



NEWS ROUNDUP

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By: Ian Smith

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MANILA BULLETIN

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By: Myrna M. Velasco

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The extreme heat we are all experiencing today leads many to think of climate change — a term very often bandied about but not completely understood.

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

FINANCIAL TIMES

UK home insurers hit by surge in weather damage claims

By: Ian Smith

A succession of severe storms last year left UK home insurers on the hook for £573mn in weather damage, the highest since the data began to be tracked seven years ago.

The record level of claims underscores the challenge that climate change poses to the industry and to homeowners through rising premiums.

High winds and flying debris from a series of storms, including Babet, Ciaran and Debi in October and November, left a trail of damage, with subsequent widespread flooding contributing £286mn to the bill, according to data published on Monday by the Association of British Insurers.

“Extreme weather events may not feel so rare as they used to as we grapple with a changing climate,” said Louise Clark, a policy adviser at the ABI. Insurers would continue to press the government for further investment in flood defences and changes to the planning system to discourage building in at-risk areas, she added.

Overall, property insurers paid out £4.9bn to households and businesses last year, with more than half of that to homeowners. The weather-related damage to homes — as opposed to other sources of claims such as fire, break-ins and water leaks — was more than a third higher than the previous year. The ABI started to break out weather-related damage in 2017.

UK businesses, meanwhile, submitted £443mn of weather-related claims last year, around half the level of fire damage claims.

The insurance sector has been scrambling to respond to the rising frequency and severity of extreme weather linked to climate change, exacerbated by rebuilding cost inflation.

There were a record 37 extreme weather events around the world last year that led to payouts of more than \$1bn each, according to figures from insurance broker Aon, with storms, floods and wildfires providing a particular challenge for underwriters.

In some of the worst-hit areas of the US, several insurers have pulled back from offering home insurance, contributing to an affordability crisis.

In the UK, insurers have pushed premiums higher in recent years to absorb a sharp rise in payouts. The latest ABI data showed that the average annual premium for a UK buildings and contents policy had risen by just under a fifth year-on-year to £364 in the fourth quarter.

The rising cost of home insurance and motor insurance has exacerbated cost-of-living pressures on households. Industry executives will appear before the House of Commons Treasury select committee on Wednesday to face questions over what they are doing to ensure cover remains affordable.

GMA

[New energy emergency center, mobile units to improve gov't response to disasters, cyberattacks](#)

By: Llanesca T. Panti

The government is expected to improve its response during natural disasters and cyber security threats with the inauguration of the Energy Sector Emergency Operations Center (ESEOC) and the Mobile Energy System (MES) in Taguig City.

The Department of Energy (DOE) said the ESEOC and MES form part of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID)'s \$34 million Energy Secure Philippines initiative with the Philippine government.

According to the DOE, the ESEOC is a centralized energy command hub "equipped with the latest technological innovations from Europe and the United States."

The Energy Department said ESEOC is positioned to monitor, assess, and coordinate responses to various energy-related emergencies, including natural disasters, grid failures, and cyber security threats.

"By leveraging real-time data analytics and predictive modeling, the ESEOC enables proactive decision-making and rapid deployment of resources to mitigate disruptions and safeguard critical infrastructure," the DOE said.

Meanwhile, the DOE said the MES would serve as a fleet of adaptable and scalable energy solutions designed for rapid deployment in emergencies.

"These modular systems incorporated renewable energy sources, energy storage, and microgrid technologies to provide reliable power generation and distribution in remote or disaster-stricken areas," the agency said.

"As climate change escalates, extreme events will continue to come more often, even in greater intensity. Investing in proactive measures that enhance resilience and ensure the continuity of essential services is crucial. We thank the USAID Philippines for this enduring partnership that resulted in this significant breakthrough," Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said.

USAID also turned over eight solar-powered MES units to the Philippine government via the DOE. These will be used by various government agencies and local government units.

Of the eight MES units, two are stationed at the DOE, one of which will be used as backup power for the ESEOC.

