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By: Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson

DEVELOPING ASIA needs to consider carbon pricing systems if it hopes to meet its climate goals, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said.

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### **[Catastrophic drought that's pushed millions into crisis made 100 times more likely by climate change, analysis finds](#)**

By: Laura Paddison

The unrelenting drought that has devastated the Horn of Africa and left more than 20 million people facing acute food insecurity would not have been possible without climate change, a new analysis has found.

## **GMA NEWS**

### **[Romualdez: Filipinos to benefit from Marcos-Biden meeting](#)**

By: Llanesca T. Pantí

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s upcoming visit to the United States will be beneficial to the country, particularly in terms of security, investment opportunities, and job creation, Speaker Martin Romualdez said Thursday.

## **MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT**

### **[Marcos-Biden meet: What to expect](#)**

THE first official visit of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. to the United States was first announced by the White House, then confirmed by Malacañang. The visit was to start on Sunday, April 30 and end on May 4, with the highlight being Marcos’ one-on-one talk with US President Joseph Biden.

## **MANILA BULLETIN**

### **[9 Metro mayors learn best practices on sustainability, environment protection from Dutch gov't](#)**

By: Patrick Garcia

Several Metro Manila mayors led by San Juan City Mayor and Metro Manila Council (MMC) President Francis Zamora went to The Netherlands to learn about the best practices on sustainability and environmental protection.

## **MANILA STANDARD**

### **[Global warming made Horn of Africa drought possible: report](#)**

A devastating drought that has struck the Horn of Africa could not have occurred without global warming, according to a new report released Thursday from an international team of climate scientists.

## **NIKKEI ASIA**

### **[Net-zero transition benefits outweigh costs fivefold in Asia: ADB](#)**

By: Sayumi Take

The benefits of transitioning to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions would outweigh the costs fivefold for countries in developing Asia if effective policies are implemented, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a report published on Thursday.

## **PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

### **[DENR talks with German diplomats on climate change](#)**

By: Jean Mangaluz

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) held a dialogue with German envoys to tackle how Manila and Berlin could work together to mitigate climate change.

### **[Horn of Africa drought not possible without climate change—study](#)**

The drought that has left some 4.35 million people in the Horn of Africa in dire need of humanitarian aid – with 43,000 in Somalia estimated to have died last year – would not have been possible without climate change, according to an analysis released Thursday.

## **PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY**

### **[Legarda cites need for more women leaders vs. climate change](#)**

By: Leonel Abasola

Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda urged women leaders to put the goal of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management on top of their priority list noting that other than environmental issues it will also pose a risk to socio-economic and political stability.

## **RAPPLER**

### **[\[Vantage Point\] How prepared are we for El Niño?](#)**

By: Val A. Villanueva

It's coming! As winds weaken along the equatorial Pacific Ocean, heat builds up beneath the ocean plane. All weather prediction models point to the return of the climate system's major disruptor by July 2023, the first time in nearly four years.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Go pushes disaster resilience measure](#)**

By Javier Joe Ismael

SEN. Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go reiterated on Thursday his call for the creation of the Department of Disaster Resilience.

### **[Marcos forms Water Resources Management Office in DENR](#)**

By: Catherine S. Valente

TO avert the looming water crisis in the country, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has signed an executive order (EO) creating the Water Resources Management Office (WRMO) in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

## **CCC IN THE NEWS:**

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **[Napocor partners with CCC for rehabilitation of watershed in Laguna](#)**

By: Ashley Erika O. Jose

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. (Napocor) has signed an agreement with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) for an eight-year program to rehabilitate the Caliraya-Lumot Watershed in Laguna.

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Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda urged women leaders to put the goal of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management on top of their priority list noting that other than environmental issues it will also pose a risk to socio-economic and political stability.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **[ADB sees carbon pricing as key to meeting climate goals](#)**

By: Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson

DEVELOPING ASIA needs to consider carbon pricing systems if it hopes to meet its climate goals, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said.

“Without carbon pricing, we won’t be able to reduce emissions with the speed and skill needed to meet the Paris Agreement goal,” ADB economist Manisha Pradhananga said in a briefing on Thursday.

“What we find is that several countries will benefit from selling their carbon permits. Overall, the region is a small carbon importer,” she added.

Asia is one of the most highly vulnerable regions to climate change.

“Climate change will increase the spread of vector-borne and waterborne diseases, and deaths due to cardiovascular stress. Climate change under a high emissions scenario could impose gross domestic product (GDP) losses of 24% in the whole of developing Asia, 35% in India, 30% in Southeast Asia, and 24% in the rest of South Asia by 2100,” according to the Asian Development Outlook 2023 Thematic report by the ADB.

Developing Asia’s share of global greenhouse gas emissions doubled from 22% in 1990 to 44% in 2019 and is expected to remain at this level until mid-century under current policies, the ADB said.

ADB economist David Raitzer said developing Asia risks large losses if climate change is not addressed.

“Growth in the region has relied heavily on emission-intensive activities, with the emission intensity of GDP currently 41% higher than the rest of the world. Developing Asia is starting its decarbonization at relatively low-income levels and faces large development needs,” according to the report.

