



NEWS ROUNDUP

07 MAY 2026 | 08:00 am

- India shifts climate priorities as global uncertainty grows
- A call for anticipatory approach to climate disaster response
- APA project advances climate-resilient farming in Cordillera
- ASEAN, DENR highlight importance of knowledge exchange, collaboration to ramp up climate change efforts
- [Opinion] The World Is About to Get a Preview of Life in 2035
- UN supports Philippines to strengthen energy security and accelerate energy transition
- WMO: Invest in Resilience as Climate Risks Intensify

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- CCC pushes stronger tracking of climate funds across ASEAN

ECO BUSINESS

[India shifts climate priorities as global uncertainty grows](#)

By: Kundan Pandey

India has withdrawn its bid to host the UN climate conference, COP33 scheduled for 2028, a move that reflects shifting priorities in global climate negotiations and geopolitics.

MANILA STANDARD

[A call for anticipatory approach to climate disaster response](#)

By: Angelica Villanueva

Extreme heat, stronger storms, and rising seas are no longer distant warnings but daily conditions reshaping how communities prepare for disasters.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[APA project advances climate-resilient farming in Cordillera](#)

By: Debbie E. Gasingan

The Department of Agriculture – Cordillera (DA-CAR) has commenced the full-scale implementation of the Adapting Philippine Agriculture to Climate Change (APA) Project.

[ASEAN, DENR highlight importance of knowledge exchange, collaboration to ramp up climate change efforts](#)

By: Christopher Hedreyda

Embodying the spirit of collaboration and partnership in ASEAN, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have committed to discussing and identifying solutions to address the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss.

THE NEWS YORK TIMES

[\[Opinion\] The World Is About to Get a Preview of Life in 2035](#)

By:David Wallace-Wells

A climate monster is growing right now in the Pacific Ocean, perhaps the most fearsome El Niño since before scientists even began modeling them. They now know the pattern quite well: A marine heat-wave in the Pacific Ocean scrambles global weather and produces in some places more intense droughts and in others more intense rainfall and flooding; disruptions to hurricane patterns and monsoon seasons, which can cause widespread crop failures; and much more punishing heat.

UNITED NATIONS PHILIPPINES

[UN supports Philippines to strengthen energy security and accelerate energy transition](#)

By: Maria Jorica Pamintuan

As global energy markets remain volatile amid geopolitical tensions, climate change and economic uncertainty, the United Nations system is supporting the Philippines to strengthen its energy security while accelerating a just and sustainable energy transition, according to a new analysis published by the UN in the Philippines.

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

[WMO: Invest in Resilience as Climate Risks Intensify](#)

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has officially launched a new financing mechanism to safeguard the critical weather forecasting backbone, which underpins trillions of dollars in economic value and supports global stability.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PALAWAN NEWS

[CCC pushes stronger tracking of climate funds across ASEAN](#)

By: Emman Magpusao

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has called for stronger and more transparent systems to track climate-related spending across Southeast Asia, emphasizing the need to ensure public funds are used effectively for climate action.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ECO BUSINESS

[India shifts climate priorities as global uncertainty grows](#)

By: Kundan Pandey

India has withdrawn its bid to host the UN climate conference, COP33 scheduled for 2028, a move that reflects shifting priorities in global climate negotiations and geopolitics.

Rajat Agrawal, Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), informed the Asia-Pacific group of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) about India's decision on April 2. A ministry spokesperson, Virat Majboor, confirmed to Mongabay-India that the decision had been communicated to the UNFCCC secretariat, but said no further information was available.

At COP28 in Dubai in 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced India's interest in hosting the climate conference scheduled in 2028. India had earlier hosted COP8 in New Delhi in 2002.

The COP presidency and the responsibility for hosting the annual climate conference rotate among the five United Nations regional groups — the African Group, Asia-Pacific Group, Eastern European Group, Latin American and Caribbean Group, and Western European and Others Group.

After Brazil hosts COP30 in 2025, Australia and Türkiye will jointly host COP31, followed by Ethiopia hosting COP32 for the African Group. This would be followed by the Asia-Pacific Group's turn to host COP33, for which India had put forward its bid.

The process of selecting a host remains "opaque" and takes place within regional groups, Joanna Depledge, a research fellow at the Centre for Environment, Energy and Natural Resource Governance (CEENRG) at the University of Cambridge, said. India's bid was still under consideration within the Asia-Pacific Group and had not been finalised.

"It is not a good sign," Depledge said, referring to the withdrawal. She pointed to Brazil's withdrawal from hosting COP25 after the election of President Jair Bolsonaro, widely interpreted as a signal of reduced interest in climate action, which did follow.