The rest of the MES units will be deployed between June and August of this year.

Each MES unit has a 50 kh battery storage and, upon full charging, would be enough to power two television sets, two air-conditioning units, 10 lightbulbs, two desktop computers, two laptops, five phone chargers, five electric fans, and one modem for almost 12 hours.

Compared to the conventional diesel generator set, the DOE said the MES can be easily deployed during emergencies at minimal operation and maintenance costs.

The cost of each MES unit ranges between P2.99 million to P5.25 million.

MANILA BULLETIN

Philippines sets up centralized energy command hub for disasters, power system failures

By: Myrna M. Velasco

With \$1.5 million funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Philippine government - with the Department of Energy (DOE) in the lead - has established a centralized energy command hub that will be primarily activated in times of disasters, power system failures as well as key events such as elections.

Dubbed as the Energy Sector Emergency Operations Center (ESEOC) and the Mobile Energy System (MES), the facilities had been inaugurated on Monday (April 15) by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin – and these are part of the \$34 million endowment of the American government that had been funneled through the USAID for programs and transformative initiatives in the Philippine energy sector.

According to the DOE, these two projects that also have complementary funding from Europe are “designed to address the need for resilient energy infrastructure and response capabilities in times of crisis.”

Energy Secretary Raphael P. Lotilla stated that “as climate change escalates, extreme events will continue to come more often, even in greater intensity.”

Leaning on what climate science portends, the energy chief indicated that “investing in proactive measures that enhance resilience and ensure the continuity of essential services is crucial,” hence, he considers the USAID-supported project a “significant breakthrough.”

As emphasized, the ESEOC “is positioned to monitor, assess, and coordinate responses to various energy-related emergencies, including natural disasters, grid failures, and cyber security threats.”

The MES, which will comprise of solar solution with energy storage system as well as tools for the warranted data gathering work, will be supporting the operations of ESEOC.

“These modular systems incorporated renewable energy sources, energy storage, and microgrid technologies to provide reliable power generation and distribution in remote or disaster-stricken areas,” the DOE specified.

For that undertaking, the USAID turned over eight (8) solar-powered MES units to the DOE – and two of the solar units are stationed at the DOE; one of which will be used as back-up power source for ESEOC.

The remaining solar-powered systems will be distributed between June to August this year to relevant government agencies, including local government units.

The energy department also noted that “by leveraging real-time data analytics and predictive modeling, the ESEOC enables proactive decision-making and rapid deployment of resources to mitigate disruptions and safeguard critical infrastructure.”

Nevertheless, given that the command center will only be activated on specific events and power system circumstances, there is no direct pronouncement from the DOE how it can address data gaps, so it can guarantee the flow of reliable information that it can employ for data analytics or predictive modeling.

The DOE has not also specified the information technology (IT) and data management interfaces that it shall be undertaking with power industry players, so it can efficiently gather data sets that will underpin the establishment of credible algorithms for disaster response or even in delving deeper into the mysteries of power system failures in the country.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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The Provincial Government of Misamis Occidental, led by Gov. Henry Oaminal, recently organized a three-day workshop aimed at formulating Enhanced Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (DRR/CCA)-Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plans (PDPFP) 2025–2033.

The Office of the Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator (OPPDC) conducted the workshop at the Asenso Misamis Occidental Sports and Cultural Center on March 20–22, 2023.

The executive and legislative branches of the government, along with other sectors such as the business sector, civil society organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly those representing the marginalized sectors, collaborated to design the workshop.

During the workshop, Oaminal emphasized the importance of provincial development and physical framework plans, stating that they are critical to the province's future.

The 5Ms: Misamisnon Magpuyong Malinawon, Malambuon ug Malipayon, which means Misamisnon lives peacefully, productively, and happily, served as the provincial government's roadmap for local development projects.

“The main goal of this activity is to create a five-year development plan that will empower people living in a safe, secure, and disaster-resilient environment with a sustainable economy,” he said.

