation paradigm sourcing power from renewable energy, such as solar and wind, which incurs zero marginal costs and the cheapest generating cost.

“We want to tap into renewable energy because they are cheaper than fossil fuel and are available endlessly. With lower dependence on fossil fuels, there will be lower carbon emissions and it saves a lot on our electricity expenses,” Atty. Jose Layug, Jr., president of the Developers of Renewable Energy for AdvanceMent, Inc. (DREAM), explained.

#### RE transition as an effective climate change and energy poverty solution

As energy and transport account for 72 percent of the total Philippine carbon emissions, Jonas Marie Dumdum, co-founder of Sustainarumble!, strengthened the case of RE transition as an urgent and effective climate action for the country and the world.



“The switch to renewable energy sources is deemed vital to reduce temperature change below 1.5C degrees. Renewable energy is a cleaner energy source that has very little to no emissions generated when being used,” Dumdum noted.

Philine Donggay, co-founder of Greenergy Solar PH, also acknowledged the potential of RE to accelerate the electrification of poor communities in Mindanao. Greenergy Solar PH has been active in the promotion and development of RE power generation in the Mindanao region since 2008.

“Access to modern energy services should be considered a basic human right when many sustainable development goals are anchored on it. With advances in solar PV technology and energy storage, energy poverty now has a real and practical solution that has co-benefits in climate resiliency and energy independence,” Donggay added

GEOP is one of the mechanisms vital in pursuing just RE transition in the country and in increasing the share of renewables in the generation mix to 35 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2040.

“GEOP contributes to the growth of the RE industry in the country and advocates for a cleaner and more sustainable environment. It is also viable in supporting the national and global decarbonization goals,” said Gina Lyn Camacho-David of Aboitiz Energy Solutions, one of the registered RE suppliers under GEOP.

## Heavy rain causes gutter-deep floods in parts of Manila

By: Jaleen Ramos

Gutter-deep floods were reported in several areas in Manila on Thursday evening, April 13, due to heavy rain brought by a low-pressure area formerly known as Tropical Depression "Amang".

The Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (DRRMO) Operations Section reported gutter-deep floodwater along U.N Avenue Taft, Padre Faura, Recto Avenida, Remigio Taft, Bambang, L. Guinto corner Quirino, and A. Linao corner Quirino as of 9:20 p.m.

It assured that its Emergency Operations Center is closely monitoring the road situation in the city for possible flooding.

## Make modern jeepneys cheaper to magnify benefit of reduced CO2 emissions-- Salceda

By: Ellson Quismorio

Albay 2nd district Rep. Joey Salceda has presented figures that should motivate anti-climate change crusaders to call for the production of cheaper modern jeepneys.

In a statement Thursday afternoon, April 13, the economist-lawmaker tackled the matter of carbon dioxide or CO2 emissions as it pertains to modern jeepneys versus traditional jeepneys that the former seek to replace.

Conventional wisdom says that modern jeepneys have less CO2 emissions than the old, traditional ones. And this isn't wrong.

But Salceda told the Department of Transportation (DOTr) to consider emissions "on a per capita basis".

This is primarily because more modern jeepneys "can accommodate fewer passengers than traditional jeepneys".

According to the number-crunching solon, a traditional jeepney produces some 0.33 kilograms (kg) of CO2 emissions per passenger per year, while the modern jeepneys would still produce some 0.25 kg per passenger due to smaller capacity.

"It's a 31 percent saving in per passenger emissions for a vehicle that costs as much as 620 percent more. We need a cheaper, domestically manufactured jeepney that modernizes the traditional one," Salceda said.

Theoretically, having the choice of a cheaper modern jeepney will help broaden its use in the country, thereby magnifying the benefit of reduced emissions.

Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere warms the planet, causing climate change. Experts say this has triggered severe weather events, and that the Philippines is of high risk to such natural disasters.