In India's case, however, the move is likely to be seen differently, she said, linking it to the country's dissatisfaction with developments at COP29 in Azerbaijan, particularly over the decision on a new climate finance goal.

Ravi Shankar Prasad, former chief negotiator for climate change (2013-2021) and distinguished fellow at CEEW, said the Prime Minister had earlier indicated India's interest in hosting the climate negotiations, and added that several geopolitical changes have since emerged,

including challenges around climate finance, energy security, and critical minerals. CEEW is a New Delhi-based think tank.

Evolving reality

The global climate landscape has undergone significant shifts in the two and a half years since India announced that it would host COP33. At the time of the announcement, in December 2023, the United States remained part of the Paris Agreement.

By November 2024, it had become clear that Donald Trump was likely to return to power in the United States. He has indicated plans to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, the first global treaty to set specific climate goals, including limiting temperature rise to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to keep it to 1.5°C. In January 2025, he issued an executive order in this regard.

At the same time (November 2024), countries were negotiating a new climate finance goal at COP29 in Baku. After long and tough negotiations, developed countries agreed to mobilise US\$300 billion annually by 2035 under the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG). The outcome was seen as inadequate by many developing countries, with India among those raising strong objections.

Earlier, the Prime Minister, while announcing India's interest in hosting COP33, had also emphasised the need to scale up climate finance commitments from billions to several trillions, which shows India has realised the importance of climate finance in setting up ambitious climate goals.

R. R. Rashmi, India's former principal negotiator under the UN climate process at several COPs and a distinguished fellow at TERI, said that global climate finance has remained inadequate, and countries have to factor this in and work within these constraints. TERI is a New Delhi-based think tank.

Regarding the changing reality, he said the focus has largely been on mitigation, but as climate impacts become more visible, attention is shifting towards resilience. He said public budgets are increasingly being directed towards supporting vulnerable communities, while mitigation is expected to be driven by private capital.

Another major development has been rising concerns over energy security. The Iran-Israel conflict is the latest geopolitical episode to strain global energy supply, highlighting vulnerabilities in supply chains. Earlier, the Russia-Ukraine war and restrictions on critical mineral exports by China had already exposed these risks, particularly for large energy consumers such as India.

These developments are also reflected in India's domestic policy discourse. The latest Economic Survey, which was tabled in the Parliament in January, questioned the prevailing narrative by saying, "...deterministic or catastrophic policy narratives often compresses nuance

and downplays uncertainty.” It argued that “development is, in itself, a form of adaptation,” adding that growth and resilience should be seen as complementary to climate action.

Similar views are emerging globally. Writing ahead of COP30, US-based billionaire and philanthropist Bill Gates noted that excessive focus on near-term emissions targets could divert attention from practical solutions to improve resilience in a warming world.

Against this backdrop, Karthik Nachiappan, a Research Fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore, linked India’s withdrawal from hosting the COP to a broader shift. He said India’s climate diplomacy is moving from symbolic leadership, such as hosting summits, towards a more instrumental leadership focused on finance, technology, and industrial policy. This includes prioritising forums such as the G20, multilateral development bank reforms, and partnerships across the Global South, making COP hosting less central.

Increasing expectations on ambition

The year 2028, when COP33 will take place, is significant because it coincides with the second Global Stocktake (GST), a process under Article 14 of the Paris Agreement that assesses collective progress towards its long-term goals. The first GST was concluded in 2023 at COP28 in Dubai.

The GST assesses emissions trends, policies, finance, and adaptation efforts, and evaluates whether current actions are sufficient to meet the Paris Agreement’s temperature goals of limiting warming to below 2°C and pursuing efforts to keep it to 1.5°C. Current assessments, including the latest emissions gap report by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), show that global efforts remain insufficient.

The outcome of the 2028 GST is expected to trigger calls for more ambitious climate action, placing greater expectations on the COP presidency to push mitigation efforts. This comes even as India has emphasised adaptation and resilience in its domestic policy discourse, including in the Economic Survey.

The call for increasing ambition is getting visible even now at other forums. It is the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, as its seventh assessment report is expected towards the end of this decade. However, there is a push by developed countries, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), and several Least Developed Countries (LDCs), to advance these reports to embed their findings in GST. Countries, including India, have expressed their concerns about compressing timelines and early release of these reports.

Amid this, the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement, given its share of around 12 per cent in global emissions, creates a gap difficult for others to fill, increasing pressure on the host country to address the widening emissions gap.

Experts say these dynamics make it difficult for developing countries to bridge the emissions gap. R. R. Rashmi said developed countries were expected to lead mitigation efforts, but are not acting in line with their capacities, shifting the burden onto developing countries.

