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By: Robert Mizo

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By: Ma. Teresa Montemayor

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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Recognizing the vital role of the private sector in attaining the country’s climate adaptation and mitigation plans, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and Ayala Group formally forged a partnership with the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on April 12.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

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[Singapore looking to buy carbon credits from PHL](#)

By: Malou Talosig-Bartolome

Singapore is eyeing to buy carbon credits from the Philippines as part of its international commitment to mitigate climate change.

A carbon credit is a financial instrument corresponding to the avoidance or removal of one ton of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The credits are issued by climate-action projects that capture or stopping CO₂ from the atmosphere such as planting trees, stopping deforestation or using efficient cook stoves instead of open fires.

The number of carbon credits generated is based on CO₂ the climate-action project saves.

Visiting Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan said he discussed with Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo the prospect of buying carbon credits from the Philippines.

“We talked about the creation of the carbon credits market that is compliant with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement,” Balakrishnan said, referring to the international agreement that allows countries to pursue cooperation to reach climate targets.

Under Article 6, countries can transfer carbon credits earned from the reduction of the greenhouse gas emissions to help one or more countries to meet their climate targets.

“I believe this is in mutual interest of both our countries given the global need to transit towards net carbon zero,” Balakrishnan said.

“The Philippines, in my view, has a great potential on this area,” he added.

He is proposing that Singapore and Manila work on the “framework” of the carbon credits.

“This will open broad areas and opportunities for the Philippine economy whilst expanding Singapore’s businesses’ excess to the available carbon credits that would be generated,” Balakrishnan said.

Singapore has been establishing carbon credit collaboration with other countries like Costa Rica, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Indonesia, Kenya, Mongolia, Morocco, Peru, Rwanda, Senegal and Sri Lanka. It aims to meet its net-zero emissions target by 2050.

JAPAN TIMES

Climate change is political and we must treat it that way

By: Robert Mizo

When I was deciding the topic of my Ph.D. some years ago and expressed interest in studying the politics of climate change, a fellow doctoral candidate asked why I was not pursuing a “real” political science.

I felt this was a ridiculous question, convinced as I was that everyone understood how political climate change is. However, as the years have gone by, I have come to realize that, outside of certain circles, there is little appreciation of this fact.

Global warming is certainly a hot topic, and has been for a few years now. It elicits animated conversations, as well as some skepticism and dismissal — although the latter have thankfully grown quieter over the years. However, it remains outside of the core domain of politics and broader public consciousness in most countries.

In mainstream media and government agendas, climate change often exists on the periphery of what are considered more “pressing” issues like the economy, security and even identity politics. Therefore, as the effects of global warming are being increasingly felt and more climate catastrophes loom, it is about time to recast this as a deeply political question.

If we borrow David Easton’s definition of politics as the “authoritative allocation of values”— i.e., the distribution of resources, including wealth and power, within a system — climate change is fundamentally political: It influences and is influenced by the allocation of rights and privileges across the world and across generations.

The causes of and responses to the climate crisis raise issues of justice, equity, interests, security and economics — ones that have shaped government and political behavior throughout history.

First off, global warming, which leads to long-term changes in climatic conditions, is anthropogenic, i.e., caused by human activity. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is categorical about this. But who, then, is “anthropogenic” referring to?

Historical data shows that the Industrial Revolution that started in 18th century Europe catalyzed the burning of fossil fuels that accelerated the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, leading to a planetary greenhouse effect.

Scientific evidence increasingly shows that the effects of climate change are global, yet those worst affected, namely people in the Global South, are those who least caused it in the first place.

This leads to questions of justice. Who caused the problem and who should be responsible for mitigating its effects? How should the worst affected, and least culpable, be best compensated?

While there may be seemingly apparent ways to answer these questions based on principles of historical responsibility and accountability, there are, in fact, no easy answers. Tackling these issues requires culpable countries to own up to their responsibilities and commit to righting past and present wrongs — no small task.