Salceda said the government should first ensure that the domestic jeepney manufacturing sector is an option for the public utility vehicle (PUV) modernization program, and assist it in producing cheaper but similarly modern and efficient units.

A modern jeepney is reported to cost as much as P2.8 million per unit.

“If we can bring the cost of the unit to P600,000 to P1 million, that becomes more realistic for both the jeepney operator, and on a cost-benefit basis. I think the domestic manufacturing sector can do it. But we need to support them,” explained the Bicolano.

## [Opinion] Reflections on the climate crisis

By: Johannes Chua

I'm not a religious person. I'm also not the type who will post Bible verses on my social media accounts. This past Lent week, however, I was able to do some "spring cleaning" of the multiple email accounts I have. In the process of sorting my Environment Section email inbox, I had what experts call "eco-anxiety."

Aimee Oliveros, engagement lead and Luzon coordinator of the Climate Reality Project Philippines, wrote that eco-anxiety is "characterized as the overwhelming feelings of fear and worry about climate change impacts and the effects of extreme disasters and weather events, affecting our way of life and daily functioning. It can also be associated with feelings of guilt about our actions that impact the environment, as well as feelings of helplessness, and even hopelessness in fighting climate change."

If you see my inbox, it is filled with the words "climate crisis," "marine disaster," "environmental collapse," "biodiversity challenge," etc. Stories, photos, video links are replete with horror stories on how mankind's activity has destroyed our one and only home. Again, I'm not a religious person but I suddenly had the urge to utter a prayer for our planet. I don't know if it's too early for me to have a mid-life crisis but I was filled with fear for the future, guilt for some trash-throwing incidents I did when I was younger, and regret for not doing much more for the environment.

I felt privileged that in my unique position as Manila Bulletin's Environment and Sustainability editor, I could use this platform to amplify more messages for the planet. But, at the end of the day and after much reflection, I felt inadequate. The climate crisis challenge is so colossal that I, alone, couldn't even make a dent to demolish all the misconceptions and misinformation about saving the planet.

How much more the others? How about the solitary forest ranger guarding hectares of a virgin forest? The coast guard patrolling millions of miles of waters replete with marine life? Or members of an indigenous tribe saving their ancestral land from unsustainable mining? It would be too preposterous of me to claim awareness of their plight as I don't feel their fear as they hold on to the last remaining natural resources we have. The least I could do is to know them and tell their stories.

With all these eco-anxiety inducing incidents, what can one do to counter it? Aimee asked co-members of her group on tips how to cope with eco-anxiety. I'm sharing some of it here in the hope that you will be able to take it "one-day/ one-moment" at a time and reflect on how we, as part of this planet, can do our share.

From Ana Michaela Reyes: “Exploring my core through meditation and reflection exercises helps me in dealing with eco-anxiety. Connecting my body and soul with nature helps me be grounded and feel deep empathy for each creature. In the battle against climate change, there is no single bullet to solve all of the problems associated with it. More so, it is not up to a single human being to save the world. Our individual selves may seem negligible to the vast sea of problems but concerted efforts and a community of like-minded individuals can surely create ripples of change — little by little, slowly but surely.”

From Nicole Limlengco: “Breathe. When things get overwhelming, it's okay to take a step back. Use what you have. You don't have to go and buy the latest eco-friendly product. Making full use of the things you have right now is perfectly fine. Switching and maintaining a new lifestyle doesn't have to be all or nothing. Taking baby steps is the key to sanity. Start with the little things such as bringing a packed lunch to school or work instead of always ordering or eating out; use any refillable container for your drinks, bring your own eco-bag or container when shopping, etc.”

From Rey Sario: “Living a simple lifestyle is excellent for our health. It is beneficial to our physical and mental health. Staying connected with nature is very important and relaxing. It helps me value what is there and thank the Creator for what I have. I am blessed, alive, and enthusiastic.”