He also noted that carbon pricing is the only policy that “ensures that mitigation effort is allocated efficiently.”

“A carbon price measure ensures that abatement occurs where it is least costly, whereas command and control regulations have no mechanism to assure that they target the lowest-cost opportunities to decarbonize. Subsidies similarly have no market

to guide their targeting, have some degree of fungibility, and often lead to deadweight welfare losses,” the report said.

“Carbon pricing is critical to achieving a net zero world at attainable cost. The inability of markets to account for the full social, economic, and environmental cost of greenhouse gas emissions remains the fundamental market failure that has led to carbon-intensive growth and climate change,” it added.

The ADB estimates that a carbon price of \$70 per ton of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030 and \$153 by 2050 will “trigger a transition to low-carbon growth and achieve global net zero.”

“Ambitious mitigation can be attained without carbon pricing, but the cost would be higher as carbon pricing is more efficient. Although progress is being made in the adoption of carbon prices, barriers often prevent prices from affecting investment and consumption decisions in developing Asia,” the ADB said.

“If the region’s economies do not proactively adopt carbon pricing, they risk being subjected to carbon border adjustment tariffs and other measures that could put trade at a disadvantage,” it added.

The ADB also cited how carbon trade can “help to smooth the distribution of costs among countries.”

“The modeled scenarios find that developing Asia will have both major carbon exporters and carbon importers if the world were to gradually transition to equal per capita emission quotas under the net zero scenarios,” it said.

“At the aggregate level, the modeling finds that developing Asia will be a slight potential importer of carbon offsets from the rest of the world under a contraction and convergence scenario over the entire century, so some policy costs are compensation to other regions. At the same time, revenues from exports of offsets turn aggregate costs negative for South Asia and help reduce costs in Indonesia and the rest of Southeast Asia,” it added.

Mr. Raitzer noted that the Philippines could be a carbon exporter.

“The Philippines is extremely climate vulnerable. It’s coming from a low level of baseline emissions, it would be a potential carbon exporter,” he said.

“The Philippines has expanded the share of coal in electricity generation. We don’t find (coal expansion) preferable because of the declining cost of other energy sources. If there were an agreement, the Philippines would come out as a carbon exporter and that would offset much of the cost,” he added.



**CNN**

**[Catastrophic drought that's pushed millions into crisis made 100 times more likely by climate change, analysis finds](#)**

By: Laura Paddison

The unrelenting drought that has devastated the Horn of Africa and left more than 20 million people facing acute food insecurity would not have been possible without climate change, a new analysis has found.

Since October 2020, this part of East Africa, one of the world's most impoverished regions, has been gripped by its worst drought in 40 years as an unprecedented five consecutive rainy seasons have failed.

The drought has brought catastrophic impacts to large areas of Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia: Tens of thousands have died, crops have shriveled, livestock have starved and chronic hunger and water insecurity are widespread and growing.

In a world without human-caused climate change, this devastating drought would not have happened.

That's the conclusion of a rapid attribution study released on Thursday by the World Weather Attribution initiative. The organization is made up of a team of international scientists who, in the immediate aftermath of extreme weather events, analyze data and climate models to establish what role climate change played.

In the Horn of Africa, they found that planet-heating pollution caused by burning fossil fuels has made the region's ongoing agricultural drought 100 times more likely — and that's a conservative estimate, they said.

Higher temperatures have significantly increased the amount of water evaporating from plants and soils, according to the study, causing crop losses, livestock death and water shortages.

The planet's average temperature is now around 1.2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial levels of the late 1800s. Without that warming, the region would not have experienced this severe agricultural drought, the report found.

The scientists also looked at whether climate change was to blame for the lack of rain, but concluded there was no overall impact.

The report found that while climate change makes low rainfall twice as likely during the region's "long rains" season, which runs from March to May, it actually makes the "short rains," between October and December, wetter.

The reason this wetter trend has been absent in the Horn of Africa over the last few years is because of the influence of La Niña, a natural climate phenomenon that brings dryer conditions to the region during the short rains period.

Human-caused global heating is making droughts across the world longer and more extreme. The blistering drought that affected the Northern Hemisphere last summer, including large parts of the US, Europe and China, was made 20 times more likely by the climate crisis, according to an October analysis from the the World Weather Attribution group.

Scientists say droughts will only become more severe if the world continues to burn fossil fuels.

Regions that are already vulnerable face the worst impacts. The climate change-fueled disaster in the Horn of Africa has brought devastation to a region already suffering from a slew of problems, including global price hikes following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and deadly internal conflicts.

Much of the population are farmers that rely on rainfall for crops and livestock. They have been plunged even further into poverty as the rains failed. At least 8 million farm animals are estimated to have died during the drought.

"This has actually forced people to migrate to other regions in search of either water or pasture for their crops, or also just food for their families," said Phoebe Wafubwa, an adviser at the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent in Kenya.