He added that while global efforts to address climate change have been inadequate, the impacts cannot be ignored. The resulting pressure on developing countries, already dealing with climate impacts, underscores the importance of climate justice.

Prasad said, “Developed countries were expected to play a leading role in mitigation, but they are not acting in line with their responsibilities and capacities. This points to a harsh reality: the world is likely to overshoot its warming targets. The challenge now is how to respond to that, and developing countries are already grappling with this question.”

Increasing scrutiny of the COP host/presidency

In recent COPs, host countries’ domestic energy policies, especially those related to fossil fuels, have come under scrutiny. From the United Arab Emirates’ oil expansion during COP28 to Azerbaijan’s gas strategy ahead of COP29 and the United Kingdom’s North Sea projects during COP26, questions have been raised about the alignment between climate leadership and fossil fuel policies.

India faces a similar dilemma. Coal remains important to its energy needs, even as global climate efforts increasingly focus on phasing down fossil fuels. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced India’s interest in hosting the COP, he also emphasised the need for technology transfer and strengthening clean energy supply chains.

However, it remains uncertain how much traction such demands from developing countries will receive, even as coal continues to come under scrutiny in climate negotiations.

While India’s per capita emissions remain low, its overall share of around 7-8 per cent makes it one of the world’s largest emitters, placing its climate and energy policies under increasing global scrutiny.

Nachiappan said hosting a COP brings visibility but also pressure to raise climate ambition and defend domestic choices. He said withdrawing from the bid allows India to avoid that exposure and preserve flexibility. He added that the move reflects a broader shift in climate politics, away from large multilateral moments towards negotiations and discussion on finance, technology, and sectoral cooperation.

Joanna Depledge said the prospect of intense scrutiny could deter potential hosts. However, she added that COPs will remain highly relevant, even as climate action becomes more dispersed across smaller initiatives and groupings.

MANILA STANDARD

[A call for anticipatory approach to climate disaster response](#)

By: Angelica Villanueva

Extreme heat, stronger storms, and rising seas are no longer distant warnings but daily conditions reshaping how communities prepare for disasters.

At the Asian Conference on Climate Change and Disaster Resilience 2026 at the Asian Institute of Management, officials and experts called for a shift away from disaster response and toward early preparation before impacts occur.

Delivering the keynote address, Senator Loren Legarda framed the issue in practical terms. Disasters, she said, have long been met with a familiar cycle—impact, relief, rebuilding—only for communities to face the same risks again.

“We rebuild. But too often, we rebuild into the same risks. This is the status quo. It reflects not only a failure of policy and imagination but a deeper structural misalignment between how risk unfolds in real time and how finance is released in response,” said Legarda.

That cycle is not just a policy gap, but something felt in daily routines: when families delay evacuation because assistance comes late, when local governments wait for formal declarations before acting, or when recovery funds arrive after livelihoods have already been disrupted.

Across sessions, officials and experts described a region facing growing pressure. Asia and the Pacific account for a large share of global disaster impacts, with climate shocks now happening alongside food insecurity, unstable fuel prices, and weak supply chains.

Speakers pointed to scenarios already affecting households—from prolonged drought tied to El Niño to the possibility of increased rice imports as local production falters.

The discussions repeatedly returned to a concept gaining traction in both policy and community planning: anticipatory climate finance. Instead of releasing funds after damage is assessed, the approach pushes resources out earlier—based on forecasts, risk thresholds, and early warning systems.

For Legarda, this shift is about everyday survival as much as it is about government policy. She proposed systems that would let local governments access funds before disasters happen, so they can strengthen infrastructure, store food supplies, or put early warning tools in place.

“Therefore, this is my challenge to you, and my promise to our people: We must legislate for anticipation,” she said, calling for reforms that would allow disaster funds to be released based on forecasts, not just declarations.

She added that the same principle should apply at the household level, with support reaching families early enough to act.

“Fiscal policy is meaningless if it does not reach the mother packing her children into a tricycle to flee a flooding home,” the senator continued.

Government officials pushed for a shift in how preparedness is understood, arguing it cannot stop at warehouses filled with relief goods. Planning has to reflect who is most at risk—women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and communities in geographically isolated areas—and start well before evacuation centers begin to fill.

The discussion also went beyond policy and focused on everyday realities. Climate change is no longer seen as a distant environmental issue, but as something already affecting how people find food, get around cities, and make a living. Systems built on past weather patterns are no longer reliable, as heat indices reach record levels and rainfall becomes more unpredictable.

Legarda underscored how this disconnect plays out on the ground, saying the country has “become experts in counting the dead and repairing the broken,” while failing to act early enough to prevent losses.