The dimensions of justice that climate change centers on are multiple. On one level, it is a question of global justice that requires fair and universally acceptable settlement mechanisms between developed, more culpable, countries and developing ones. It is also a matter of gender justice, with women and LGBTQ people estimated to be some of the worst impacted because natural calamities exacerbate existing inequalities.

It is also an issue of intergenerational justice, with present and future generations dealing with the consequences of their ancestors' excesses.

The question of justice is, in turn, inextricably tied to that of equity. Who still has the right to pollute (if anyone) and who, instead, should desist from doing so lies at the heart of the debate — one that cannot be easily resolved, given that discussions on emissions reduction cause in states a sense of insecurity regarding their geopolitical and economic interests.

At the same time, because a disproportionate burden is shouldered by the poorest people in the Global South and the historical responsibilities fall on the rich few in the Global North, it is important to work out the fairest way of sharing the global carbon pie. As the carbon budget — the amount of carbon dioxide that can be released without catalyzing further catastrophic warming — rapidly shrinks, this question is becoming evermore contentious.

Furthermore, climate change has become a site of contestation between the interests of different states, as well as nonstate actors such as civil society organizations and businesses. For example, competition and squabbling are regularly on display at the yearly United Nations climate change conferences, or COPs.

The countries and businesses most responsible for global warming often twaddle over taking meaningful action because, as “rational” actors, they weigh such prospects against the prevailing profit-driven economic logic. Political leaders depend on making “economic sense,” often at the cost of the environment, while businesses often resort to greenwashing.

Climate change also raises existential security challenges for states. Studies have shown how it can be a threat-multiplier, for example, by inducing resource scarcity, which in turn can lead to the intensification of existing political fault lines, especially in weak political systems. For example, some studies view the Syrian civil war that broke out in 2011 as an indirect outcome of food insecurity and internal migration caused by drought-induced poor harvests.

In many instances, global warming reduces agricultural productivity, heightens water scarcity and exposes communities to an array of health problems.

It also threatens critical security infrastructure such as military, air and naval bases, nuclear and other weapon installations, arterial access roads and bridges, as well as lines of communication. The Himalayan region shared by China and India, for instance, is one of the most militarized borders in the world and is especially vulnerable to climate impacts such as glacial melt.

In addition, rising sea levels can throw maritime security in disarray, potentially leading to increased criminality and piracy in the high seas, as well as migration and poverty. Climate change is also intricately connected to energy security: Countries are obliged to scout for cleaner energy sources without compromising the need to power their growth, development and even survival.

All the above elements threaten countries’ internal and external security, and it goes without saying that economically and politically weaker states bear the brunt of these grim scenarios.

Furthermore, addressing the climate crisis requires a fundamental rethinking of how humans interact with nature — especially how we procure, produce and consume the means of our existence. It necessitates cleaner, gentler and more sustainable economic models.

Such transformations make economic sense, too, as they promote resource and energy efficiency, and job creation. However, attempts to tinker with the current capitalist model in favor of alternative strategies aimed at carbon neutrality — such as rapid

decarbonization or degrowth — are often met with hostility by political and economic forces, including those groups that most benefit from the status quo.

For instance, former President Donald Trump, not long after assuming office in 2017, withdrew the United States from the Paris Agreement to “promote national economic interests.”

If we invoke Marx’s definition of politics as class struggle, climate change is indeed a site of contestation not only between competing interests, but also conflicting modes of production, or economic systems. The dominant classes — the political and economic elites — have so far resisted overhauling the system that caused global heating in the first place, namely industrial capitalism.

A much-needed economic restructuring is an intensely political question with no viable prospects in sight. The irony, however, is that unlike other issues, climate change is yet to figure on the manifestos of political parties in many major democracies and rarely do politicians promise to take climate action in their campaigns. This, in part, is because there is little demand from citizens to put this issue at the center of the agenda, barring some sparse civil society-led movements.

So far, we have underestimated the political nature of climate change. A shift in mentality is required now, in our hour of most need.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Basic Energy, Japan's Renova firm up collab for P4.5-B wind project](#)

By: Jordeene B. Lagare

Basic Energy Corp. firmed up its partnership with Japan's Renova Inc. through joint development and shareholder's pact related to the Mabini wind project, estimated to cost P4.5 billion.