William Valles, provincial planning and development coordinator, also emphasized the importance of training the provincial planning teams. He further explained that the Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan (PDPFP) serves as the primary technical guide for the development of Misamis Occidental.

It guides and sets the direction of the province, with the end goal of promoting security and improving the social and economic conditions of its constituents. The same plan also guides the province's component cities and municipalities in crafting their respective Comprehensive Land Use Plans.

The workshop also aimed to identify the natural hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities of exposed areas and communities in the respective towns and cities.

This process aimed to prioritize appropriate programs and projects that would mitigate or prevent the adverse effects of disasters and successfully implement them.

The LGUs are prime movers of sustainable development, and they support the implementation of DRR/CCA initiatives, share relevant information on DRR/CCA to raise awareness, ensure reasonable allocation of resources, foster development ingenuity leading to safety and increased resiliency of local communities, and affirm shared responsibility and renewed commitment in pursuit of better quality and safer lives for all Misamisnons.

The provincial plan is critical because it helps the province's cities and municipalities grow and develop by identifying their physical resources, development constraints and opportunities, long-term vision, strategies, corresponding policies, and program recommendations.

RAPPLER

[Extreme heat is hurting the economy](#)

By: Ralf Rivas

Beyond the searing sensation on the skin and the stifling air that weighs heavily on the chest, extreme heat has broader economic implications that affects industries, businesses, and livelihoods.

The state weather bureau PAGASA tagged some areas in the Philippines with dangerous temperatures, reaching as high as over 40 degrees celsius, which could result in heat stroke.

For perspective, the Philippines' mean annual temperature is at 27.1 degrees celsius, according to the World Bank's Climate Change Knowledge Portal. The hottest months are usually in April and May.

A discussion paper by economists of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) found that as the country's average temperature goes up by 1 degree celsius, it tends to make the economy grow more slowly by about 0.37 percentage points.

This slowdown in economic growth gets even bigger, about 0.47 percentage points, when events like El Niño occur.

Inflation

The study, which is the first to quantify the long-term effects of temperature shocks on output growth in the country, noted that extreme temperatures caused by El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) events can cause prices of goods to spike.

“Short-term inflationary effects of temperature shocks on headline, food, and non-food are deeper in magnitude at 0.49 ppt, 0.69 ppt, and 0.49 ppt, respectively, when we incorporated dummy variables for episodes of ENSO events,” the study said.

Luzon is more affected by these inflationary effects, as most of the regions are predominantly agricultural and have food processing and machinery production.

Inflationary pressures caused by these temperature shocks remain persistent up to four years, with a cumulative increase of 0.77 percentage points in headline inflation, according to the study.

Sectors

The study found that output in the manufacturing and services sectors dip as temperature rises.

“The magnitude of drop is more evident in the real value added of manufacturing sector at 1.8 ppt vis-à-vis the 0.7 ppt decrease in the services sector output,” the study said.

Researchers, however, noted that while output has dipped in heat-exposed industries, labor productivity remains the same. Workers in heat-exposed industries may already be used to the heat and could still be productive.

“The results possibly imply that workers in the construction and transportation sectors are already used to the weather conditions in the country. Likewise, in the transportation sector, jeepney and taxi drivers operate on a quota- and boundary-based system such that regardless of the weather conditions, they still need to work to either meet their daily quota or earn back their ‘boundary fees.’”

However, research from other countries show that exposure to extreme heat does reduce worker productivity, not only for outdoor occupations, but also for indoor industries.

Another World Bank study found that even white-collar workers can be negatively affected by heat, including government workers and financial traders.

On crop production, BSP researchers found that temperature shocks have a negative effect on palay and corn. A rise in temperature, in the short run, negatively impacts palay production by 1.83 percentage points and corn production by 3.51 percentage points.

However, researchers found that high temperatures have a positive impact on mango production, as mangoes prefer climate conditions with warm temperatures and light amounts of rainfall especially during the fruit development stage.