By the close of the conference, the takeaway was straightforward: the gap is not only about resources, but about when they are used. Acting earlier, whether through government policy or household decisions, can spell the difference between disruption and stability.

As Legarda put it, preparedness is measured not by what is rebuilt after a disaster, but by what is prevented from being lost.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[APA project advances climate-resilient farming in Cordillera](#)

By: Debbie E. Gasingan

The Department of Agriculture – Cordillera (DA-CAR) has commenced the full-scale implementation of the Adapting Philippine Agriculture to Climate Change (APA) Project.

The APA project is a seven-year project, jointly implemented by DA, Department of Science and Technology – Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (DOST-PAGASA), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Green Climate Fund funded the project implementation from 2024 to 2030 with 23.6 million US dollars.

APA Project Field Technical Assistant Vladymir Mabli said the project aims to support countries highly affected by climate change. This includes 1000 vulnerable municipalities in the Cordillera and regions 2, 5, 10, and 12.

“Daytoy ket nai-base iti result ti FAO nga climate resilient vulnerable areas. Ti pinaka-aim talaga ni APA ket to support dagitoy affected areas tayo, dagitoy small holder farmers tayo tapnu ag-adopt da kadagitoy climate-resilient agriculture technologies while supporting met laeng dagitoy indigenous practices ditoy Cordillera,” Mabli said.

[This is based on the result of FAO climate resilient vulnerable areas. The aim of the APA is to support the affected areas, the small holder farmers so that they can adopt to climate resilient-agriculture technologies while supporting the indigenous practices in the Cordillera.]

The beneficiaries in CAR include Flora, Kabugao, Pudtol, and Santa Marcela in Apayao; Aguinardo, Hingyon, Kiangan, Mayoyao, Tinoc, and Hungduan in Ifugao; and Lubuagan, Rizal, Tanudan, Pasil, and Pinukpuk in Kalinga.

Mabli said that this year, they are targeting 60 farmers’ cooperatives and associations (FCAs) in the said areas. They will be expanding the project to other FCA beneficiaries in the identified areas in the succeeding years.

The project is composed of three components namely, climate information services (CIS), climate-resilient agriculture (CRA) adoption through enterprise development, and mainstreaming of the climate-resilient agriculture.

Regional Operations Assistant Jay Chattom said that they have already conducted a Free Prior and Informed Consent for the rollout of key activities in Hungduan, Ifugao. The priority commodity identified in the area is heirloom rice.

“Ti goal tayo ditoy, mai-share tayo dagiyay climate-resilient agriculture technologies kadagitoy farmers tayo, or mai-demonstrate tayo tapnu isu met ti i-adopt da. Nu successful, usaren da tapnu maka-establish da iti enterprise wenno agri-business,” Chattom said.

[Our goal is to share climate-resilient agriculture technologies to our farmers, or to demonstrate it so that they will adopt it. If successful, they will use to establish their enterprise or agri-business.]

He said that they will also be introducing to the FCAs CRA technologies including soil conservation, water management practices, and greenhouses, among others.

The priority commodities for the project include rice, corn, and vegetables.

Under the project, a regional CIS center and three provincial CIS centers will also be established.

Jerome Manuel, Regional CIS Specialist, said that the climate information services will provide weather-related data and forecasts that are essential for farmers, helping them decide when to plant or delay planting. “Daytoy dagiti aglalaon iti datos, impormasyon wenno prediction wenno forecast iti panawen ken klima manipud iti DOST PAGASA. In that forecast, adda met ti kunkuna tayo nga impact outlook, no sadino dagiti maapektaran na base kadagiyay forecast. Adda recommendations magapu iti DA wenno na-craft together with LGUs and DA,” he said.

[This contains the data, information or prediction or weather and climate forecast of DOST PAGASA. In that forecast, there’s what we call impact outlook where those affected are based on the forecast. There are recommendations from DA or we craft together with LGUs and DA.]

Manuel added that the information, which will be translated in local dialect, will serve as an early warning and advisory especially for the farmers.

[ASEAN, DENR highlight importance of knowledge exchange, collaboration to ramp up climate change efforts](#)

By: Christopher Hedreyda

Embodying the spirit of collaboration and partnership in ASEAN, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have committed to discussing and identifying solutions to address the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Guided by the theme of the Philippine ASEAN Chairship, “Navigating our Future, Together,” ACB said it aims to foster collective action and cooperation among ASEAN member states, while supporting commitments to global and regional frameworks.

Speaking at the ASEAN Climate Week on April 27, ACB Executive Director Jerome Montemayor said the lives of 680 million people in the ASEAN region who depend on natural wealth and biodiversity are at risk due to the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss.