The agreement "heralds a major advance in the development of the Mabini Wind Power Project," according to Basic Energy.

The company said Tokyo-based Renova, which has numerous power projects both in Japan and other countries, has committed to work with them on a 50:50 equity basis in Mabini Energy Corp (MEC), the special purpose vehicle for the wind facility.

MEC is the project proponent of the Mabini wind project with an initial power generation capacity of 50 megawatts (MW), covered by the wind energy service contract issued by the Department of Energy.

The service contract covers a 25-year term, including a five-year pre-development phase, which can be extended for another 25 years.

The planned wind facility, expected to start operating by 2027, is situated across a 4,860-hectare contract area in the Mabini peninsula in Batangas.

Basic Energy earlier said MEC continues to conduct its wind resource assessment for the project by collecting the data from LIDAR equipment readings and the meteorological mast installed in the project area.

The assessment, critical for determining the project's viability and gauging its potential annual energy production, is estimated to be concluded by May this year.

Through this, the company will be able to choose the most suitable wind turbine generators to install on the project site.

Basic Energy said the wind project signifies their support for the government's renewable energy goals and promoting environmental sustainability.

“Moreover, our collaboration underscores our commitment to fostering enduring relationships within the Philippine energy sector,” Basic Energy vice chair and CEO Oscar de Venecia Jr. said.

Pagasa: Fair weather with chances of isolated rains in most of PH

By: Luisa Cabato

Generally fair weather with chances of slightly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms may be expected in most areas of the country on Thursday, the state weather agency said.

In an early morning advisory, Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) weather specialist Aldczar Aurelio said these clouds and rain will be brought by localized thunderstorms.

He advised residents to stay alert because flash floods or landslides may happen in low-lying areas during severe thunderstorms.

Aurelio likewise said the ridge of the high pressure area and easterlies, or warm winds blowing from the Pacific Ocean, will continue to affect the country.

“Ngayong araw, inaasahan pa rin natin na magiging maganda at maaliwalas ang panahon sa bansa. Asahan pa rin ang maalinsangan na panahon,” Aurelio said.

(Today, we still expect nice and clear weather in the country. Still anticipate humid weather.)

“Wala po tayong mino-monitor o binabantayang sama ng panahon, low pressure area, o bagyo sa loob ng ating Philippine area of responsibility,” he added.

(We’re not monitoring or observing any bad weather, low-pressure area, or typhoon within our Philippine area of responsibility.)

As for predicted temperature ranges in key cities and areas of the country for April 18, Pagasa issued the following:

- Metro Manila: 24 to 35 degrees Celsius
- Baguio City: 18 to 27 degrees Celsius
- Laoag City: 25 to 33 degrees Celsius
- Tuguegarao: 25 to 38 degrees Celsius
- Legazpi City: 25 to 32 degrees Celsius
- Puerto Princesa City: 27 to 34 degrees Celsius
- Tagaytay: 23 to 33 degrees Celsius
- Kalayaan Islands: 26 to 33 degrees Celsius

- Iloilo City: 27 to 33 degrees Celsius
- Cebu: 26 to 32 degrees Celsius
- Tacloban City: 26 to 32 degrees Celsius
- Cagayan de Oro City: 26 to 32 degrees Celsius
- Zamboanga City: 25 to 34 degrees Celsius
- Davao City: 26 to 34 degrees Celsius

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Fair weather seen across PH Thursday

By: Ma. Cristina Arayata

The country will continue to experience fair weather on Thursday, the weather bureau said. Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) forecaster Aldczar Aurelio said the ridge of a high pressure area and the easterlies are currently affecting the country.

PAGASA expects the whole archipelago to experience isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms. Severe thunderstorms, however, could result in flash floods and landslides.

High temperatures are still forecast -- with up to 38 °C in Tuguegarao and up to 35 °C in Metro Manila; up to 34 °C in Puerto Princesa, Zamboanga and Davao.

