



NEWS ROUNDUP

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- Philippines seeks deeper climate policy cooperation with ASEAN
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FINANCIAL TIMES

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By: Kenza Bryan and Steven Bernard

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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[ASEAN Strengthens Cooperation on Loss and Damage to Support Communities Across the Region](#)

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By: Marita Moaje

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CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS WORLD

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By: Chloe Mari A. Hufana

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

AL JAZEERA

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Nearly all of Europe experienced above-average annual temperatures in 2025, a year that included record-high marine temperatures and wildfires from the Arctic to the Mediterranean, according to the World Meteorological Organization.

The United Nations body released its findings on Wednesday in a joint report produced with the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), painting a grim picture of climate change in the region.

“Europe is the fastest-warming continent, and the impacts are already severe. Almost the whole region has seen above-average annual temperatures,” said Florian Pappenberger, director-general of the ECMWF, including drought conditions in May 2025.

Hot and dry conditions across the region helped fuel wildfires last year that burned more than 1 million hectares (2.5 million acres) of land – roughly the size of Cyprus – and about 70 percent of European rivers recorded below-average annual flows, the report said.

Strong marine heatwaves were also observed across much of the continent, spiking in waters of the Atlantic Ocean near the United Kingdom, Ireland and Iceland and in several spots around the Mediterranean, according to a map shared with the report.

A number of the most significant changes were seen in Europe’s coldest regions, as sub-Arctic Norway, Sweden and Finland recorded a 21-day heatwave – their worst on record – in July 2025.

During that period, temperatures reached 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit) and higher around the Arctic Circle, the report said.

Snow cover across Europe also fell by nearly 30 percent to 1.32 million square kilometres (509,655 square miles) in March 2025, equivalent to a loss of territory spanning France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and Austria combined, the report said.

Glacier loss was recorded across Europe, with the second-largest loss on record observed in Iceland.

“The [2025 report] paints a stark picture: The pace of climate change demands more urgent action,” said Samantha Burgess, strategic lead for climate at ECMWF.

“With rising temperatures, widespread wildfires and drought, the evidence is unequivocal; climate change is not a future threat, it is our present reality,” Burgess said.

FINANCIAL TIMES

[Greenland ice sheet and Europe's glaciers shrink further, scientists say](#)

By: Kenza Bryan and Steven Bernard

Continental glaciers and the Greenland ice sheet will continue to shrink in coming years, scientists say, after data showing Europe has warmed twice as fast as the global average.

Military and commercial ships, particularly from Russia, have in recent years stepped up their activity in the region that is one day expected to be ice free during the summer.

The EU's Earth observation service Copernicus and the World Meteorological Organization drew on work from more than 100 scientists for the annual "state of the climate" report.

"The loss of ice mass throughout the century will continue," said Carlo Buontempo, director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service. This could expose people "across the planet" to flooding risk, with each 1cm in sea-level rise thought to expose 6mn people to coastal flooding.

The European continent is warming more quickly than the rest of the planet, and the Arctic is heating at an even faster rate as a result of the reduction of the so-called "albedo effect", where snow and ice reflect sunlight back into space while the exposed darker ground absorbs heat.

Loss of mass by Europe's glaciers was particularly apparent in Iceland, Svalbard and the periphery of Greenland, the report said.

The ice sheet that covers most of Greenland lost about 139bn tonnes of ice in the year to August 2025, or about 1.5 times the amount stored in all the glaciers in the European Alps.

The sheet contains enough fresh water to raise sea levels by more than 7 metres. Last year's melt raised the global average sea level by 0.4mm.

The number of European winter days with temperatures that were at freezing point or below fell last year.

At the same time, the continent experienced 5 per cent more sunshine than average in 2025.

The report highlights ways in which clean energy systems are sensitive to the effects of climate change.

The sunnier conditions — along with more solar panel installations — drove a record for solar energy, which contributed 12.5 per cent to Europe's electricity production compared with 10.3 per cent in 2024. Solar and wind energy produced more of Europe's electricity than fossil fuels for the first time last year.

However, the loss of water from snowmelt as overall snow and ice ground cover is reduced can pose difficulties for hydropower generation.

Last year was the third warmest on record across the world. This year the effects of man-made climate change could be turbocharged in the short term by the cyclical Pacific Ocean warming phenomenon known as El Niño, which affects weather around the world.

Seasonal forecasts compiled by Copernicus suggest that an El Niño could develop from late next month. But its scientists refused to be drawn on reports of a “super” El Niño.

“The amplitude — whether modest, strong or very strong — cannot be reliably determined yet,” Buontempo said. “Forecasts that project a specific category of event at this point go beyond what the science currently warrants.”