“Despite also being threatened, healthy and resilient ecosystems are our best line of defense, providing layers of protection from the harmful impacts of disasters and climate change. They safeguard communities, store carbon, and anchor our economic and social well-being,” Montemayor said.

As part of climate change mitigation efforts, ACB said the ASEAN Biodiversity Plan is one of the frameworks institutionalized to better understand nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based adaptation, helping cushion and address climate change impacts across ASEAN Member States.

One of the collaborative, people- and science-based programs highlighted by ACB is the Enhancing Conservation and Restoration of Wetlands and Peatlands in ASEAN as Effective Sinks and Reservoirs of Greenhouse Gases (EnCORE Wetlands) project. This initiative is a partnership with the UK Mission to ASEAN through the ASEAN-UK Green Transition Fund and is implemented with the Global Environment Centre.

“The project aims to create science-based and practical methods to protect carbon-rich ecosystems, such as wetlands and peatlands, and to protect biodiversity in the region. By protecting these often overlooked ecosystems, we are not only mitigating climate change and creating climate-resilient communities—we are also supporting sustainable livelihoods,” Montemayor explained in his statement.

DENR Secretary Juan Miguel Cuna emphasized the importance of coordination among ASEAN member states in implementing regional targets and programs.

“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,” he said.

Cuna added that ASEAN’s ongoing efforts to assess the preparedness of member states and identify gaps in responding to climate impacts are crucial in determining their readiness and specific needs.

“Climate action must protect the natural systems that sustain our communities. By restoring mangroves and watersheds, enforcing environmental safeguards, and investing in nature-positive livelihoods, we not only reduce disaster risk and biodiversity loss, but we also create resilient economies and secure the futures of our coastal and upland communities,” the environment secretary said.

Under the Philippines’ ASEAN Chairship, DENR stands ready to translate ASEAN commitments into on-the-ground protection and opportunities for the Filipino people. The department also said it will accelerate efforts to meet ecosystem restoration targets, expand community-based natural resource management, strengthen environmental compliance and monitoring, and mobilize nature-positive finance tools.

Cuna declared: “As lead partner, DENR is committed to a people-centered approach, integrating adaptation and resilience into national planning, prioritizing ecosystem-based solutions, addressing loss and damage, and protecting communities affected by climate-induced mobility,”

According to a study by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Southeast Asia is among the most vulnerable regions in the world to the impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels, more frequent and extreme weather events, and shifting rainfall patterns that threaten food security, economies, infrastructure, and livelihoods.

THE NEWS YORK TIMES

[\[Opinion\] The World Is About to Get a Preview of Life in 2035](#)

By:David Wallace-Wells

A climate monster is growing right now in the Pacific Ocean, perhaps the most fearsome El Niño since before scientists even began modeling them. They now know the pattern quite well: A marine heat-wave in the Pacific Ocean scrambles global weather and produces in some places more intense droughts and in others more intense rainfall and flooding; disruptions to hurricane patterns and monsoon seasons, which can cause widespread crop failures; and much more punishing heat.

The El Niño building right now, and expected to crest around the end of next year, arrives on top of all our global warming. And it appears stupendously intense — almost certainly stronger than the “Super” El Niño of 2015-16, and perhaps the most intense since the epochal El Niño of 1877. The global consequences of that climatic event were so devastating that the environmental historian Mike Davis called them “Late Victorian Holocausts.”

The subtitle of Davis’s 2001 book is “El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World,” but his argument is not that climatic disasters were singularly responsible for mass suffering, even in the 19th century. Across decades of work of freelance scholarship and left-wing activism, Davis frequently struck notes of environmental alarm, but remained far too committed a radical to fall victim to ecological determinism. Instead, he argued, environmental disaster punishes those who have been made most vulnerable, with 19th-century El Niños a test for global political economy as much as a parable of ecological frailty. Almost certainly, the upcoming El Niño will be the same for us. Even a monster El Niño isn’t going to produce nearly as much human suffering as the one of 150 years ago. But we are going to learn an awful lot about how much climate disruption we can manage at the moment — and, presumably, how much we cannot.

Punishing El Niños didn’t arise for the first time in the late 19th century. The basic rhythm had been known to Peruvian fishermen for many hundreds of years by that point, and in more recent years historians have connected the dots with the collapse of ancient Egyptian dynasties and civilizations in Peru, and perhaps with the French Revolution, which began with bread riots and coincided almost perfectly with what is sometimes called the “Great El Niño” of 1789-93.