“These results show that higher temperatures have varied results on food production which, in turn, could have implications in the formulation of the government’s support programs as well as in setting up crop-targeted insurance schemes,” researchers said.

THE MANILA TIMES

Govt urged to address climate change as heat waves disrupt learning

Save the Children Philippines called for the government to address climate change, as heat waves surpassed 42 degrees Celsius in five places this week, resulting in the suspension of hundreds of classes across the country.

It said children's bodies were still developing and were not as capable of regulating internal body temperature as adults, making them more susceptible to heat-related illnesses, asthma, allergies, cardiovascular disease and respiratory problems.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) blamed El Niño for recent heat waves. High temperatures would be particularly uncomfortable in Western Visayas and Negros Island.

"Educators and local authorities have been forced to take 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 degrees above preindustrial levels. Failing to do this will have dramatic consequences for children's health, safety and well-being," Save the Children Philippines Chief Executive Officer Alberto Muyot said.

Climate change has been raising global temperatures and causing unprecedented heat waves all around the world with more countries experiencing hotter days more frequently.

According to some teachers, the oppressive temperature in the classroom was bad for students' health, focus and the entire learning experience.

"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 heat waves," Teacher Nur of Cotabato City said.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Senator pushes for probe into mining, quarrying impacts](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Sen. Risa Hontiveros is seeking an investigation into the environmental and social impacts of mining and quarrying in the Philippines to address the reported adverse effects of these activities.

“The devastation and loss caused by mining and quarrying activities are distressing. Not only livelihoods are lost, but also the lives of our fellow countrymen,” Hontiveros said after filing Senate Resolution 989.

“The shortcomings in the law need to be addressed to put an end to these tragedies,” she added.

The resolution cited the fatal landslide in a gold-mining village in Davao del Sur, and the increased flooding risk and water quality concerns on biodiversity-rich Sibuyan Island in Romblon.

Concerns were also raised over the use of mined and dredged materials to support reclamation efforts along Manila Bay and Chinese island-building initiatives in the West Philippine Sea.

Hontiveros added the detention of vessels crewed by workers from the People’s Republic of China engaged in dredging activities off Zambales and the alleged presence of Chinese dredging vessels in Maguindanao del Norte underscore the need for an investigation.

“The mining industry has not contributed significantly to economic development over the past 20 years while exposing host communities—including many indigenous cultural communities—to the adverse effects associated with mining activity, such as damage to critical ecosystems, reduced biodiversity, increased risk of landslides and other natural resources, and rising food insecurity,” the resolution read.

Hontiveros’ resolution also sought to evaluate the regulatory framework of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), particularly the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and the Environmental Management Bureau.

The government aims to revitalize the mining industry to attract investments and spur economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. It has lifted restrictive mining policies,

including the ban on open-pit mining, and increased support for the industry by leading exploration activities to identify where critical minerals can be extracted.

The Philippines is also aspiring to become a hub for minerals processing.

Alyansa Tigil Mina national coordinator Jaybee Garganera called the proposal a “step in the right direction, which would hopefully result in amending our laws and policies on mining and quarrying.”

Garganera recommended a dialogue between the affected communities, the DENR and the Department of the Interior and Local Government to address the concerns of mining-affected communities and determine the negative impacts of mining and quarrying operations.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[CCC, SGV strengthen collaboration](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and SyCip Gorres Velayo & Co. (SGV & Co.) are poised to further strengthen their collaboration for transformative climate action by identifying areas of cooperation and leveraging public-partner partnerships pathways.

CCC and SGV underscored the important role of the private sector in bolstering adaptive capacities at the local government level and emphasized the value of science-based and data-driven assessments.

“One of the priority areas that we have is strengthening further the cooperation and partnership with the private sector to drive investment-led, transformative climate actions,” said CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje.

