



## NEWS ROUNDUP

05 MAY 2025 [ 08:00 am]

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### **[Climate change is both sinking, and lifting, South Africa](#)**

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## **FINANCIAL TIMES**

### **[Neom climate adviser warns futuristic city could alter weather patterns](#)**

By: Kenza Bryan

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## **THE GUARDIAN**

### **[Arctic plant study reveals an 'early warning sign' of climate change upheaval](#)**

Scientists studying Arctic plants say the ecosystems that host life in some of the most inhospitable reaches of the planet are changing in unexpected ways in an "early warning sign" for a region upended by climate change.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[\[Opinion\] Climate change vis-à-vis health of nature](#)**

By: Amado Tolentino Jr.

The upside of the coronavirus pandemic is a greater awareness of biodiversity or species of plants and animal conservation. Nearly all the new infectious diseases that scientists know about originate in animals and so will the emergence of diseases in the years to come. HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) began in chimpanzees; SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) in bats; and mpox, formerly "monkeypox," influenza in aquatic birds. At some point, the animal pathogens jump the species barrier to humans which experts call a spillover. Spillovers have always occurred, but the rapid environmental change wrecked by humans in recent years has accelerated the spread.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Philippines seeks bigger role in global fund for climate change](#)**

By: Louise Maureen Simeon

The Philippines is seeking a bigger role in a global fund mechanism that helps developing economies address the impacts of climate change.

## **CCC IN THE NEWS:**

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Ccc opens scholarship program for climate leaders](#)**

The Climate Change Commission (CCC), in collaboration with the Office of Sen. Loren Legarda and the Asian Institute of Management (AIM), has launched the second iteration of the Sustainable Leadership Learning for Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction (SLL-CDRR) scholarship program to empower a new batch of leaders in disaster resilience and data science.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **ABS CBN**

### **Humid weather with scattered rains expected in many parts of PH**

Hot weather will continue, though scattered rains in the afternoon are expected across the Philippines in the coming week.

A low pressure area over the West Philippine Sea may persist on Monday and Tuesday before dissipating, according to ABS-CBN's resident meteorologist Ariel Rojas.

Another LPA may form east of Southern Luzon or Eastern Visayas by Tuesday, but it may also dissipate by Wednesday or Thursday.

These weather systems may bring scattered rains over MIMAROPA on Monday and affect parts of Bicol and Eastern Visayas on Wednesday or Thursday.

Meanwhile, the rest of the country will experience humid conditions and afternoon or evening thunderstorms especially Northern and Central Luzon, CALABARZON, Panay, Negros, and Mindanao due to the warm and humid Easterlies and a frontal System (convergence of warm and cool air masses) that may form by weekend.

Metro Manila will experience mostly overcast with scattered afternoon and evening thunderstorms especially from Monday through Thursday. Sunny spells are possible in the morning.

## **BUSINESS MIRROR**

### **Marine scientist: PHL development structures should be 7 meters higher than current sea level**

By: Geraldine Bulaon-Ducusin,

In climate change adaptation, there's a need to think about the reality of the sea level rise, said Dr. Laura T. David, a professor and marine expert at the University of the Philippines.

“Our streets should be way higher than the sea level. The 40-meter easement in the existing law is no longer enough. Climate change was non-existent yet when it was made. Today, with climate change, the goal should be 7 meters higher,” David explained in Filipino during the online dialogue on the “Global Climate Change: Assessing the State of Our Planet.”

The April 25 event was part of the #PilipiNAST Kapehan series being held by the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST).

David advised that the country's developments—roads, hospitals, schools— should be 7 meters higher than the current sea level because with the climate change, even with a sea level rise of 1 meter, a storm surge can potentially destroy the infrastructures. When this happens, the country will have to spend again on the materials for development.

The Presidential Decree 1067, s. 1976, also known as “The Water Code of the Philippines,” states in Article 51 that the banks of rivers and streams and the shores of the seas and lakes throughout their entire length and within a zone of 3 meters in urban areas, 20 meters in agricultural areas and 40 meters in forest areas, along their margins, are subject to the easement of public use in the interest of recreation, navigation, floatage, fishing and salvage. No person shall be allowed to stay in this zone longer than what is necessary for recreation, navigation, floatage, fishing or salvage or to build structures of any kind.”

Currently, what's being followed is still the 40-meter easement, and that's the horizontal distance, instead of a height distance.