Around 1.7 million people in Ethiopia and Somalia have had to leave their homes because of the impacts of the drought, according to the report, and hunger levels are sky-high. More than 20 million people in the Horn of Africa have been pushed into crisis levels of food insecurity, or worse, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

In Somalia, which has been teetering on the edge of famine, more than 43,000 people are estimated to have been killed by the drought, half of whom were children under five years old.

"Almost half of country's population is affected, over 3 million people are displaced," Mamunur Rahman Malik, the Somalia representative for the World Health Organization, told CNN. "The country continues to pay the price of global warming and climate change," he added.

"The findings of this study show that frequent multi-year droughts compounded with heat extremes, in the main rainy season, will severely impact food security and human health in the Horn of Africa as the climate continues to warm," Joyce Kimutai, principal meteorologist and climate scientist at the Kenya Meteorological Department, said in a statement.

The region is seeing some relief during the current rainy season, although it has brought flash flooding to parts of Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia.

"The expectation is that the drought is coming to a close," Chris Funk, director of the Climate Hazards Center at UC Santa Barbara, told CNN.

But it will be a very long road to recovery. The current rains are "not substantial enough" to see a significant improvement to food security, Kimutai explained on a call with reporters. And the region can expect more extreme dry conditions in the future.

As the world continues to warm, "we expect to see the combined effect of low precipitation with (high) temperatures causing really exceptional droughts in this part of the world," she said.

## **GMA NEWS**

### **Romualdez: Filipinos to benefit from Marcos-Biden meeting**

By: Llanesca T. Panti

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s upcoming visit to the United States will be beneficial to the country, particularly in terms of security, investment opportunities, and job creation, Speaker Martin Romualdez said Thursday.

Marcos will have a bilateral meeting with US President Joe Biden at the White House on May 1.

"The meeting between President Marcos and US President Biden will further reinforce the robust bilateral relations between the Philippines and the United States," Romualdez said in a statement.

"Security and stability are indispensable ingredients for continued economic growth and prosperity. An improved iron-clad alliance between the two countries would greatly contribute to the realization of President Marcos' vision for sustained economic growth that would provide jobs and livelihood for the Filipinos," he added.

The US State Department earlier said that during Marcos' visit, "President Biden will reaffirm the United States' ironclad commitment to the defense of the Philippines, and the leaders will discuss efforts to strengthen the longstanding U.S.-Philippines alliance."

Marcos said he would seek a review and assessment of the commitments under the 70-year Mutual Defense Treaty between the two countries because the alliance must evolve to address the emerging geopolitical realities, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

Romualdez, along with other Filipino lawmakers, is currently in the US for meetings with his American counterparts to discuss ways of further strengthening defense and security cooperation as well as the economic partnership between the Philippines and the US.

"Now, the congressional delegation of the House leadership is engaging their counterparts in the US Congress. We are working on sending our strong message to come to the Philippines and invest there," Romualdez said.

"In addition to increased investments, our economy would profit from the expected assistance the US can provide us in combating the effects of climate change. This

would help in our efforts not only to improve food security but also in mitigating the effects of global warming,” he added.

## MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

### Marcos-Biden meet: What to expect

THE first official visit of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. to the United States was first announced by the White House, then confirmed by Malacañang. The visit was to start on Sunday, April 30 and end on May 4, with the highlight being Marcos’ one-on-one talk with US President Joseph Biden.

Foremost on the agenda of the two presidents’ dialogue are defense and security matters, considering the ongoing geopolitical tension in both the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait, two places where American foreign policy gives considerable importance.

Officials said the trip’s purpose is to reaffirm the special relationship between Manila and Washington. But this is already “iron-clad” as attested to by top American officials who visited the Philippines, among them Vice President Kamala Harris. It seems weird that the “iron-clad” relationship would need reaffirmation every month.

The official line from the Palace is that Marcos will push for closer partnership in agriculture, energy, climate change, and disaster relief, among others. This is more like it, more direct to the point. The President will look into the possibility of accessing some financial help from the West in the form of “green bonds” that can be used to mitigate climate change in the Philippines.

“Many things have changed, climate change has become a huge issue and we want to see what else we can do, what strategies we can take. The US has something called a green bond. That means they can offer funds to help us,” Marcos said.

Climate change, agriculture, and trade are gut issues that Filipinos are clearly interested in, but these items will have to take a back seat when the real reason for the trip is put on the table — defense and security cooperation between Manila and Washington, which has taken on a more relevant and compelling character now than when the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) was signed in 1951.

“Of course we will clarify again the treaty agreement between the Philippines and America and we have to look at it because of several changes,” said the President, who has revealed his pro-US card on several occasions, the most telling of which is when he approved the inclusion of four more sites to the list of military facilities the US can use under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

The Chief Executive talked of evolving and adjusting the provisions of the MDT “because of the changes in the situation we are facing in the South China Sea, the developments in Taiwan and North Korea, our situation is heating up somehow.” The Philippines has become a fulcrum of the geopolitical contest between the US and China.