Between 42 to 45 heat index, or what the temperature feels like to the human body when relative humidity is combined with the air temperature, are forecast in these areas:

Dagupan City, Pangasinan; Mariano Marcos State University in Batac, Ilocos Norte; Bacnotan, La Union; Tuguegarao City, Cagayan; Isabela State University in Echague, Isabela; Tayabas, Quezon; Ambulong in Tanauan, Batangas; Sangley Point, Cavite; Coron Palawan; San Jose, Occidental Mindoro; Puerto Princesa City, Palawan; Aborlan, Palawan; Virac, Catanduanes; Roxas City, Capiz; Dumangas, Iloilo; Iloilo City; Catarman, Northern Samar; and Guiuan, Eastern Samar.

PAGASA considers 41 °C to 51 °C heat index as danger level, wherein heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely. Continued exposure to the sun could also cause heat stroke.

Meanwhile, light to moderate winds and slight to moderate seas continue to prevail across the country.

[PPP center, French dev't agency develop climate, disaster risk tools](#)

By: Ma. Teresa Montemayor

The Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Center and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) are holding a workshop to strengthen national projects that concern natural disasters and climate change.

The PPP Center said the workshop, which started on April 2 and will last until the 12th, is the third field mission of the AFD in connection with its technical assistance program.

The workshop focuses on the use of the Climate Change and Disaster Risk (CCDR) screening tool and the CCDR adaptation and mitigation affordability tool.

The CCDR screening tool captures the need for integrating climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction considerations in PPP projects across stages of the project life cycle.

Meanwhile, the CCDR adaptation and mitigation affordability tool assists in climate change mitigation efforts by reducing and preventing greenhouse gases and other substance emissions.

This is done through the review of applicable adaptation and mitigation measures and climate finance mechanisms for specific projects.

The two-year technical assistance program aims to strengthen the PPP Center's capacity to assist local and national agencies in preparing, structuring, and evaluating PPP projects that integrate disaster-resilient and climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

It started in October 2022. Its first and second AFD mission in the country was held on Nov. 17 to 25, 2022, and March 27 to April 4, 2023.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Power plant woes spark call for clean energy shift](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Climate and energy advocates ramped up calls for a shift away from “expensive and unreliable” fossil fuels in the wake of recent power plant outages and capacity reductions.

The National Grid Corp. of the Philippines on Tuesday placed the Luzon grid on red and yellow alerts, and the Visayas grid on yellow alert after dozens of power plants either went offline or operated at reduced capacity, prompting President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to direct government offices to “set the standard” in conserving energy.

Power for People Coalition (P4P) convenor Gerry Arances said the recent power woes were caused by the country’s “continued addiction to fossil fuels and the government’s refusal to heed civil society’s pleas to properly prepare for El Niño.”

The power generation in the Philippines heavily relies on fossil fuels such as coal and gas. The country generates 60% of its electricity from burning coal, a major contributor to planet-warming emissions and linked to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

“The government needs to wake up and get with the program: fossil fuel dependence leads to costly and undependable energy. The long-term solution is obvious to anyone not blinded by fumes from fossil fuels: transitioning to renewable energy is the only solution,” Arances said.

Only 22% of the energy mix comes from renewables. The Department of Energy (DOE) targets to increase the share of clean energy to 35% by 2030 and 50% by 2040.

A 2023 report by Berlin-based Climate Analytics said it is “entirely feasible” for the Philippines to end its reliance on coal and gas in favor of renewable energy sources by 2050, which can reduce electricity costs and create around one million jobs.

While the Marcos administration says it is aggressively pursuing a transition to renewable energy, the country is also increasing the reliance on imported natural gas for power generation

“With these outages, the case to phase out fossil fuels has never been stronger. It is not the time for distractions like fossil gas (liquefied natural gas), which is just as dirty, costly, and deadly as coal,” the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ) said.

‘Consumers suffer’

PMCJ said that while frequent power outages disrupt consumers and jeopardize the economy, power companies get mere slaps on the wrist.