David said that it would be a big help if the legislators will craft a policy, at least on the essential structures for transportation like roads, airports, hospitals, evacuation centers, and schools which are also being used as evacuation centers. These structures should be placed higher than 7 meters.

To illustrate what's going on in the environment with the climate change, Academician Rodel D. Lasco, an environment expert, explained it this way partly in Filipino: "Let us think of it like a blanket. These gases, such as the carbon dioxide [CO<sub>2</sub>], methane [CH<sub>4</sub>], and nitrous oxide [N<sub>2</sub>O], are like a blanket, blanketing the earth to keep us warm and comfortable. So they are very important. However, what's happening is that we are like blowing out greenhouse gases. In layman's term, we are like adding to the blanket."

"So if you are in Baguio, for example, you are comfortable with one blanket, but if you use two, you feel warm, and if you use three, you might perspire and feel uncomfortable. So that's what's happening in our planet right now. This is what is called human-induced climate change because it's beyond the natural variability," Lasco added.

The globe is fast changing and what's being experienced now is no longer the natural pace of change and it's the people who are causing this rapid changes.

Lasco emphasized the importance of the blanket because if there's no blanket as protection, the temperature may be negative 20 degrees Celsius and the people might feel cold as if they're on the North Pole.

But, if there's an excess in blankets, the people will feel very warm and that would also have various effects both in the natural and human ecosystem.

One of the manifestations that climate change is real is in the way the roots of coconut trees are now getting visible in the beaches, not just in the Philippines, but in other countries, as well, which was not supposed to be because they are not like mangroves with visible roots. This means that waves are going in many places, eroding the soil, and the sea level is rising.

The strength of the storm comes from the hot temperature of the sea. The greater the sea temperature, the greater chance for the storm to develop. The hotter the sea, the stronger the storm will be.

In the past, when there's a storm signal No. 5, the storm weakens as they come near the Philippines because of the cold water surrounding the area.

But now, with the hot temperature of the water close to the Philippines, the storm no longer weakens as they approach and they have become even stronger.

"It's not an increasing number of typhoons. They are getting stronger and bringing more rains. The rains that we expect within a month are poured out within a few days. That is why many low-lying areas, like agriculture and communities near the shore, even if there is no storm surge, are getting flooded," David explained.

Mangroves expert Dr. Dixon T. Gevaña suggested strengthening the mitigation efforts, in light of knowing and experiencing the patterns that comes after the extreme heat, when a number of storms lined up, like what happened in November 2024. There should be mitigation preparations, he said.

In the 1970s, there was very limited understanding on what the mangroves can do to protect the environment, so they were sacrificed back then to make way for more fishponds so there will be more food for the people and more shrimps for export to Japan.

But now, people know better how mangroves help in the environment by giving shelter to fishes and their importance in helping ease the impact of storm surge.

The current problem, however, as pointed out by David, is the damage to the mangroves as a result of roads being built near the coastal areas.

David said there's a need to really think about these things as these actions might be exposing the communities, plus the fact that investments will be wasted if they will be damaged by storm surges.

When asked on the urgency, if there's a timeline for action, the scientists agree that climate change is already an emergency and requires action now.

Based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommendation in 2022, there's a 10-year window for action and that window's fast closing now.

"I think like in everyday life, the government has to attend to many concerns. But like when a person gets sick or has an emergency, the attention is focused on one thing. The government has to realize, and all of us need to realize, that this is already a climate change emergency. It is an emergency. And we have to focus to deal with this now. Because if we do not act now, we have to deal with a bigger task in the future," David advised.

David added that she hopes this administration will come up with concrete action, at least policy-wise, to do something right for adaptation.

PilipiNAST Kapehan has been a regular monthly online dialogue among NAST, academicians and science experts and media, tackling the programs, activities, of the academy, as well as the timely issues of the country.

## DW AKADEMIE

### Climate change is both sinking, and lifting, South Africa

By: Abubakar Said Saad

As seas rise along South Africa's coastlines, a natural counterforce is at play, drought. New research reveals that parts of the country are slowly lifting out of the ocean due to water loss underground.

Rising seas threaten South Africa's coastlines, battering cities with floods and erosion. Yet in a surprising twist of climate science, the ground beneath parts of the country seems to be rising.

Researchers from Germany believe drought and resulting water loss due to global warming may be causing parts of South Africa to lift out of the ocean by two millimeters each year.