## Will your city make the sustainability cut?

By: Marie Buenaventura

Your local politician would like you to believe they're doing everything they can to make your city clean and green—but are their efforts going to make a real impact, apart from delivering empty promises and campaign-worthy soundbytes?

There is one surefire way to find out—nominate it for the World Wide Fund for Nature's One Planet City Challenge to see if it really is meeting all the standards for sustainability.

The One Planet City Challenge is a friendly biennial competition that aims to help cities deliver commitments to limit the rise in global temperature to below 1.50C.

The One Planet City Challenge (OPCC), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) initiative that recognizes cities for their ambitious and innovative climate action plans and targets, is back in the Philippines for the fifth time for the 2023-2024 cycle.

OPCC started in 2011 and is a global challenge where WWF provides action-oriented recommendations to cities. Since then, 700 cities from nearly 70 countries in six continents have participated at least once in the competition. In the Philippines, a total of 22 cities have joined since the first run in 2015. For the last leg of OPCC, Davao City, Dipolog City, and Quezon City were shortlisted as national finalists. Dipolog City emerged as the OPCC 2021-2022 National Winner, and also became the "Most Lovable Philippine City" for 2022. Former national winners include the cities of Santa Rosa, Pasig, and Batangas.

This friendly biennial competition aims to help cities deliver the commitments in the Paris Agreement to limit the rise in global temperature to below 1.50C and to recognize those who are making substantial progress in their mitigation and adaptation actions balanced toward their goals. According to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, cities consume over two-thirds of the world's energy and are responsible for over 70 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions. Their potential impact is expected to double by 2050.

This year, the One Planet Cities (OPC) program is introducing a Customized Strategic Feedback Report that is tailor-made for each city to enable better tracking and monitoring a city's climate journey. This guidance is, among others, based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change urban mitigation strategies identified in their latest summary. The OPCC is an example of how WWF aims to democratize global climate science by adapting it to local urban contexts, working with cities on their

reported climate action plans to improve and elevate them on their journey toward a 1.50C planet, using science-based targets and the latest science.

Further, to celebrate the national and global frontrunners, all shortlisted cities will be able to showcase their work to their citizens through the We Love Cities campaign and also collect their feedback suggestions. In 2022, the We Love Cities campaign received 1.3 million global votes and 116k feedback suggestions for participating cities—its social media reach was 447 million globally.

WWF's OPCC recognizes that there has never been a more urgent time for climate action than now and that cities are key to our success. On a global level, we need a network of multidimensional urban responses to tackle the climate emergency. Cities are central to implementing our global goals to make progress. WWF-PH hopes that more cities lead the charge in becoming climate-smart cities.

Cities who are interested in joining OPCC 2023-2024 may submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) from until April 19. Those interested are required to fill up a checklist, together with a cover letter signed by the City Mayor.



## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

### World ocean surface temperature reaches new record high

By: Cristina Eloisa Baclig

As countries continue to find ways to tackle the devastating impacts of climate change, new data showed that the world's ocean surface temperature has hit a new record-high—which scientists warned could lead to higher risks of extreme weather.

Studies found that global temperatures will continue to rise for many decades, mainly due to increasing greenhouse gases produced by human activities.

Scientists have predicted and warned about the effects of human-caused global warming, such as the loss of sea ice, melting glaciers and ice sheets, sea level rise, and frequent intense heat waves.

There is, however, another expected effect of global climate change which is already happening now: the rising temperature of the world's ocean surface.

Prof. Matthew England, a climate scientist at the University of New South Wales, told the UK paper The Guardian that “the current trajectory looks like it's headed off the charts, smashing previous records.”

Preliminary data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Noaa) revealed that the average temperature of the world's ocean surface has been 21.1°C since the start of April this year.

The recorded temperature is a new record-high and has surpassed the previous high ocean surface temperature of 21°C recorded in 2016. Scientists warned that increasing ocean temperatures could cause marine heatwaves and a higher risk of extreme weather.