The MDT aims to strengthen the military capabilities of the Philippines and the US, their interoperability and ability to come to the aid of each other in times of actual attack inside their territories. The treaty has never been invoked in the wake of two such attacks in recent memory: the 911 Twin Towers in New York and the Marawi “siege” in Lanao.

When Marcos meets Biden on May 1, the two nations may see more concrete signs of unity and cooperation in defense, security, economy and environment, which should redound to the benefit of both countries.

## MANILA BULLETIN

### [9 Metro mayors learn best practices on sustainability, environment protection from Dutch gov't](#)

By: Patrick Garcia

Several Metro Manila mayors led by San Juan City Mayor and Metro Manila Council (MMC) President Francis Zamora went to The Netherlands to learn about the best practices on sustainability and environmental protection.

Aside from Zamora, Mayor Joy Belmonte of Quezon City, Mayor Jeannie Sandoval of Malabon, Mayor Imelda Calixto-Rubiano of Pasay, Mayor John Rey Tiangco of Navotas, Mayor Ruffy Biazon of Muntinlupa, Mayor Along Malapitan of Caloocan, Mayor Weslie Gatchalian of Valenzuela, Mayor Ike Ponce of Pateros, Vice Mayor Menchie Abalos of Mandaluyong, and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chairman Atty. Don Artes joined the program.

They met with Dutch officials and private entities spearheading sustainability programs and climate change-conscious initiatives as part of the MMC's efforts to implement these in the Philippines.

According to Zamora, the group first visited the Philippine Embassy in The Netherlands headed by Ambassador Ed Malaya.

The group also visited the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) in Rotterdam which is an international organization working as a solutions broker by engaging in innovative solutions to drive adaptation at scale, high-level policy development, new research contributions, advocacy, communications, and work with partners to deliver action on the ground.

Zamora said that the GCA taught the council its best practices in sustainable development and were also given a tour of its famous floating office with its environment-friendly characteristics.

The delegation also met with Rotterdam City Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb who had been given numerous commendations for his leadership skills and sustainability programs.

"Rotterdam City Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb has been awarded as the 2021 World Mayor by the London-based thinktank City Mayors Foundation for 'his commitment to treat all citizens as 'Rotterdamers', irrespective of their origins and backgrounds.' Mayor Aboutaleb was the first Muslim mayor appointed in a major city in Western Europe since



Mayors in the Netherlands are formally crown appointees. He is taking charge of Rotterdam, Europe's biggest port and multiracial melting pot," Zamora said.

Aboutaleb and other city officials shared with the council members how they are able to live with water through the construction of dikes and dams which prevent their city and other areas from being submerged in water given that a huge percentage of the Netherlands is below sea level.

The council members also went to AEB Amsterdam which is considered as the largest waste-to-energy single location plant in the world. It provides waste management services such as processing of residual waste, extracting valuable materials, and incineration.

They also visited the head office of Royal HaskoningDHV which develops sustainable water energy and partners with industries, advising, engineering and implementing smart solutions to reduce, reuse and recycle water, and recover resources and replenish water ecosystems. The group is also responsible for the construction of major dams and dikes in the Netherlands which protect their people from flooding.

With San Juan regarded as one of the most bike-friendly cities in the country and himself a cycling advocate, Zamora wasted no time in visiting Amsterdam's underwater bike parking facility which is built underneath a huge canal.

The mayor noted that the facility can accommodate close to 11,000 bikes which are strictly monitored to ensure their safety. This facility is also directly accessible to train stations which makes transportation more convenient for the Dutch people.

In March, Zamora, who is also the concurrent chairman of the Regional Peace and Order Council (RPOC) of Metro Manila, flew to the United States to attend a series of meetings with US senators and congressmen at the US Capitol, and a training program that will help boost the RPOC's knowledge and skills.

He was joined by the Regional Peace and Order Council - Department of the Interior and Local Government (RPOC-DILG) in his meetings with US senators and congressmen at the US Capitol.

Zamora also attended training sessions with American think-tanks regarding public safety, homeland security, and peace and order.

## MANILA STANDARD

### [Global warming made Horn of Africa drought possible: report](#)

A devastating drought that has struck the Horn of Africa could not have occurred without global warming, according to a new report released Thursday from an international team of climate scientists.

“Human-caused climate change has made agricultural drought in the Horn of Africa about 100 times more likely,” said a summary of the report by the World Weather Attribution (WWA) group.

“The ongoing devastating drought would not have happened at all without the effect of greenhouse gas emissions,” it added.

Since late 2020, countries on the Horn of Africa — Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan — have been suffering the worst drought in 40 years. The extended drought has led to the deaths of millions of heads of cattle and wiped out crops.

The WWA study concentrated on the three areas worst hit by the drought: southern Ethiopia, Somalia and eastern Kenya.

While climate change had little effect on total annual rainfall in the region, “higher temperatures have significantly increased evaporation from soil and plants, which has made dry soils much more likely”, according to the 19 scientists who contributed to the WWA report.

“Without this effect, the region would not have experienced agricultural drought — when crops and pastures are affected by dry conditions — over the last two years,” the summary added.