But for sheer intensity, most scientists agree, the climatological event which began in Pacific waters in 1877 — which the coming El Niño may equal or surpass, remember — stands above the rest. To illustrate its globe-wrapping, genuinely world-historical impact, Davis tags along on the grand tour which Ulysses Grant embarked on as he exited the presidency in 1877 — first to Egypt, where thousands were dying of famine and riots were widespread; then to India, where more than five million had officially died of famine in the previous three years; and then to China, where recent drought and famine had killed between eight million and 20 million people. The numbers can be numbing, but these were not normal events, in the 19th or any other century. “It

was almost as if the Americans were inadvertently following in the footprints of a monster whose colossal trail of destruction extended from the Nile to the Yellow Sea,” Davis writes.

The monster was El Niño, and it also produced punishing drought and famine in the Philippines, Korea, Brazil, and throughout Africa, among other parts of the world. Similar years followed several times over the following decade, and in total this short series of intense El Niños resulted in tens of millions of deaths, Davis estimates — between 31.7 million and 61.3 million just in India, China and Brazil, and at least 10 million in India alone. Epidemics followed in famine-weakened populations — malaria, plague, dysentery, smallpox and cholera — and in the very same half-century, Davis writes, in which real hunger and famine were fast disappearing from Western Europe.

And the El Niño famines of the late 19th century were not only compounded by autocratic incompetence and colonialist cruelty, they also perhaps exacerbated those problems, Davis shows, enabling a last-dash European scramble to establish and extend imperial control over populations disempowered by hunger and illness in the global South. “What seemed from a metropolitan perspective the 19th century’s final blaze of imperial glory was, from an Asian or African viewpoint, only the hideous light of a giant funeral pyre.”

How much will burn in the 18 months to come? It is still too early to say with confidence, since though the models are flashing red, we are still early enough in the season that scientists tend to be cautious in their projections. But some are already calling it a “Super Duper El Niño,” and others a “Godzilla El Niño,” and underlying warming has been accelerating in recent years, disconcertingly, raising the possibility that even a brief spike will push the planet into genuinely uncharted territory temperature-wise. In fact, it’s almost certain that this El Niño will make 2027 the hottest year on record by some margin, and there is a chance, the climate scientist James Hansen has suggested, that global average temperatures would jump to 1.7 degrees above the preindustrial average next year.

Scientists tend to talk about warming thresholds in terms of long-term averages rather than single-year bursts, but a monster El Niño will give us at least a brief preview of a hotter and more chaotic world — a 2027 like we might’ve expected to see in 2035, and which not that long ago didn’t seem likely before 2050. “Prepare for bedlam,” the environmental writer Bill McKibben wrote earlier this year in anticipation.

But if the super El Niño will offer a kind of brief preview of future warming, it will also offer a test of how well prepared and adapted the world is to that future. If droughts intensify across parts of Africa, how much worse will the world’s hunger crisis — already twice as bad as 2019, according to the World Food Program — become? Will the likely wildfires in Australia do as much human damage as the Black Summer of 2019-20, which destroyed thousands of homes, killed dozens of people and forced hundreds of others into military evacuations from beaches encircled by flame? (Not to mention blanketing Sydney in such thick smoke that the ferries couldn’t navigate the harbor and fire alarms in office buildings were routinely triggered by the ambient smoke.)

In even a weak El Niño a few years back, flooding displaced a half-million people in just one Brazilian state, so what will an intense one bring? Will adaptation and acclimatization mean that extreme heat — in the United States and elsewhere — prove less deadly than in recent memory? Last month, the climate scientist Andrew Dessler calculated that global warming is responsible for about 1.7 percent of summertime deaths in his home state of Texas. According to the imperfect-but-still-illuminating EM-DAT international disaster database, between 2022 and 2024 an average of more than 59,000 people died worldwide from extreme temperatures — about 20 times as high as the previous decade’s average.

It will also offer several other tests, perhaps no less consequential. The first concerns the science of warming, given long-running debates about just how much the temperature rise is accelerating — and why. Over the last decade or so, a high-profile group of alarm-raisers led by Hansen has published a series of papers and commentary suggesting that the scientific community has significantly underestimated the rate of warming, which, they argued, has been accelerating faster than the broader community has acknowledged. And that the fact that it is accelerating so quickly is a sign, they believe, that many conventional predictive models are calibrated wrong, that we are heading for much worse warming in the decades ahead than almost anyone appreciates. Over the last few months, Hansen has proposed that this El Niño will offer an explicit test of the thesis. In the next year or two, he expects, we’ll know for sure.

Another test concerns public response and public opinion. A decade ago, it was conventional wisdom among those most focused on climate change that more extreme weather and cascading climate disasters would inevitably elevate public concern and with it, ideally, the need for collective action. Today, as unprecedented fires burn through the Southern forests downed by Hurricane Helene, a new conventional wisdom prevails — that the public has moved on from climate anxiety, burned out from the alarmism of the Greta Thunberg years and fixated now on a series of successor panics, many of them no less apocalyptic: first about Covid and then about A.I., about smartphones and fertility rates and income inequality and the crisis of American democracy (to name just a few).