“We also have to emphasize and highlight the climate resilience of our LGUs (local government units). That’s one of our goals now, to see how we can help the LGUs be more climate resilient,” said SGV & Co. chair Wilson P. Tan.

The SGV & Co. is a multidisciplinary professional services company that provides advisory services to both public and private sector entities, engaging in policy-making initiatives, climate resilience assessments, carbon market exploration, transition risk analysis, among other crucial areas.

The CCC and SGV & Co. are aligning their efforts with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. By mobilizing private sector investments towards low-carbon initiatives, this partnership contributes to sustainable development, in line with the broader SDG agenda.

Commission iterates importance of wetlands in biodiversity survival

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasizes the vital role of wetlands in ensuring the survival of our planet and our species.

Wetlands are considered one of the world's most productive environments, providing the water and productivity where various species of plants and animals depend for their survival. All of this points to human survival, which brings us to the question, are wetlands really that important?

Wetlands are also the best carbon sinks there is. According to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, or the Convention on Wetlands, peatlands store approximately 30 percent of all carbon emitted on land. This is double the amount that all forests combined can store.

What do wetlands do?

Protect against floods. Wetlands trap and slowly release rain, surface water, groundwater and flood waters. They are aided by trees, root mats and other wetland vegetation that slow the speed of flood waters and distribute them over floodplains. This combined braking action reduces soil erosion and lowers flood heights.

Improve water quality. Wetlands provide unparalleled values and services, including improving natural water quality, flood protection, and shoreline erosion control. Many wetlands replenish underground aquifers where 97 percent of the world's unfrozen freshwater are stored. Plants and soil in wetlands work together to purify this water source, making them safe to drink.

Trap carbon dioxide. Wetlands are home to countless varieties of plants, wildlife and microbes which play a vital role in atmospheric maintenance. Wetlands are able to trap and store carbon within these plants and soil instead of releasing it to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide, making them one of the most important components in moderating the global climate crisis.

The Philippines currently has eight Ramsar Sites, including four wetlands, namely:

Olango Island in Lapu-Lapu, Cebu (920 hectares) — where millions of shorebirds rest enroute from Siberia and northern Japan to Southeast Asia and Australia to escape the cold weather. Each year Olango sees nearly 100 different species of birds, most of which are migratory.

Naujan Lake National Park in Oriental Mindoro (14,568 has) — the fifth largest lake in the Philippines (14kms by 7kms) where aquatic vegetation abound. Communities within the area depend upon the lake for their livelihood, particularly through fishing.

Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary (14,836 has) — includes a number of freshwater marshes and water-courses with numerous shallow lakes and ponds in the upper basin of the Agusan River and its tributaries. It functions as storage for rain water, reducing the immediate downstream flow of flood water into Butuan City and other nearby communities.

Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park (33,200 has) —located in the middle of the Central Sulu Sea about 150 kms southeast of Puerto Princesa City, and is home to more than 300 coral species and 379 fish species. Sea turtles, dolphins, tuna and jackfish can be found in the reefs. Tubbataha Reef was included in the UNESCO's World Heritage list in 1993.

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of Ramsar sites. It is named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the convention was signed in 1971.

The CCC is the lead policy-making body of the government tasked to coordinate, monitor and evaluate government programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local, and sectoral development plans towards a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

The future Carbonomics

By: Ginggay Hontiveros-Malvar

The extreme heat we are all experiencing today leads many to think of climate change — a term very often bandied about but not completely understood.

Yes, climate change is often blamed as the culprit for wildfires, severe rainfall and melting ice caps that cause our oceans to rise. When we have floods or receding shores, it's much easier to point the finger. But what is this "change" that disrupts nature and affects us all? To get to the root of this matter, let's go back to basics.

Carbon, to generations before Gen X, meant the black paper used to make duplicate documents through typewriters and other printing machines. The advent of photocopying practically rendered it obsolete and, in today's world, carbon is actually considered a "dirty word." But is it really?

Let's attempt to understand the lingo better.