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Bracing for 'super' El Niño](#)

That the Philippines will be hit by the El Niño weather phenomenon this year is no longer a question of if or when, but rather of how intense and devastating this year's cycle will be.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) even raised the possibility of a “super” El Niño—some are even predicting a “Godzilla” event—that will certainly wreak havoc on the country's vital agriculture sector, which is already hobbled by escalating costs of inputs, such as fertilizer, spurred by the continuing turmoil in the oil-rich Middle East.

The El Niño phenomenon is characterized by a longer and more intense dry season, and the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) predicted a 92-percent chance of a moderate to strong El Niño hitting the country in the fourth quarter of this year and is likely to extend to early 2027.

But even this early, the country is already baking under hotter and drier conditions, with forecasts of the heat index soaring to “danger” levels of 42 to 51 degrees Celsius in various parts of the country becoming routine.

Additional threat

Provinces such as Masbate, Sorsogon, Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, and Catanduanes have also already reported three straight months of about 60 percent less rain than usual, and this is likely to worsen when El Niño peaks.

And as if this were not challenging enough, Pagasa said that the Philippines should likewise prepare for a more intense southwest monsoon or “habagat” season in the western part of the country from June to August as the conditions for a full-blown El Niño episode build up.

Resources of both the national and local governments are already stretched thin by the need to respond to the Middle East crisis that has caused oil prices to surge, and consequently, the prices of basic goods and services.

And yet, the entire government apparatus must dig deep, craft strategies, and implement all necessary measures to strengthen the country's response to this additional threat with potentially far-reaching consequences.

Grim figures

During the 2024 El Niño episode, which was described as one of the worst on record, total damage to agriculture due to the extended dry spell and drought conditions was pegged at P57.78 billion, one of the biggest losses ever sustained by the sector.

The corn sector, which produces the feed for livestock, was hardest hit, followed by rice, high-value crops, and cassava.

The fisheries sector was not spared from the adverse effects of warmer temperatures, and neither was the livestock and poultry industry nor the coconut sector, which all support employment in the countryside.

Total output decreased by 2.2 percent to P483.58 billion in 2024, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

These grim figures should impress upon government officials the urgency of preparing now and preparing well for the full impact of this year's El Niño, which has a higher chance of being a moderate to strong one rather than weak.

Fortunately, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has indicated that he is indeed aware of the potential magnitude of the impact and has already directed managers of the DA's Masagana Rice Industry Development Program to lay out and prepare for worst-case scenarios.

Initial actions include the immediate shift to less water-intensive crops, such as mung beans, to ensure that people have nutritious food on the table; adjusting planting calendars and then accelerating the rollout of solar-powered irrigation systems so that precious water supply will be used efficiently to produce crops despite below-average rainfall.

Best practices

The DA is also coordinating with the National Irrigation Administration to optimize water allocation and is reviewing rainfall projections and water availability to recalibrate planting strategies in an attempt to mitigate the potential impact of the weather phenomenon that has worsened due to climate change.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System has also directed distributors Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Company Inc. to be ready to activate contingency measures, including reducing water losses and optimizing treatment plant operations, in case supply from Angat Dam, which supplies the bulk of the water supply in Metro Manila, declines.

Towns, cities, and provinces across the country are also stepping up their preparation for the worst-case scenarios, and they should be able to do so easily, considering that the El Niño weather phenomenon is not new to the Philippines.

There should be enough history by now to look back on to see what worked and what did not, so that only the best practices will be employed this time around, not just by government but also by the private sector and individuals.

For while there is no way that the Philippines can fend off the El Niño phenomenon, proper preparation, coordination, and cooperation among the public and both public and private institutions should help blunt the worst effects on food supply, energy, prices of basic goods, and farmers' welfare.

Farmers at risk from El Niño, urgent gov't action needed – agri group

By: Andrea Gregorio

The Amihan National Federation of Peasant Women urged the government to take both immediate and long-term measures to mitigate potential agricultural damage affecting farmers' livelihoods amid the El Niño Alert and the fuel crisis.

Earlier, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) reported that although ENSO-neutral conditions are currently dominant over the tropical Pacific, there is a 79% likelihood that El Niño will develop during from June to August 2026 and could last until early 2027.

In a statement on Tuesday, Amihan Secretary-General and Bantay Bigas spokesperson Cathy Estavillo said El Niño, intensified by climate change, has become a recurring challenge, yet the government insufficiently addresses its impact on agriculture. "If El Niño intensifies, it will directly affect the livelihood of farmers, which will affect the supply of rice in the country. So both producers and consumers are affected," Estavillo said in Filipino. "With no or limited irrigation, people are forced to borrow and spend many liters of gasoline to harvest, in addition to the very high cost of farm inputs," she added. Amihan's May 2024 study on drought impacts documented cases in Albay of zero rice yield and very low production of about three cavans per half hectare. The report also found that livestock, poultry, and fisherfolk are similarly affected, with heat stress reducing fish catch and productivity. "The impact of El Niño is heavier now because of the oil price shock, so right now, the government should allocate a budget for this," Estavillo said.