“Instead, widespread crop failures and livestock deaths have left more than 20 million people at risk of acute food insecurity.”

The WWA said that, for its rapid analysis, “scientists looked at changes in rainfall in 2021 and 2022 in the affected region, covering southern Ethiopia, southern Somalia and eastern Kenya”.

“They found that climate change is affecting the rainfall periods in opposite ways. The long rains are becoming drier, with low rainfall now about twice as likely, while the short rains are becoming wetter due to climate change,” it added.

“This wetting trend in the short rains has been masked recently by the La Nina weather pattern, which reduces rainfall in the short rains.”

Joyce Kimutai, a Kenyan climatologist who contributed to the report, told AFP: “It is time we act and engage differently. Central to this process is to transform and enhance resilience of our systems.

“We need to innovate across and throughout food systems, improve collaboration, involve vulnerable groups, make the best use of data and information, as well as incorporating new technologies and traditional knowledge.”

The WWA network, set up by leading climate scientists, has built a reputation in recent years for its capacity to evaluate the extent to which climate change has contributed to extreme weather events.

Its results are published as a matter of urgency, without passing through the long peer-review process required by scientific journals, but employ approved methodological approaches.

## NIKKEI ASIA

### [Net-zero transition benefits outweigh costs fivefold in Asia: ADB](#)

By: Sayumi Take

The benefits of transitioning to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions would outweigh the costs fivefold for countries in developing Asia if effective policies are implemented, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a report published on Thursday.

"We really have to start now with more ambitious decarbonization, and along with that, we need more international cooperation," Manisha Pradhananga, ADB economist and one of the report's authors, told Nikkei Asia.

Developing Asia, which refers to the bank's developing member nations in the region, was historically a low carbon emitter but now accounts for nearly half of global emissions. Regional growth has been fueled by emission-intensive activities but now faces the challenge of meeting development goals while trying to lessen climate risks.

The region has "the most" vulnerable populations to climate change, the ADB said. Low-lying coastal zones are heavily populated, making it "the most exposed globally" to rising sea levels, storm surge, floods and land subsidence.

One-third of jobs in the region are in sectors such as agriculture and fisheries, which face declining yields and product quality due to climate change. Rising temperatures will also harm tourism, tighten energy supplies, reduce labor productivity, and increase the spread of disease, according to the report.

The policies needed to avoid these risks -- such as encouraging energy efficiency and decarbonization as well as expanding forest area and land to grow crops for bioenergy - - will lead to higher food prices and energy bills. But with efficient policies such as carbon pricing, the expense can be limited to a "modest" amount of less than one year of economic growth over this century, according to the report.

Changes toward net zero would improve air quality, helping avoid as many as 346,000 premature deaths annually in the region by 2030, the report said. It would also create 2.9 million jobs in the solar and wind energy fields by 2050, topping the 1.4 million jobs lost in the fossil fuel sector.

The cost of achieving net zero can be lowered 10% to 20% by taking more aggressive action immediately rather than waiting until 2030 -- the target year of many countries' midterm climate goals, the authors wrote. Costs can also be "substantially" lowered through more international coordination of market mechanisms such as carbon trading.

Benefits and costs, however, will differ in each economy, according to the report.

For example, China and India are the region's top two emitters, mostly due to their carbon-intensive energy sectors. But the cost of switching from fossil fuels to renewables is lower for India, which has less existing energy capacity to replace, than China. Both countries would benefit from better air quality, but India would also gain from less climate damage, as it is currently more vulnerable to such hazards than China, the authors said.

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

### [DENR talks with German diplomats on climate change](#)

By: Jean Mangaluz

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) held a dialogue with German envoys to tackle how Manila and Berlin could work together to mitigate climate change.

German Special Envoy for International Climate Action Jennifer Lee Morgan represented the European country in the consultation.

Officials from DENR, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Science and Technology, and other Philippine officials and representatives of the German Embassy in Manila were also present.

The activity was held on April 18 and organized by the DENR.

“The event marked the first high-level consultation between the Philippines and Germany aimed at strengthening their bilateral partnership for accelerating climate agenda,” the department said in a statement.

It added, “The two nations also discussed ways to accelerate the implementation of German-funded environmental and climate programs aligned with the Philippine Development Plan, particularly the Philippines’ commitment to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.”

## [Horn of Africa drought not possible without climate change—study](#)

The drought that has left some 4.35 million people in the Horn of Africa in dire need of humanitarian aid – with 43,000 in Somalia estimated to have died last year – would not have been possible without climate change, according to an analysis released Thursday.

Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia have endured five failed consecutive rainy seasons since October 2020, with aid groups labeling it ‘the worst drought in 40 years’. But while the drivers behind the drought are complex, a team of international climate scientists with World Weather Attribution (WWA) group found rising greenhouse gas emissions made it at least 100 times more likely.

“Climate change has made this drought exceptional,” said Joyce Kimutai, a climate scientist with the Kenya Meteorological Department who worked with WWA to tease out climate change’s role. She and her team found that in a 1.2C degree cooler world, the combination of low rainfall and evapotranspiration “would not have led to drought at all”.