South Africa's coastal cities like Cape Town, Durban, and Port Elizabeth experience eroding shorelines, frequent flooding, and the loss of critical infrastructure and natural habitats.

The country also experienced a series of extreme weather events in 2017: massive waves, storm surges, heavy rainfall, wildfires, and hurricane-force winds that devastated the southwestern cape.

The storms resulted in at least eight deaths and damaged 135 schools. Approximately 800 homes in Cape Town were flooded.

Such incidents underscore the growing risks to South Africa's coastal regions posed by increasing weather hazards, which scientists predict will be more frequent and intense due to rising global temperatures.

David Willima, an ocean governance policy researcher in South Africa, said integrating climate and ocean concerns at the policy level was important to effectively address the rising sea level threat.

"The problem has been that South Africa hasn't successfully linked climate and ocean discussions, they're often treated as separate issues," Willima said.

Cities like Cape Town and Durban are threatened by flood, storm and erosion.

Climate change is lifting the continent up



Just as threats of rising seas grow, scientists have observed that parts of South Africa's coastal regions are gradually lifting.

Changes in land elevation have usually been attributed to deep earth processes such as the movement of hot materials beneath the crust.

However, a recent study led by Makan Karegar, a geodesist at the University of Bonn, challenges that view.

The research points to droughts as the primary driver.

"Groundwater adds weight to the land," Karegar told DW. "A lot of rain and flood put weight on the Earth's crust, surface and that weight causes [it] to go down."

During drought, as water is lost from the soil and underground reservoirs, the land becomes lighter and can rise up, similar to the way a sponge expands when it dries.

The researchers used GPS measurements, satellite data, and hydrological models to study the correlation between areas experiencing severe droughts and significant land uplift.

Jasper Knight, a geoscientist at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, who was not involved in the study, considers the research scientifically sound.

"They used high-quality data and strong modeling techniques and the ways in which they are applying it for southern Africa is of interest," Knight said.

"They suggest that climate variability is an important determinant of systematic variations in land surface elevation across the region compared to a kind of traditional idea, based upon a tectonic uplift of the land surface."

A silver lining or not?

While the phenomenon may appear to offer a natural buffer against rising sea levels, Knight cautions against drawing overly optimistic conclusions.

"Of course, you may say if the land surface is rising, then in a relative sense the sea level may be static or may be going down," Knight said.

"But of course, that may be at the expense of less water being present on the land surface. And here if I had to decide between a decreasing sea level rise at the coast versus drought in the interior, I would choose sea level as the least-worst option."

Karegar adds that while some countries artificially raise land elevations by injecting wastewater underground to reduce flooding risk, South Africa's situation is a byproduct of natural drought.

Still, he said the insights from the study could aid broader environmental management.

"These findings could help improve drought and flood monitoring, guide groundwater management, and inform more strategic water resource planning and climate adaptation efforts," he said.

## FINANCIAL TIMES

### [Neom climate adviser warns futuristic city could alter weather patterns](#)

By: Kenza Bryan

A leading climate scientist advising Saudi Arabia's mega-project Neom has warned that plans for its new futuristic city could alter weather patterns and the path of wind and sand storms, in yet another problem for Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's flagship scheme.

Neom is expected to be delayed or scaled back, as part of a review under an acting chief executive who recently took over the \$500bn project, as Saudi Arabia grapples with lower oil prices, lower foreign investment and the huge scope of the development, the Financial Times has reported.

Now Donald Wuebbles, an expert in atmospheric physics and chemistry who serves as a paid adviser to Neom, has told the FT he has repeatedly raised the question of how the project's linear city, ski fields and islands could change their local environments and weather systems.

He said the sustainability advisory committee was informed at a recent meeting that the issue had been escalated to a "higher priority" since the abrupt departure of the previous chief executive of Neom, Nadhmi al-Nasr. The committee reported to al-Nasr, a person close to Neom said.

"Part of my concern was, what impact is The Line and those [projects] going to have on the local environment...you start affecting the local weather and climate," said Wuebbles, a University of Illinois professor of atmospheric science and among the lead authors of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports.

The damaging effects could include changes to rain patterns, amplification of wind and storms in the desert area, which have "not been studied enough," he said.

The vast construction project includes plans for a skyscraper city of narrow buildings up to 500 metres high, encased in a mirrored glass facade initially designed to run along 170km.