In politics and media, it’s true, climate worries have receded, replaced in headlines by affordability debates, stories about the electricity demands of data centers, and a kind of simplistic energy triumphalism. But public opinion has proved surprisingly resilient, with nearly as many Americans saying they “worry a great deal” about warming as they did at previous peaks in 2017, right after Donald Trump was inaugurated the first time, and 2020, right before the pandemic hit. The share is higher than any year in the presidencies of Joe Biden, with its major climate legislation and Los Angeles wildfire disaster; Barack Obama, with Hurricane Sandy and the Paris agreement; or George W. Bush, with Hurricane Katrina and “An Inconvenient Truth.” And though those survey responses can seem a bit hollow, given how few people truly orient their politics around climate action, it’s not clear that climate has fallen that much as a liberal political priority either: In a Pew poll conducted in August 2020, after “Green New Deal” debates throughout the Democratic primaries, climate ranked fifth among 12 issues among Biden supporters; in one conducted in fall 2024, when it had almost entirely disappeared from the campaign trail, climate ranked fifth of 10.

What will a super El Niño do to the effective settlement that has prevailed since the end of the climate protests and the doomed passage of the Inflation Reduction Act? On his Substack, McKibben predicts it will quickly bring an end to the idea that “global warming is over,” as Americans grow more concerned about how fast the world is racing toward irreversible tipping points — in the Arctic, in the Amazon, in the Atlantic. In the climate and energy publication Heatmap, Jeva Lange argued it would instead be “bad news for climate politics,” particularly in America, where many of the El Niño effects might look to disengaged observers to be pretty salutary — more rain rather than less, for instance, bringing an end to the record drought now gripping so much of the U.S. and perhaps limiting the wildfire damage as a result (among other effects). And then there is the eternal objection that El Niños long predate global warming, are not, strictly speaking, a phenomenon of warming, and that they did far more human damage in the past than they will today.

And me? An awful lot depends on the actual size of El Niño and the particular scale and distribution of suffering it might unleash. In general, I tend to think climate people overestimate the political impact of discrete disasters — and that we process even mind-bending catastrophes largely by normalizing them, as we’ve done in recent years with wildfires in Los Angeles and Maui, mass heat deaths in the Pacific Northwest and on the Hajj, and flooding events in places like Spain and Brazil beyond what has been observed, in those places, for decades. But coming during a Donald Trump presidency, this one even more nakedly hostile to climate concern than the last, and on the heels of a war that has illustrated unmistakably the dangers of fossil-fuel dependence and driven up the price of food and energy, I do think a pattern of unmistakable global climate disruptions could do a lot to dislodge our seeming complacency. What comes next, as ever, would be as much a matter of political economy as climate.

UNITED NATIONS PHILIPPINES

[UN supports Philippines to strengthen energy security and accelerate energy transition](#)

By: Maria Jorica Pamintuan

As global energy markets remain volatile amid geopolitical tensions, climate change and economic uncertainty, the United Nations system is supporting the Philippines to strengthen its energy security while accelerating a just and sustainable energy transition, according to a new analysis published by the UN in the Philippines.

The article, *Energy security: Nine ways the UN is supporting the Philippines*, outlines how 11 United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are working with the Government, development partners and stakeholders across the country to help ensure access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy for all Filipinos while reducing vulnerability to global shocks.

Energy security has become a defining development challenge for the Philippines. The country remains heavily dependent on imported fossil fuels, exposing households and businesses to global price spikes, supply disruptions and inflationary pressures. At the same time, climate change is increasing extreme weather risks that threaten energy infrastructure and undermine long-term growth.

“The Philippines’ energy future cannot be separated from global developments, but it is precisely in this context that multilateral cooperation becomes an advantage,” said Arnaud Peral, United Nations Resident Coordinator in the Philippines. “Through our collective expertise and presence on the ground, the UN is supporting the country to diversify its energy mix, protect consumers from volatility, and accelerate the transition to clean, resilient and inclusive energy systems.”

Coordinated UN support across the energy sector

The article highlights nine interlinked areas where the UN system is delivering added value through coordinated action.

These include policy and regulatory support, helping national agencies align energy planning, climate commitments and development priorities, including through long-term energy roadmaps consistent with the Philippines’ Nationally Determined Contribution and sustainable development goals.

UN agencies are also supporting the scale-up of renewable energy, including solar, wind, geothermal and other clean energy sources, to reduce import dependence while unlocking investment, innovation and decent jobs.