Unlike with extreme heat and heavy rainfall, scientists have a harder time pinning down climate change’s contribution to droughts around the world.

Using computer models and climate observations, the WWA team determined climate change had made the Horn of Africa’s long rains from March through May twice as likely to underdeliver, and the short rains from October through December wetter.

But the nearly 3-year drought has also coincided with a La Nina, an ocean phenomenon resulting from unusually cold water in the equatorial Pacific known to cause below average short rains in East Africa. This ultimately counteracted the excess moisture added from climate change.

“If you have a doubling of the chance of a severe drought, that really sets the stage for these sequential shocks that have devastated the region,” said climatologist Chris Funk at the University of California, Santa Barbara who was not involved in the analysis.

In addition to less rain falling on the Horn, a warming climate means more water is evaporating from soil and transpiring from plants into the atmosphere.

“This drought is primarily due to the strong increase in evaporative demand caused by high temperatures,” said Kimutai.

Despite initial predictions of a sixth failed rainy season, the region is now receiving some rain, she added.

Although it will take far more rain to help farmers and pastoralists recover, “it’s really positive that we’re seeing rainfall in the region at the moment,” Kimutai said.



## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### [Legarda cites need for more women leaders vs. climate change](#)

By: Leonel Abasola

Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda urged women leaders to put the goal of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management on top of their priority list noting that other than environmental issues it will also pose a risk to socio-economic and political stability.

Speaking at the launching of the Women International Network for Disaster Risk Reduction (WIN DRR) on Wednesday held at the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City, Legarda highlighted the vital role of gender equality in addressing environmental issues.

"Climate change affects all of us, but how men and women are affected is different. It is not gender-neutral. Women are found to be more affected by climate impacts than men because of cultural and societal roles and prevailing gender inequalities," she said.

Legarda said women, particularly in fragile and conflict-ridden areas, become more vulnerable to gender-based violence, such as conflict-related sexual violence, human trafficking and child marriage.

She added that climate change and disasters further exacerbate the health risks for women due to limited access to adequate healthcare and services, a serious concern that must be address with a sense of urgency.

She believes that policies related to climate change must prioritize integrating gender considerations throughout the planning, financing and implementation stages.

Legarda, a long time advocate for women's empowerment and the environment, authored Republic Act 9729, or the Climate Change Act, which includes a provision that at least one of the commissioners of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) must be female.

This provision aims to integrate the gender lens and gender-responsive approaches into the policies and programs on climate change.

Several actions have already been taken to address the growing concern about climate change. But this year, being ranked as the world's most at-risk country among 193 countries worldwide in the World Risk Index 2022, Legarda reminded the women leaders attending the WIN DRR launch that there is still much more to be done.

"We need crisis and disaster risk women leaders to save more lives. We women leaders from grassroots groups to global organizations can step up to drive meaningful action. It is time to be bold, take responsibility, and create a more climate resilient world, which requires taking decisive action and making significant changes to the way we live and interact with the environment. Together, we can strive towards a vision of a more resilient and sustainable future," the senator said.

## RAPPLER

### [\[Vantage Point\] How prepared are we for El Niño?](#)

By: Val A. Villanueva

It's coming! As winds weaken along the equatorial Pacific Ocean, heat builds up beneath the ocean plane. All weather prediction models point to the return of the climate system's major disruptor by July 2023, the first time in nearly four years.

El Niño is the flipside of what experts call the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). It is the front to La Niña's back.

In El Niño's wake, for months on end, an ocean strip covering 10,000 kilometers westward off the coast of Ecuador warms, typically about 1 to 2 degrees Celsius. If you think a few degrees would not make much difference, you're mistaken. In that part of the world, it's more than enough to completely reorganize wind, rainfall, and temperature patterns across the planet.

A recent, rapid heating of the world's oceans has scientists pushed on edge fearing that it will add to global warming. This month, the global sea surface hit a new record high temperature. It has never warmed this much, this quickly.

Experts are at a loss why this has happened. They're very much concerned that, combined with other weather events, the world's temperature could reach an alarming new level by the end of next year. Warmer oceans can kill off marine life, lead to more extreme weather and raise sea levels. They are also less efficient at absorbing planet-warming greenhouse gases.

We've only just passed the first three months of this year, but the heat we're experiencing is already punishing. The prospect is terrifying: just when we thought the heat has thus far been unbearable, it can in fact get even worse.

Characterized as a weather phenomenon that causes below-average rainfall and drought, it's highly likely to exacerbate the water shortage problem that's already pervasive in several parts of our country.

The consequences can be devastating: crop failure, public health risks, and water supply interruption for millions of Filipinos.

According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) the worsening weather phenomenon will affect at least 11 provinces by August and then by October it will become 46.

NDRRMC Executive Director Ariel Nepomuceno says Ilocos Norte, Bataan, and Cavite could be hit hardest.