The shape of cities and their typically higher temperatures can alter the surrounding air currents and cloud formations, research has shown. Academics from institutions including Princeton observed in a paper last year that summer storms typically intensify over urban areas.

A second member of the Neom advisory committee who asked not to be named confirmed some of the concerns Wuebbles raised.

Other issues raised included emissions from Neom's use of cement and a slow transition away from combustion engine construction vehicles and machinery, Wuebbles said. Neom had commissioned academics to examine his concerns, but their findings had not been shared with him, he said.

Neom said it was a responsible development company and sustainability remained a core priority. Its goal was to lower its projects' environmental impact "compared to traditional construction projects", including in the use of building materials.

Last year Neom's chief environment officer Richard Bush took members of the advisory committee on a helicopter tour over Neom's planned ski resort and area where The Line is being developed, landing on a planned golf course on an island where it visited half-built villas. Bush would be leaving Neom at the end of May, a person familiar with the matter said.

Another member of the advisory group, known as the environmental steering committee for Neom, is Usha Rao-Monari, a non-executive director of Australian mining group Fortescue who has also been a senior adviser to the Blackstone Infrastructure Group. A person close to her declined to comment

The committee's future is being reconsidered, as part of the broader review of the project by acting chief executive Aiman al-Mudaifer, Wuebbles said, adding "the whole operation has been slowed down by six to 12 months".

Wuebbles said he was impressed with Neom's use of technology, however, and hoped it could one day become a model for sustainable cities of the future. "They're trying to do something like a moonshot: nothing like this has been done before, and there's so much that could be learned."

## THE GUARDIAN

### [Arctic plant study reveals an 'early warning sign' of climate change upheaval](#)

Scientists studying Arctic plants say the ecosystems that host life in some of the most inhospitable reaches of the planet are changing in unexpected ways in an “early warning sign” for a region upended by climate change.

In four decades, 54 researchers tracked more than 2,000 plant communities across 45 sites from the Canadian high Arctic to Alaska and Scandinavia. They discovered dramatic shifts in temperatures and growing seasons produced no clear winners or losers. Some regions witnessed large increases in shrubs and grasses and declines in flowering plants – which struggle to grow under the shade created by taller plants.

Those findings, published in *Nature*, fill key knowledge gaps for teams on the frontlines of a changing climate.

“Climate change is so widespread across the whole of the Arctic and we’re seeing this magnitude of warming at four times the rate than the rest of the planet. We expected to see very concrete trends and trajectories. Because in other biomes, we are,” said lead author Mariana García Criado, a postdoctoral researcher in tundra biodiversity at the University of Edinburgh. “But the Arctic is a special and often unexpected place.”

The researchers found greater species richness at lower latitudes and warmer sites, while species and the areas with the greatest growth – and loss – were in areas with the largest temperature increase.

In Canada’s western Arctic, for example, Isla Myers-Smith and her “Team Shrub” group of researchers have documented ecosystems rapidly shifting, where the tundra is “greening” at an incredible rate as shrubs such as willow push north and grow taller.

Shrubs are highly competitive: they grow taller and shade out other plants, extracting more resources in the process. As they take over, they push out the cottongrass, mosses and lichens that take hundreds – sometimes thousands – of years to grow. Higher temperatures and lengthened growing seasons mean this trend is unlikely to abate, and more broadly across the Arctic, the number and diversity of plants will keep growing.

“Often when we think about climate change impacts on the planet we think about biodiversity loss, but in the temperature-limited tundra, climate change is multi-faceted,” she said in a news release.

While an increase in biodiversity might seem like a beneficial shift for the region, experts caution those changes come with a steep cost.

“These ecosystems are so fragile and any changes to the species composition can really have strong effects on everything else. Changes start with plants, and if plants move, everything follows, said García Criado, adding that herds of caribou were among the most likely casualties, as bare spots on the tundra, favoured by the lichen that they like to eat, are overtaken by shrubs.

“This has cascading effects for Arctic animals that depend on these plants, also for food security for all the people that live in the Arctic, for local and Indigenous communities, but also for the more ecosystem function,.”

Greg Henry, a geography professor at the University of British Columbia who helped establish the study’s data collection system, said the research involved thousands of hours of fieldwork in remote locations, with teams “enduring extreme weather, clouds of biting insects and even the occasional polar bear encounter”.

But researchers didn’t have enough data to include mosses and lichens in the study. These cryptogams are critical for ecosystem function, particularly in the Arctic where there is a rich diversity in species.