What happened?

Since the pre-industrial period—between 1850 and 1900—the increase in human activities, mainly fossil fuel burning, has led to increased heat-trapping greenhouse levels in the Earth's atmosphere.

Most of the excess atmospheric heat, NOAA explained, is then passed back to the ocean—which causes a rise in the temperature of the ocean’s surface or higher upper ocean heat content. But how exactly did it happen?

The ocean, which covers over two-thirds of the world’s surface, absorbs huge quantities of heat as a result of the rising concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

“The ocean’s ability to absorb excess heat has shielded humans from even more rapid changes in climate. Without this oceanic buffer, global temperatures would have risen much more than they have done to date,” said the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The Fifth Assessment Report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2013 showed that the ocean had absorbed over 93 percent of excess heat from greenhouse gas emissions since the 1970s—resulting in increasing global ocean surface temperatures.

In 2022, global ocean surface temperatures were 0.69°C higher than the 20th-century average. Data from NOAA also showed that from April 1 to 22 last year, the ocean’s surface temperature was 20.8°C.

Alarming, scientists have pointed out that while heat absorbed by the ocean moves from one place to another, it does not dissipate.

“The heat energy eventually re-enters the rest of the Earth system by melting ice shelves, evaporating water, or directly reheating the atmosphere,” NOAA stressed.

“Thus, heat energy in the ocean can warm the planet for decades after it was absorbed,” it added.

This means that as the ocean absorbs more heat than it can release, its heat content increases, which could cause extreme events, affecting marine species, ecosystems, and humans.

### Devastating impacts

Scientists stressed that high ocean surface temperature could increase the risk of extreme weather conditions in the years to come—including more intense El Niño events, which can bring more droughts and floods.

“The recent ‘triple dip’ La Niña has come to an end. This prolonged period of cold was tamping down global mean surface temperatures despite the rise of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere,” NOAA senior research scientist Dr. Mike McPhaden told The Guardian.

“Now that it’s over, we are likely seeing the climate change signal coming through loud and clear,” he added.

High ocean surface temperatures could also lead to deoxygenation—the reduction in the amount of oxygen dissolved in the ocean—and sea level rise due to the thermal expansion of seawater and continental ice melting.

Recent data from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) showed that the Greenland ice sheet is disappearing four times faster than it did in 2003 and has already contributed 20 percent of the current sea level rise.

Moreover, rising ocean surface temperatures paired with ocean acidification—the decrease in pH levels of the ocean due to its uptake of carbon dioxide—could affect marine species and ecosystems.

“Marine fishes, seabirds and marine mammals all face very high risks from increasing temperatures, including high levels of mortalities, loss of breeding grounds and mass movements as species search for favourable environmental conditions,” IUCN explained.

“Coral reefs are also affected by increasing temperatures which cause coral bleaching and increase their risk of mortality,” it added.

What can be done

According to IUCN, several adaptive and precautionary measures could still protect ocean ecosystems and minimize the impact of ocean warming on humans.

These include:

- Limiting greenhouse gas emissions—achieve targets set by the Paris Agreement on climate change and hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.
- Protecting marine and coastal ecosystems—protected and well-managed areas can help conserve and protect ecologically and biologically significant marine habitats.

- Restoring marine and coastal ecosystems—restore elements of ecosystems that have already experienced damage. This involves creating surrogate habitats for organisms or boosting the resilience of species to warmer temperatures.
- Improving human adaptation—governments can introduce policies to keep fisheries production within sustainable limits. The use of new monitoring tools can be developed to forecast and control marine disease outbreaks.
- Strengthening scientific research—investments in scientific research that help measure and monitor ocean warming and its effects must be increased and supported by the government.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### La Union town gets solid waste management tech from DOST

By: Hilda Austria

This town has received a dual drum composter machine and two multi-purpose bio-shredders from the Department of Science and Technology in Ilocos Region (DOST-1) under the Community Empowerment through Science and Technology (CEST) program.