He says that the country is already experiencing the initial effect of the El Niño phenomenon and is projected to worsen in October to December this year or January to March 2024. Based on its latest five-day projection, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said the heat index in a number of areas will breach 40°C in the coming days, with the highest at 48°C in Butuan on April 29.

The same phenomena occurred in 2019, when Angat Dam recorded its lowest level of 116 meters. This is way below the dam's minimum operating level of 180 meters, and brought about one of the worst water crises in the country the Philippines in nearly a decade. Up to 61% of the Philippines was exposed to El Niño's effects, with tens of thousands of households subjected to intermittent water supply in Metro Manila alone.

We're all rooting for the combined efforts of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) and the National Irrigation Association (NIA) to cushion the effects of the inevitable El Niño, through cloud seeding activities and other contingencies. The NWRB and NIA are racing against time to provide much-needed preemptive and on-crisis assistance to the already embattled agriculture sector. According to the NWRB, what's particularly concerning is the fact that 11 million families nationwide still lack access to clean water.

These mitigation initiatives are mere drops in the bucket when we consider the relative history and modern state of water accessibility in the country. When such a basic, daily necessity comes up short too often, shouldn't current solutions be reviewed and augmented, and other options explored?

A more recent and pressing example to consider is the current state of water supply in Cebu. The Metro Cebu Water District (MCWD) itself admitted that it was unable to reach even half of the daily demand for 639,889 cubic meters, producing and using only up to around 250,000 cubic meters in a day.

Over the last couple of years, the shortage of potable water has spread to more communities and residents in Cebu. Representatives from multiple sectors have begun flooding the district office with calls for solutions.

The MCWD, in response, has been transparent on the many challenges it faces in executing its mandate: seawater intrusion, groundwater contamination and over-extraction, clogged rainwater recharge areas, rapid demand growth, and calamities.

### Solutions

It's clear that provinces like Cebu desperately need to democratize their water sources before it's too late. They can invest more in other alternative solutions, such as rainwater harvesting, wastewater treatment, and groundwater recharge systems.

Currently, the foremost solution is to operate desalination plants which convert seawater into potable water. The technology is already being used in countries with water scarcity issues such as Israel, Australia, and Singapore.

These desalination plants hold several advantages over other water supply solutions. First, they provide a reliable and consistent source of water, even during times of drought. Second, they do not rely on rainfall or freshwater sources, making them more sustainable in the long run. And last, desalination plants have a relatively low environmental impact, since they use seawater as their primary water source.

Leaning towards this option, the MCWD plans to utilize the 11 desalination plants located all over Cebu. The question now is: What's taking it so long?

With the scorching heat bearing down on us, many residential and business faucets down to a trickle, and solutions being sluggishly implemented, the situation will most likely leave Cebuanos scratching their heads.

The recent creation of the Water Resource Management Office – a precursor to an expected addition to the Cabinet – offers hope that more modern solutions to the water crisis can finally be tapped. After all, the need for a secure and consistent water supply is not only a means to survival, but a matter of economic growth.

With reliable access to water, the agricultural sector can thrive, and industries – such as manufacturing and tourism – that rely on water can continue to operate efficiently. Additionally, a robust water supply ensures public health and sanitation, preventing the spread of waterborne diseases.

The Philippines and other water-locked countries have the potential for equitable distribution of water resources. The journey begins with careful study of and wise investment in alternative solutions, such as operating desalination plants that provide a reliable and consistent source of water even during times of drought. The benefits of having a secure water supply system far outweigh the costs. The government must act urgently to ensure that every Filipino has immediate and continuing access to clean and safe water.

With the abnormal warming of sea surface temperature in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean lasting for up to 18 months, it is time to deliver a sea of change in our country to ward off the extremely disruptive climate events of El Niño. –

## THE MANILA TIMES

### [Go pushes disaster resilience measure](#)

By Javier Joe Ismael

SEN. Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go reiterated on Thursday his call for the creation of the Department of Disaster Resilience.

The vice chairman of the Senate Committee on National Defense said the Philippines is one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change which, among others, sees the gradual rise of global temperature and sea level.

"Its precarious location in the Pacific Ring of Fire also makes the country prone to destructive earthquakes and volcanic eruptions," he said.

"It's time to scale up our preparedness and resiliency against disasters. We cannot prevent the arrival of a typhoon, but it is better if we are always prepared so we could prevent a bigger disaster," said Go in Filipino.

He refiled Senate Bill 188 which aims to create a specialized department that will be solely responsible for managing the country's disaster response and mitigation efforts.

The department will focus on three areas: disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness and response, and recovery and building forward better.

The measure also provides for the creation of an Integrated Disaster Resilience Information System which will serve as a database of all disaster risk reduction and climate change information.

Go lauded President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s efforts to prioritize and ensure that Filipinos have better access to adequate and safe water supply.

A bill that seeks to create a Department of Water Resources is being discussed at the committee level in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Under the National Water Resource Management Act, the proposed agency will be the primary policy, planning, coordinating, implementing, monitoring, and administrative entity of the executive branch responsible for the comprehensive and integrated development and management of water resources.