The group is calling on the government to implement a ₱50,000 production subsidy for farmers, prioritize irrigation systems for food production, distribute climate-resilient seeds for free, and provide immediate financial aid to affected farming communities.

She pointed out that irrigation development remains low at 69 percent, with Central Luzon reaching only 74 percent, while dam operations are still largely prioritized for power generation over agricultural water distribution.

Estavillo said that even before the full onset of El Niño, drought conditions are already being reported across the country.

Based on Pagasa data as of April 22, 15 areas in Luzon are experiencing drought, 32 areas are under a dry spell, and 23 areas are already facing dry conditions due to significantly below-normal rainfall over consecutive months.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[ASEAN Strengthens Cooperation on Loss and Damage to Support Communities Across the Region](#)

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is strengthening regional cooperation on loss and damage, as member states work to address the growing impacts of climate-related disasters on communities, economies, and infrastructure across Southeast Asia.

During the inaugural session of the ASEAN Climate Week 2026, officials emphasized that beyond mitigation and adaptation, countries must also prepare for the impacts that cannot be fully avoided, such as damage to homes, loss of livelihoods, and disruption to essential services following extreme weather events.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Juan Miguel T. Cuna underscored the importance of coordination at the regional level.

“What ASEAN is doing with regard to this is pushing for stronger coordination and collaboration among ASEAN member- states, and also pushing for the sharing of resources and technical expertise,” Sec. Cuna said.

He added that ASEAN is also working to better assess the preparedness of member -states and identify gaps in responding to climate impacts.

“There’s a study on loss and damage... which aims to be able to assess the readiness of the different ASEAN member-states to deal with climate change, and in the process identifying their specific needs so that these can be addressed,” he said.

In practical terms, strengthened cooperation on loss and damage can help improve how countries respond after disasters— enabling faster mobilization of assistance following typhoons, improving access to financing for rebuilding damaged homes and infrastructure, and supporting recovery programs for affected sectors like agriculture and fisheries.

Regional efforts also focus on improving climate risk management systems, enhancing data sharing, and building technical capacity so that governments can better plan for and respond to climate-related losses. These include developing clearer mechanisms for accessing international climate funds and aligning national and regional approaches to disaster response and recovery.

Through ASEAN Climate Week, member states are engaging in technical discussions, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening these systems and ensuring that support mechanisms are in place when climate impacts occur.

As the Philippines leads ASEAN in 2026, advancing cooperation on loss and damage remains a key priority—supporting a more coordinated, responsive, and resilient region in the face of increasing climate risks.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[ASEAN moves to strengthen support for climate-hit communities](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is stepping up regional cooperation on loss and damage as member states seek stronger support systems for communities affected by climate change-related disasters across Southeast Asia.

In a news release Wednesday, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Juan Miguel Cuna underscored the importance of prioritizing closer cooperation among member states, through the ASEAN Climate Week.

He said that as ASEAN chair this year, the Philippines is advancing closer and better cooperation on loss and damage as a key priority to help build a more resilient and responsive region amid increasing climate threats.

“Beyond mitigation and adaptation, countries must also prepare for the impacts that cannot be fully avoided, such as damage to homes, loss of livelihoods, and disruption to essential services following extreme weather events,” the DENR chief said.

At the opening of ASEAN Climate Week 2026 in Manila on Monday, DENR officials and concerned stakeholders noted that mitigation and adaptation efforts alone are no longer enough, stressing the need to prepare for climate impacts that cannot be fully prevented.

These include the destruction of homes, loss of income, and interruptions in essential services following extreme weather events.

Cuna said the regional bloc is prioritizing closer coordination, resource-sharing, and technical collaboration among member states, and developing clearer pathways for accessing international climate finance.

He added that regional efforts are also focused on improving climate risk management, expanding data-sharing systems, and developing clearer pathways for accessing international climate finance.

“What ASEAN is doing with regard to this is pushing for stronger coordination and collaboration among ASEAN member-states, and also pushing for the sharing of resources and technical expertise,” Cuna said.

“The Philippines, for its part, has initiated dialogue and studies through the ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change, and in fact, there's a study on loss and damage in particular which aims to be able to assess the readiness of the different ASEAN states to deal with climate

change, and in the process, identifying their specific needs so that these can be addressed,” he added.