In a statement on Thursday, Provincial Science and Technology Office La Union director Jonathan Viernes said the distribution of the waste management technology aims to encourage the preservation of the environment in the town.

“Dual drum is a small-scale composting machine developed by the DOST to cater to the small volume of biodegradable waste from the communities. This can be an alternative to solid biodegradable waste management of barangays, schools, canteens, restaurants, and other food processing firms,” he said.

Training on the operation and maintenance of the dual drum composter machine was also held.

Burgos town Mayor Delfin Comedis Jr. expressed his gratitude to DOST-1 for providing machines that will help their municipality in environmental protection and conservation.

“Nagpapasalamat kami sa DOST sa walang humpay na tulong at suporta na ibinibigay niyo sa amin lalong-lalo na sa machine na makakatulong upang mapabilis ang pag compost ng mga nakokolekta namin na nabubulok na basura (We thank the DOST for their help and support especially with the machine that will be a big help in decomposing wastes),” he said.

Meanwhile, the DOST Ilocos regional office has also conducted a blended planning with representatives from the LGU-Bolinao and Dagupan, Technical Education And Skills Development Authority Pangasinan Provincial Office, Pangasinan State University, Universidad de Dagupan, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Provincial Fisheries Office–Pangasinan as part of the CEST program.

Engineer Arnold Santos, Provincial Science and Technology Pangasinan director, said the planning aims to pinpoint workable initiatives and projects that will have an impact in their communities.

“In order for the group to craft a plan, define the roles of stakeholders and identify necessary interventions for the implementation. Following the planning phase of the program, the stakeholders determined the appropriate training, activities, and interventions based on the needs, issues, and opportunities identified in their communities,” he said.

He added that the DOST will continue to provide science and technology interventions to more disadvantaged and marginalized sectors to build empowered, progressive, and resilient communities in the region.

## Legarda urges public support in implementing environmental laws

By: Leonel Abasola

Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda on Thursday urged the public to fully cooperate with the government in implementing ecological laws to attain sustainable life.

"Let's make our laws work because these laws are meant to help us live a sustainable life on our planet," Legarda said in a statement.

Legarda, a known environmental advocate and author of several fundamental environmental laws, such as Renewable Energy Act (RA9513), Climate Change Act (RA9729), Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (RA9003), and People's Survival Fund Act (RA10174), also asked concerned government agencies to prioritize the enforcement of these laws not only to protect the environment but also to promote sustainable development.

"I authored these environmental laws to protect our country's natural resources, preserve biodiversity, and promote sustainability. These laws provide a framework for regulating people's activities that impact the environment and ensure that individuals and organizations are held accountable for their actions," she said.

She, however, emphasized that the success of these laws depends highly on the active participation of communities at the household level.

The challenge now, Legarda said, is for the government agencies to implement the mandates of these laws strictly and for the community to play their part in practicing energy conservation, and waste segregation, among other ways of protecting the environment.

"By enforcing these laws, we can reduce the negative impacts of pollution, climate change, and resource depletion and work towards a more resilient and sustainable future," she said.

## **PBBM looks forward to Temasek climate change mitigation programs**

By: Filane Mikee Cervantes

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday said he looks forward to future projects proposed by Singapore's Temasek Foundation to mitigate climate change and improve food security in the country.

"We're looking at some of the prospective projects that are directed towards climate change, towards agriculture and sustainability," Marcos told Temasek executives during a meeting at Malacañang Palace.

Marcos said there are potential areas that the government could participate in regarding efforts to achieve food sustainability and climate change mitigation.

According to the Presidential Communications Office, a Temasek official said potential collaborations have been discussed with Department of Science and Technology Secretary Renato Solidum Jr., Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma, and migrant workers department chief Toots Ople.