García Criado said the results underscore the deep uncertainty in understanding the effects climate change has on life – and the way in which the Arctic often serves as a harbinger of changes to come.

“All these changes that we’re observing, they’re not limited to the Arctic. We may see them in the Arctic, but the consequences spread far beyond the confines of the region,” she said. “We want to understand these changes. And then we need to prepare for these changes. Because it’s not a question of if they might happen – it is a question of when.”

## THE MANILA TIMES

### [\[Opinion\] Climate change vis-à-vis health of nature](#)

By: Amado Tolentino Jr.

The upside of the coronavirus pandemic is a greater awareness of biodiversity or species of plants and animal conservation. Nearly all the new infectious diseases that scientists know about originate in animals and so will the emergence of diseases in the years to come. HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) began in chimpanzees; SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) in bats; and mpox, formerly "monkeypox," influenza in aquatic birds. At some point, the animal pathogens jump the species barrier to humans which experts call a spillover. Spillovers have always occurred, but the rapid environmental change wrecked by humans in recent years has accelerated the spread.

Scientists believe bats are most likely the source of the coronavirus with pangolins also being eyed as transmitters of the pathogens. While China cracked down on wildlife trade after the SARS epidemic in 2003, the emergence of Covid-19 clearly showed a lot needs to be done. Apart from killer diseases traced to animals, the world continues to confront the many problems that are endangering both plants and wildlife.

Worse is the compelling factual evidence of rapid climate change: global temperatures are rising, polar ice sheets are shrinking, glaciers are melting, etc. As climate scientists have been predicting for decades, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and causing irreversible damage, affecting nature and human societies, especially when shifts in seasonal patterns disrupt agriculture.

#### Biodiversity loss and its impact on humanity

Biodiversity loss is the dying out, or the extermination of species because of environmental forces like global climate change as mentioned above, natural disaster and overexploitation of species for human use. Mankind is reportedly using 25 percent more natural resources than the planet can sustain.

Concomitant with biodiversity loss is habitat destruction. As more and more people need space, damaging human activities continue to encroach on natural environments, thereby destroying the habitats of countless species. As the population increases, cities and industrial areas are growing, fragmenting the remaining habitat and leaving "isolated islands" of natural populations of plants and animals which are too small to survive.

Research shows that only one quarter of land areas and one-third of oceans remain undamaged by human activity. Mankind is also laying heavy pressure on populations of

wild species both by meat-hunting and large-scale industrial fishing. Increased hunting has also reduced the number of waterbirds and rare marine species (dugong, dolphins and sea turtles). Wildlife poaching and trafficking as well as intensive harvesting of aquatic resources including aquatic vegetation also present threats to many species. Another is agriculture intensification to meet the needs of the overgrown population for food.

Moreover, the planet is on the verge of a climate catastrophe due to endless production of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide and methane). In that regard, the impact of climate change on human health is varied. Sunburn of our lungs happens when we inhale smog which causes chest pain, coughing and difficulties in breathing. It triggers asthma attacks, exacerbating conditions of bronchitis and emphysema. Extreme high temperatures contribute directly to death from cardiovascular and respiratory disease.

Climate change has caused the extension of mosquito season beyond the summer months. That means more spread of malaria, dengue fever and other diseases.

Depletion of the ozone layer has a harmful effect on human health, too. This typically results in higher ultraviolet rays from the sun reaching us on Earth. Research confirms that higher levels of UV rays cause non-melanoma skin cancer which plays a major role in malignant melanoma development.

It is now commonly known that floods contaminate freshwater supplies, heighten the risk of waterborne diseases like leptospirosis and create breeding grounds for disease-carrying insects which led to the identified "mpox." A lack of safe drinking water can compromise hygiene and increase the risk of diarrheal disease.

### The way to fight back

With biodiversity in our ecosystem, the result is a greener environment. In addition, a healthy ecosystem can help reduce the risk of all diseases and the way people respond to them. Environmental changes brought about by climate are regulated because of biodiversity.

Culture, too, is enriched through biodiversity as it involves the existence of numerous species and people in one environment. In short, the ecosystem becomes the hallmark of diversity because it helps sustain the lives of diverse living things.

We should, therefore, work toward maintaining biodiversity and find solutions to prevent its decline resulting in loss. Governments must strive hard in formulating stricter laws and create awareness among people on environmental issues and its consequences. It must demonstrate to people that it is the responsibility of everyone to save our planet



Earth by maintaining a rich biodiversity. Otherwise, humans will need to find another planet to live in.