The initiative, Cuna said, aims to improve disaster response systems, speed up assistance after typhoons and floods, expand access to rebuilding funds, and support recovery in the vulnerable sectors, including agriculture and fisheries.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS WORLD

[Philippines seeks deeper climate policy cooperation with ASEAN](#)

By: Chloe Mari A. Hufana

THE PHILIPPINES will push for deeper regional coordination on climate policy as Southeast Asian governments move to align economic, energy and resilience strategies, according to President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.

Speaking at the opening session of the inaugural Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Climate Week 2026, Mr. Marcos said the region's exposure to intensifying storms, sea-level rise and drought underscore the need for collective action, adding that cooperation within the bloc can help countries address shared risks more effectively.

"Confronting these challenges is our shared responsibility and ASEAN has shown that through cooperation, we can overcome common problems with our collective purpose and resolve," he said.

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) pushed for an integrated, whole-of-system approach to ensure long-term resilience and economic stability.

Vice-Chairperson Robert EA. Borje said the region faces a widening gap between widespread climate exposure and largely national-level responses, raising the need for more synchronized policy frameworks.

"The Philippines approaches this challenge with the recognition that climate risks, economic stability, and energy systems across ASEAN are increasingly interconnected. At the same time, responses remain largely national in scope," he said in a statement.

"This gap — between shared exposure and fragmented control — underscores the need for more integrated and coordinated approaches."

Mr. Borje said that maintaining climate ambition while ensuring resilience and stability requires aligning each priority within a coherent system that supports long-term development.

The ASEAN Climate Week, held from April 27 to May 1, is set to advance technical cooperation, including policy dialogues and training programs aimed at strengthening the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions, as member states prepare for tighter climate commitments and increased scrutiny over delivery.

Meanwhile, Mr. Marcos issued Memorandum Circular No. 117, ordering the playing of "Lupang Hinirang" and the ASEAN 2026 "One Vision, One Ocean" during flag ceremonies and other

official events “to foster patriotism, strengthen regional solidarity and amplify the Philippines’ leadership and vision as ASEAN Chair.”

The order also aims to instill national identity, unity and pride among Filipinos, all national government agencies and educational institutions, both public and private.

ASEAN SUMMIT PREPARATIONS

In a separate development, Cebu is prepared for the 48th ASEAN Leaders’ Summit, according to a statement from the Presidential Communications Office (PCO).

Mr. Marcos will join his fellow heads of state on May 7 and 8.

Cebu Governor Pamela S. Baricuatro said the province is all set to host the leaders and their delegations.

Security preparations are already 80% complete, with enhanced emergency response systems and hospitals on code blue alert throughout the summit.

The PCO said delegations from 11 ASEAN member states are expected to be concentrated in Lapu-Lapu City.

Nagiel B. Bañacia, head of the Lapu-Lapu City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, said preparations have been underway since December.

Road closures will be limited to convoy movements and will be reopened immediately, he said.

Cebu City Mayor Nestor D. Archival ensured traffic management plans are in place, with no whole day road closures.

“We are ready if adjustments are needed,” he said.

Mandaue City Mayor Thadeo Z. Ouano, Jr. noted ongoing infrastructure projects, including road asphaltting, improved street lighting and solar installations along key transit routes.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[ASEAN urged to adopt coordinated approach to tackle climate crisis](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has underscored the importance of a more integrated and coordinated regional response to the climate crisis, noting that fragmented national approaches are no longer sufficient to address increasingly interconnected risks across Southeast Asia.

In a news release on Wednesday, CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje highlights the need to shift to a whole-of-system approach that aligns climate action, economic stability, and energy systems across the region.

“The Philippines approaches this challenge with the recognition that climate risks, economic stability, and energy systems across ASEAN are increasingly interconnected. At the same time, responses remain largely national in scope,” Borje said during the ASEAN Climate Week inaugural session held via online platform on Monday.

“This gap—between shared exposure and fragmented control—underscores the need for more integrated and coordinated approaches,” he added.

Borje emphasized that while countries face shared climate threats, current responses remain largely siloed, limiting the region’s ability to build long-term resilience.

He said climate ambition must be matched with a whole-of-systems approach that supports sustained development and economic stability.

Recognizing ASEAN as a key platform for strengthening coordination and partnerships to address the global climate crisis, the CCC also noted its potential role in advancing a unified climate strategy among member states.

In his remarks during the same event, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. stressed that ASEAN is “at the frontlines of the global climate crisis, as stronger storms, rising seas, prolonged droughts, and devastating floods have become realities for millions across the Southeast Asian region.”

The President added that confronting these challenges is a shared responsibility, and that ASEAN has already shown that common problems across the region can be overcome through collective purpose and resolve.

The ASEAN Climate Week, held from April 27 to May 1 and hosted by the Philippines, seeks to advance Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and promote stronger regional cooperation through high-level dialogues, technical exchanges, and capacity-building activities.

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