The new department will also manage the optimal allocation of water resources among competing uses to achieve universal access to safe, adequate, and affordable water supply, sanitation and septage services.

Last March 23, the President signed an executive order creating the Water Resource Management Office pending the passage of the law which will establish the Department of Water Resources, noting that the country is facing a water crisis.



## Marcos forms Water Resources Management Office in DENR

By: Catherine S. Valente

TO avert the looming water crisis in the country, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has signed an executive order (EO) creating the Water Resources Management Office (WRMO) in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The President signed on Thursday, April 27, EO 22, which mandates the WRMO to "ensure the immediate implementation of the Integrated Water Resources Management in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and formulate a corresponding Water Resources Master Plan (IWMP)."

The EO was created to address the challenges that affect the management of water resources in the country, particularly with the increasing demand for water due to population and economic growth, impacts of climate change and the pandemic, and the lack of adequate infrastructure leading to uneven distribution of water resources, among others.

"To avert water crisis, minimize and avoid conflicts, and consistent with the State's sole ownership and control over the country's water resources, it is imperative for the Government to integrate and harmonize the policies, programs, and projects of all relevant agencies in the water resource sector in the fulfillment of their complementary governmental mandates," the EO read.

The WRMO is also tasked to "shepherd and champion, together with the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office, the passage of a law creating an apex body such as the proposed Department of Water and/or a regulatory commission on water."

It is also directed to integrate into the IWMP the various plans of agencies, which include the Philippine Development Plan, the Philippine Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan, and the National Water Resources Board Security Master Plan.

The WRMO is further tasked to "generate and maintain credible and timely water and sanitation data to aid in evidence-based policy-making, regulations, planning, and implementation."

It will be headed by an undersecretary to be appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the DENR secretary.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### BUSINESS WORLD

#### [Napocor partners with CCC for rehabilitation of watershed in Laguna](#)

By: Ashley Erika O. Jose

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. (Napocor) has signed an agreement with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) for an eight-year program to rehabilitate the Caliraya-Lumot Watershed in Laguna.

“This partnership will help us hasten the rehabilitation of the Caliraya-Lumot Watershed, a critical water resource for Caliraya and Kalayaan hydroelectric power plants,” Napocor President and Chief Executive Officer Fernando Martin Y. Roxas said in a statement on Thursday.

“Restoring these open areas will also enhance water conservation, erosion control, and biodiversity conservation in the area,” he said.

The partnership will cover an eight-year period and will include establishment of new plantations as well as nourishing of reforested areas.

Napocor said the agreement will utilize a comprehensive and integrated approach in implementing its reforestation activities, which includes the capacity-building of people’s organizations and raising awareness in the communities.

The rehabilitation of the 25-hectare upland forest within the watershed will help offset carbon footprint, according to CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje.

Napocor’s partnership with CCC is part of its Energy Sector Carbon Sequestration Initiative (ESCSI), a program it launched together with the Energy department in 2021.

“The program aims to enjoin the private sector in mitigating the effects of climate change through reforestation,” Napocor said.

Aside from Napocor’s missionary electrification mandate, it is also tasked to manage 11 watershed areas with a combined land area of 485,199 hectares. These watershed reservations support hydro and geothermal power plants in the Philippines.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### [Legarda cites need for more women leaders vs. climate change](#)

By: Leonel Abasola

Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda urged women leaders to put the goal of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management on top of their priority list noting that other than environmental issues it will also pose a risk to socio-economic and political stability.

Speaking at the launching of the Women International Network for Disaster Risk Reduction (WIN DRR) on Wednesday held at the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City, Legarda highlighted the vital role of gender equality in addressing environmental issues.

"Climate change affects all of us, but how men and women are affected is different. It is not gender-neutral. Women are found to be more affected by climate impacts than men because of cultural and societal roles and prevailing gender inequalities," she said.

Legarda said women, particularly in fragile and conflict-ridden areas, become more vulnerable to gender-based violence, such as conflict-related sexual violence, human trafficking and child marriage.

She added that climate change and disasters further exacerbate the health risks for women due to limited access to adequate healthcare and services, a serious concern that must be address with a sense of urgency.

She believes that policies related to climate change must prioritize integrating gender considerations throughout the planning, financing and implementation stages.

Legarda, a long time advocate for women's empowerment and the environment, authored Republic Act 9729, or the Climate Change Act, which includes a provision that at least one of the commissioners of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) must be female.

This provision aims to integrate the gender lens and gender-responsive approaches into the policies and programs on climate change.

Several actions have already been taken to address the growing concern about climate change. But this year, being ranked as the world's most at-risk country among 193 countries worldwide in the World Risk Index 2022, Legarda reminded the women leaders attending the WIN DRR launch that there is still much more to be done.

"We need crisis and disaster risk women leaders to save more lives. We women leaders from grassroots groups to global organizations can step up to drive meaningful action. It is time to be bold, take responsibility, and create a more climate resilient world, which requires taking decisive action and making significant changes to the way we live and interact with the environment. Together, we can strive towards a vision of a more resilient and sustainable future," the senator said.

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