ABCs of emissions

Carbon is a crucial element for all life on Earth. It is the basic building block of life and helps form the bodies of living organisms. Its compounds (carbon bonding with other elements) form solids, liquids and gases. Carbon is in the very food we eat, in what we exhale, in what we use to fuel our economy through fossil fuels.

Like the title of that 80s pop song, "every breath you take" produces carbon and, in essence, carbon emissions — particularly, from human activities — are the primary cause of climate change. These human activities involve everyday routines like charging your mobile phone, using appliances and driving a car, which leaves a trail of gases in your wake.

Vast amounts of information will tell you that when carbon is released into the atmosphere, it builds up and traps heat from the sun like a greenhouse. That's why carbon is called a greenhouse gas.

A carbon footprint, meanwhile, is the sum of all byproducts that come from manufacturing and moving goods, energizing and building structures for homes and businesses, providing food, and travel.

These emissions have a significant impact on our planet, leading to increased temperatures, more frequent extreme weather events, and disruptions to the environment.

So, carbon, in itself, is not “bad” — it’s the amount of atmospheric carbon emissions that causes us some problems.

Low-carbon economy

Businesses are also a contributor to carbon emissions and understanding emission scopes is essential to help companies manage or reduce their numbers. These are:

Burn — emissions coming from the company’s owned physical assets;

Buy — emissions coming from the generation of electricity, heat, or steam that a company purchases; and

Beyond — an emissions catch-all; contributors beyond a company’s walls both upstream and downstream, including emissions from business travel and commuting, and emissions from the use and disposal of any products the company produces.

As such, governments are now talking about the transition to a low-carbon economy. This is essential for limiting the impacts of global temperature rise. The opportunities in using technology and innovation to reduce carbon emissions are greater than many people realize, and governments are moving to develop low-carbon policy frameworks, strengthen sustainable financing, incentivize investments in nature-based solutions and green economies, and align policies across borders.

Many of these things are already happening around the world, at a pace that is relevant and appropriate to the situation and responsibility of each economy. Developed and developing economies have a world of difference in terms of context and, therefore, require different solutions.

The power of synergy

The private sector-led CarbonPH Coalition is meant to create an enabling environment for quality discourse and enriching capabilities for nature-based solutions in the country. Companies voluntarily pitch ideas, sharing experiences and best practices towards an informed discussion on effective and practical development of policy and action plans that industry sectors can follow.

Companies in the CarbonPH Coalition actively engaged and shared insights critical to their industry sectors.

During the recent CarbonPH Education Series on “Philippine Policy and Investment Environment for Nature-Based Solutions,” 23 companies and their representatives listened to the main speaker Secretary Robert Borje of the Climate Change Commission. He highlighted President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to employ a “whole of government, whole of society, and whole of world approach” to address climate change.

Sec. Borje also spoke about an investment-led transformative climate action as the pathway for the country, emphasizing that government efforts to contribute to the global decarbonization efforts can only be achieved through synergies between government initiatives and private sector innovations.

According to data gathered from 2011 to 2021, the Philippines took in a whopping P673.30 billion in losses and damages due to climate change. It also shows that losses in our gross domestic product could reach up to 13.6 percent of GDP by 2040. Knowing the climate future predicted for us, the government is doubling its efforts for the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan and National Adaptation Plan — roadmaps for mitigation and adaptation action that can help guide the private sector in contributing to the collective goals.

At the same forum, Tim Daniels, head of Investor Relations, Sustainability & Communications of SM Investments Corporation, talked about climate change and biodiversity in the country. In today’s business landscape, we find finance executives talking about climate change, which should really be the norm if we want collective solutions to our environmental challenges.

Companies in the CarbonPH Coalition actively engaged and shared insights critical to their industry sectors such as expanding investments in transition and renewable energy technology and how banks can enable social bond investments alongside green bonds.

What we can do

Traditional business roles now require a new understanding of data and integrating solutions for business impacts on the environment and social challenges.