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Best of all, do no harm. Instead of being contributors to the earth's destruction, we should all genuinely fulfill our duties of being the "stewards of nature" through collective action with patience and forbearance.

Furthermore, corollary to the stewardship concept is the recognition of the right to a healthy environment as a human right which will make it a "hard law" binding on all states.

In conclusion, Covid-19 and nearly all new infectious diseases have their roots in habitat loss and illegal wildlife trade. To quote from The Manila Times editorial, "The new human right can help ensure that the global green recovery the world needs to rebuild society following the pandemic takes both biodiversity and the climate emergencies into account."

## THE MANILA TIMES

### [Philippines seeks bigger role in global fund for climate change](#)

By: Louise Maureen Simeon

The Philippines is seeking a bigger role in a global fund mechanism that helps developing economies address the impacts of climate change.

In a statement, the Department of Finance (DOF) said the Philippines aims to further increase the country's access to the Adaptation Fund following its appointment to the AF Board.

As such, the DOF is advancing its application to be a national implementing entity of the fund.

Being an implementing entity will allow the country to receive direct financial transfers to carry out adaptation projects and programs.

In order to become accredited, entities are required to meet the fiduciary standards and to commit to comply with the environmental and social policy and the gender policy adopted by the Board.

For now, the Philippines has joined the AF Board with Finance Undersecretary Maria Luwalhati Dorotan-Tiuseco as representative of the Non Annex I Parties, which are mostly developing economies.

The Philippines was also able to secure its first AF-financed project worth \$10 million (P555.95 million) on harnessing the water-energy-food nexus to address and adapt to climate change impacts in Tawi-Tawi.

To be implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Mindanao Development Authority, the project includes deploying resilient water supply systems integrated with existing renewable energy infrastructure in Tawi-Tawi.

It also involves supplying local capacity building for sustainable water management, building local communities' resilience and strengthening their livelihoods and providing knowledge management.

Meanwhile, the AF Board will scale up the mobilization of financing for adaptation projects.

This includes doubling the country spending cap to \$40 million, increasing the single-country program size to \$25 million and raising the regional program size to \$30 million.

The resource mobilization goal of the fund was also set at \$300 million for 2025, with a focus on implementing a robust and innovative strategy to meet its target.

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### THE MANILA TIMES

#### [Ccc opens scholarship program for climate leaders](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC), in collaboration with the Office of Sen. Loren Legarda and the Asian Institute of Management (AIM), has launched the second iteration of the Sustainable Leadership Learning for Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction (SLL-CDRR) scholarship program to empower a new batch of leaders in disaster resilience and data science.

The SLL-CDRR scholarship provides full financial support, including tuition and immersion program fees, for government professionals to pursue either the AIM's Executive Master in Disaster Risk and Crisis Management (EMDRCM), or the Master of Science in Data Science (MSDS).

The EMDRCM is an 18-month program designed to enhance expertise in disaster resilience, crisis response and sustainable development. The 15-month MSDS program combines data analytics with applications for climate and disaster risk reduction. Both programs equip scholars with the skills to drive innovative, data-informed solutions and strategic leadership in their respective fields.

"Investing in leaders who can bridge policy, technology and community action is critical for our climate-resilient future," said Senator Legarda. "This program ensures our workforce is equipped to tackle complex challenges with innovation and inclusivity."

The scholarship encourages applicants from national and local government agencies engaged in climate action, disaster risk reduction or data management. Eligible candidates are Filipino citizens who are not more than 55 years old, hold a bachelor's degree and have at least five years of professional experience, including two years focused on climate or disaster-related work and two years in supervisory or managerial roles.

Applicants must hold a position equivalent to Salary Grade 18 or higher. To promote gender equity, at least 50 percent of scholarship slots will be allocated for women.

CCC Vice Chairman and Executive Director Robert Borje described the program as "a cornerstone of our strategy to build a resilient, future-ready workforce. By empowering leaders with cutting-edge knowledge in disaster management and data science, we are strengthening our nation's capacity to navigate the complexities of climate change."

Interested applicants may access full program details and submission guidelines on the CCC social media pages and website. For inquiries, contact the CCC via [sll.cdrr@climate.gov.ph](mailto:sll.cdrr@climate.gov.ph) or by phone (+632) 8420-5515.

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