The Singapore delegation is led by Temasek Foundation chair Jennie Chua Kheng Yeng.

Among the attendees were Singaporean Ambassador to the Philippines Gerard Ho Wei Hong, Temasek board members Tony Tan Caktiong, Goh Yong Siang, Arich Rachmat, and Senior Directors Gerald Yeo Teng Han and James Chan Yong Kiat.

The Temasek Foundation is a Singapore-based non-profit philanthropic organization that funds and supports programs that aim to build capabilities of communities in Asia and beyond through philanthropic endowments gifted by Temasek.<sup>1</sup> It is an arm of Singapore's state sovereign fund, Temasek Holdings.

The Philippines and Singapore are looking at renewing a 2019 memorandum of understanding between the Department of Education and Nanyang Polytechnic International Temasek Foundation.



## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### Only 67% of households have access to running water – SWS

By: Janvic Mateo

Amid a looming water crisis in the country, results of a recent survey released on Thursday found that only seven in every 10 households in the Philippines have access to running water.

A Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey conducted last Dec. 10 to 14 found that only 67 percent of Filipino households have access to running or piped water, translating to an estimated 17 million out of over 25 million households in the country.

The 67 percent is composed of 58 percent who said their running water is billed and nine percent who said it was not billed.

For those whose running water is billed, their average expense is at P320 per month. It was highest among those in Metro Manila at P500 per month, followed by those in the Visayas at P340, the rest of Luzon at P312 and Mindanao at P300.

Those whose running water was not billed said they spend an average of P300 per month. It was highest among respondents in Metro Manila at P400 per month, followed by those in the rest of Luzon and the Visayas at P300 and those in Mindanao at P225.

The survey had 1,200 respondents and an error margin of +/- 2.8 percent.

The United Nations recognizes access to water and sanitation as a human right.

#### No water crisis

A ranking official of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System gave assurance there will be no water crisis in 2023 but admitted that the MWSS cannot confirm nor deny the warning of former MWSS chairman Ramon Alikpala that a crisis was likely next year.

In a radio interview, MWSS Deputy Administrator Jose Dorado Jr. said that based on the projection, the level of Angat Dam will reach 197 meters or 2011 meters by the end of December.

“We are doing this (simulation) on a monthly basis that is why this April, we will conduct another simulation to determine if there will be a water crisis next year,” he said. He added that as of 6 a.m. on Thursday, the water level of Angat Dam was at 198.49 meters.

On the other hand, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) is set to decide today whether to grant the 52 cubic meters per second allocation being requested by the Maynilad Water Service Inc. and Manila Water.

The NWRB has earlier approved 50 cubic meters per second allocation for the two water concessionaires until April 15, 2023.

## El Niño

A ranking official of the Department of Agriculture (DA) yesterday identified at least 16 provinces to be severely hit by the El Niño phenomenon as the DA revived the inter-agency task force to address the possible impact of the drought on the agriculture sector.

In an interview, Agriculture Assistant Secretary and deputy spokesman Rex Estoperez said the 16 provinces include areas in Central Visayas (Region 7), Eastern Visayas (Region 8), Zamboanga peninsula (Region 9), Caraga (Region 13) and Calabarzon (Region 4-A) — some of which are known big producers of palay.

“These are top producing provinces but there are also vulnerable areas because of climate change. We need to identify these vulnerable areas. Just like Mindanao, it is now affected by the flooding and typhoons,” Estoperez said.

President Marcos has ordered the revival of the inter-agency El Niño Task Force to minimize the damage of the dry spell to the farm sector.

“The task force will be represented by representatives from bureaus and attached agencies,” Estoperez said.

## Rains to continue as Amang weakens

By: Romina Cabrera

Tropical Depression Amang has weakened into a low-pressure area (LPA) but will continue to bring scattered rains over the country today, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

The state weather bureau said that the LPA was monitored around the vicinity of Infanta, Quezon yesterday afternoon. The LPA will bring rain showers over Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa and Camarines Norte.