It is important to have an open mind to continuous learning about the world we live in and the social context in which we operate. Pushing ourselves beyond what we think is possible can open a world of possibilities in terms of solutions. This can help us become more effective in contributing to the discussion and thinking of solutions for climate action, environmental protection, and biodiversity.

The environmental problem is too big and systemic to be tackled alone. Our spheres of influence extend to the interactions we have with our own families, friends, employees, customers, suppliers, partners, and communities where we operate. Working in synergy with each other to scale solutions can work for all industries and not just benefit one.

Competition is necessary to increase productivity and up the quality of goods and services in the market for the benefit of consumers. But for a challenge that impacts all, isn't cooperation much better so we can share in the economy of the future that requires less carbon emissions?

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH, Germany bolster climate action thru €36.8-M TRANSCEND project](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC), in partnership with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH or German Development Cooperation, on Monday announced the soft launch of the Transformative Actions for Climate and Ecological Protection and Development (TRANSCEND) project.

The foreign-assisted project aims at enhancing the country's capacity to implement its climate change and biodiversity policies.

The EUR36.8 million (PHP2.35 billion) TRANSCEND project ensures the transparent, integrated and accountable implementation of climate projects across all levels of society in the Philippines, soliciting and mediating coordination between government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

“Climate change poses many challenges and has differentiated impacts on sectors and disproportionate effects on others,” CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje said in his welcome remarks during the recent soft launch.

“Working with Germany on the TRANSCEND project, we can focus on maximizing and optimizing collaboration and cooperation between and among government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector in pushing for a climate-smart and climate-resilient Philippines. This is the call of our time: a truly whole of society and whole of world approach to address climate change and its impacts,” he added.

Outlined to support the Philippines in achieving its National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and Nationally Distributed Contributions Implementation Plan (NDCIP), TRANSCEND is calibrated to work and assist in key climate intervention areas as identified in the two framework documents.

This includes the protection, conservation and rehabilitation of biodiversity and natural carbon sinks, securing of investments to leverage private sector funds and jumpstart transition to a low-carbon economy and create green jobs, synergizing of adaptation and mitigation strategies for effective carbon reduction, avoidance and sequestration of carbon emissions, and establishing multi-stakeholder decision support systems at all levels of government to enhance transparency and accelerate transformative evidence-based policies.

“This project allows us to coherently synergize our efforts towards a low-carbon and biodiversity friendly future through improved coordination, fortified partnerships, and

maximum impact of our resources. TRANSCEND will catalyze positive change, promoting 'integrated, transparent, and accountable' efforts to safeguard the environment for present and future generations," said Department of Environmental and Natural Resources Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga as represented by Assistant Secretary Noralene Uy.

According to GIZ's indicative project timeline, the main launch of TRANSCEND project is set in August this year, following the signing of the project's Implementation Agreement.

The project holds much significance to both the Philippine and German governments as it marks another chapter of the Philippine-German diplomatic relationship, since its inception 70 years ago.

"Germany and the Philippines are partners who share the same values and work hand in hand to strengthen the rule base of the national order in Europe, in Southeast Asia, and everywhere in the world where it is in danger. We have a lot in common and we are reliable partners, and today's [soft] launching event is again another milestone in our partnership," H.E. Dr. Andreas Pfaffernoschke, German ambassador to the Philippines, said.

Borje said the Philippine government must continue to work and collaborate with partners, particularly with Germany.

"While the work ahead of us is still long and still requires a lot of hard work, there is a sense of hope and there is a sense of renewal. And pondered upon, it's going to power the partnership that we currently have from 70 years to beyond," he added.

The CCC continues to actively seek effective and robust local and international partnerships as part of its commitment to enhance the country's capacity to mitigate and adapt to the changing climate and to usher in a new era of climate resiliency in the Philippines.

The TRANSCEND project is deeply aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 15 (Life on Land), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by focusing on enhancing climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and fostering partnerships for effective implementation.

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