“Power surges from poorly managed rotational brownouts also further increase the bills consumers pay for. Yet power generators get away with continuous forced outages and are even moving to lighten penalties on said outages,” the group said.

According to think tank Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC), the Luzon power grid might face a tight power supply in May, resulting in yellow alerts, as El Niño threatens the country's power sufficiency.

ICSC senior policy advisor Pedro Maniego said the persistent problem of power supply shortages highlights the vulnerability of the current centralized and baseload-reliant grid system. He urged the government to prioritize flexibility and distributed generation in energy policy-making and planning.

“The transition will enable greater integration of renewable, indigenous, and clean energy into the grid, thus ensuring a resilient, dependable and sustainable electricity supply for consumers,” Maniego said.

THE STAR

[Philippine ocean systems deteriorating, says study](#)

Famed for its stunning beaches, the Philippines faces a stark reality as it plunges to 214th out of 220 in the latest Ocean Health Index (OHI), signalling a decline in marine ecosystem health.

The archipelago's diverse waters, home to the world's richest marine biodiversity, have long been a paradise for divers and environmentalists.

However, overfishing, pollution, and climate change are increasingly threatening these vibrant marine habitats, jeopardising not only local livelihood sources but also global environmental health.

The decline in the Philippines' ocean health was highlighted in the 2023 Ocean Health Index (OHI) scores, which placed the country at 214 out of 220 nations, with an overall score of 58 out of 100—significantly below the global average of 73.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[CCC, Ayala Group ramp up gov't-private sector climate action](#)

Recognizing the vital role of the private sector in attaining the country's climate adaptation and mitigation plans, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and Ayala Group formally forged a partnership with the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on April 12.

The partnership paves the way for the CCC and Ayala, together with Ayala Land, BPI, Globe, ACEN and Ayala Foundation, to explore possible avenues of collaboration in promoting and achieving the country's goals under the Philippine climate agenda.

The MOU also includes establishing prospect programs that allow investment-led, accelerated, just, and equitable transitions towards low-carbon emissions and the increase of vulnerable communities' climate resilience and adaptive capacity.

"To have the private sector's commitment to our climate goals is important. Climate change is a complex issue that requires a whole-of-a-government and a whole-of-the-society approach, and this includes the private sector," CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje in a news release on Wednesday.

He added the partnership with Ayala marks the start of an era of climate resiliency where businesses and corporations thrive in a sustainable and green business landscape.

To support the government, Ayala continues to ramp up its renewable energy investments, with ACEN expanding its presence globally and increasing its renewable capacity.

The group also scales up its climate action along the lines of energy efficiency, carbon emissions reduction, and sustainability-related financing products.

"Climate change can cause great anxiety or fear, but for us at Ayala, we see these tremendous challenges as a unique opportunity to work together with like-minded partners to help build a resilient and secure future," said Jaime Urquijo, Chief Sustainability and Risk Officer of Ayala Corporation.

“We hope that this MOU signing will bring forth collaborative projects that will enhance our capacity to adapt to climate change; expand our understanding of the risks and opportunities that climate change has brought and be a platform to show the best Filipino ingenuity and resilience in the face of a tremendous global challenge,” he added.

Under the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., the CCC has set priorities to enhance climate change mitigation and adaptation commitments and action between and among stakeholders in the country. This was formalized and institutionalized as contact groups, one of which is Communicating Opportunities to Network, Navigate, and Explore Climate Transformation or CONNECT for the private sector.

“President Marcos underscored the great need of involving and tapping the private sector in order to make sure our development plans and aspirations turn into reality. Our partnership with Ayala offers an exemplary rubric for the CCC in partnering with the private sector towards our common goal of creating a sustainable and resilient Philippines,” Borje said.

The CCC, as the government's lead policy-making body on climate change, is tasked to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate programs and ensure integration into national, local, and sectoral development plans.

The Commission remains steadfast in actively seeking and building effective and robust partnerships with the private sector as part of its commitment to increase the country's capacity to mitigate and adapt to the changing climate and to usher in an era of sustainable, low-carbon business economy in the Philippines.

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