Light to moderate and at times heavy rains are forecast over Rizal and Quezon particularly. The remnant low and localized thunderstorms will also bring isolated rain showers over the rest of the country.

PAGASA warned of possible flash floods and landslides during at times heavy rain.

Amang made landfall in three areas – Panganiban in Catanduanes, Presentacion and Lagonoy in Camarines Sur – as it traversed the eastern side of the country. Tropical cyclone wind signal no. 1 was the highest signal raised over the course of Amang.

### Displaced families

Amang has affected and displaced at least 81 families or some 280 persons in the Bicol region alone, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

The NDRRMC said 78 of the families or 275 persons were served inside five different evacuation centers, while others had decided to move in with relatives elsewhere.

The NDRRMC said necessary assistance are being provided to affected residents from at least seven barangays in Camarines Norte, Naga, Camarines Sur and Albay.

Bad weather conditions also caused floods and affected seven bridges and caused the cancellation of two domestic flights. Twelve seaports were also affected, stranding 3,395 passengers and 635 rolling cargoes.

Operations in port areas resumed yesterday after the Philippine Coast Guard lifted the suspension of sea trips in Baseport Legazpi and the ports of Tabaco and Pio Duran in Albay, along with the ports of Virac and San Andres in Catanduanes, as well as Matnog

and Bulan in Sorsogon. Meanwhile, the Philippine Ports Authority said over 100 passengers remain stranded.

As of yesterday, the NDRRMC said there have been no reported deaths or injuries in affected provinces where floodwaters are already subsiding.

#### Class suspensions

In-person and online classes remained suspended in several areas on Wednesday due to the effects of Tropical Depression Amang.

Classes in public kindergarten to senior high schools were automatically suspended in all areas under tropical cyclone warning signals.

Among the provincial governments that suspended classes in all levels, public and private, were Laguna and Camarines Sur. Classes up to senior high school were also suspended in some areas in Batangas, Rizal and Quezon.

#### P12 million agricultural damage

Agriculture damage due to Amang in Bicol reached P12.34 million as many farms were submerged in floods, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said.

In an interview, DA Office of the Director for Field Operation Services officer-in-charge U-Nichols Manalo said that based on field reports, of the total crops affected, P8.07 million were rice fields covering 1,017 hectares.

“Tropical Depression Amang made three landfalls in Bicol. As a result the affected number of farmers and fisherfolk totaled to 1,200 mostly in Camarines Sur and Sorsogon,” Manalo said. He added that damage to high value crops reached P4 million.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### THE MANILA TIMES

#### [CCC: PH should use more e-jeepneys](#)

By: Kristina Maralit

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) expressed support for President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s renewable energy and multimodal transportation system goals.

The CCC favors the use of more e-jeepneys to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

"Reducing dependence on fossil fuels through increased electric vehicle production will be instrumental to our goal of a 75 percent decrease in GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions by 2030 as part of our commitment to the Paris Agreement on climate change," CCC Vice Chairman and Executive Director Robert Borje said in a statement on Wednesday.

As of 2015, the Philippine transport sector's GHG emissions have increased by 29.68 percent compared to 2010.

The three major sources of GHG emissions in the country are land transportation (87.88%), water-borne navigation (9.17%) and domestic aviation (2.95%).

"It will also bring positive consequences by decreasing the danger of disruptions in energy supply from exporting countries or the potential for economic losses due to price volatility," he added.

Borje said the issue of shifting to renewable energy must be viewed from global and inter-generational perspectives.

"Although the Philippines' carbon footprint is almost negligible compared to bigger developed countries, it is our duty to the future generations to be able to experience the resources we have in view of inter-generational responsibility," he said.

Marcos said that the country will transition to renewable energy under his watch, noting the use of renewable energy sources such as hydro, geothermal, solar and wind will slow down the effects of global warming.

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