Strengthening power grids, energy infrastructure and system resilience is another priority, particularly in disaster-prone areas. The UN is supporting efforts to climate-proof energy

facilities and improve planning so that power supply can be restored quickly after typhoons, floods and earthquakes.

Ensuring equitable energy access remains central to UN engagement. This includes supporting off-grid and decentralized energy solutions for remote islands, rural communities and underserved populations, contributing to poverty reduction, improved health services and inclusive growth.

The UN is also helping mobilize sustainable energy finance, supporting access to concessional funding, private capital and innovative financing mechanisms to make clean energy investments viable and affordable.

Recognizing the interconnections between energy, food, water and climate, UN agencies are promoting integrated approaches that reduce emissions, strengthen adaptation and avoid trade-offs between development goals.

Other areas of support include data and evidence-based planning, strengthening national energy statistics and modelling; capacity-building and skills development to prepare the workforce for a low-carbon economy; and regional and global cooperation, ensuring the Philippines benefits from international best practices, technology transfer and policy dialogue.

“What the UN brings is not just individual projects, but a system-wide approach that connects energy security with climate action, economic resilience and social inclusion,” Mr Peral said. “This is essential for a country facing both development opportunities and increasing climate risks.”

Delivering impact through partnership

The UN’s energy work in the Philippines supports the country’s development priorities and complements national efforts to lower electricity costs, reduce emissions and improve competitiveness. By working across agencies, the UN is able to provide technical advice, convening power, financing support and on-the-ground implementation in a coherent and coordinated manner.

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

[WMO: Invest in Resilience as Climate Risks Intensify](#)

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has officially launched a new financing mechanism to safeguard the critical weather forecasting backbone, which underpins trillions of dollars in economic value and supports global stability.

Key messages

- WMO launches Weather, Climate and Water Intelligence Commons
- Zurich Climate Week hears compelling case for investment
- Target is to mobilize at least US\$ 100 million over the next five years
- Stronger weather forecasting backbone needed to meet growing demands and challenges
- Weather risk translates into economic risk

The WMO Weather, Climate and Water Intelligence Commons (“WMO Commons”) seeks to mobilize at least 100 million US dollars over 5 years to finance global weather, climate and water monitoring, prediction, and service delivery systems.

WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo presented the WMO Commons in a keynote speech to a high-level roundtable event with financial, business and government leaders during Climate Week Zurich. She made a compelling investment case for strengthening the weather forecasting and observing network to build resilience to growing climate risks and keep the world protected and prepared.

According to Swiss Re, in 2024 alone, weather and climate-related related catastrophes caused US\$ 318 billion in global losses, of which only 43% were insured. Extreme weather is the top long-term risk over the next ten-year- period, according to the World Economic Forum.

“Climate risk is increasingly expressed through weather. And weather risk is rapidly translating into economic risk,” she said.

Around the world, storms, floods, droughts, heatwaves and wildfires are disrupting operations, affecting supply chains, reducing labour productivity, straining health systems, increasing insurance losses and weakening public finances, she said.

The good news is that science has advanced dramatically, enabling investors to make more informed and smarter business and risk management decisions.

Forecast skill continue to improve. Today’s five-day forecast is as accurate as a three-day forecast 20 years ago, while one to four day forecast accuracy has improved by around 10–20%.

“Forecasts do not stop storms or droughts from happening. But they turn surprise into preparedness. And preparedness protects lives, assets and growth. Weather and climate intelligence today is not simply useful information. It is economic intelligence,” Celeste Saulo told chief executive officers and top decision-makers at the event hosted by Building Bridges.

- It transforms uncertainty into lead time.
- It allows businesses to reroute logistics.
- It helps insurers price risk more accurately.
- It supports governments in protecting citizens and infrastructure.
- It enables investors to distinguish resilience from vulnerability.
- Forecasting backbone

Every day, more than 100 million observations flow from satellites, ocean buoys, weather stations, and radiosondes into a global processing system.

WMO coordinates this supply chain: setting the technical standards that make data interoperable across borders, fostering the international collaboration that keeps information flowing, and ensuring that a weather observation made in one country can meaningfully inform a forecast in another.

This global system depends on a chain of shared investment, cooperation and stewardship. Despite its critical value, it remains underfunded and under pressure.

Many National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in developing countries lack capacity to deliver reliable operational forecasts and warnings. And this has a knock-on impact beyond national borders because when one part weakens, it weakens all countries.

Studies estimate that absent or imperfect forecasts lead to annual inefficiencies of up to 230 billion US dollars in cereal agriculture, US\$ 20 billion in energy, and US \$9 billion in disaster risk management.

Collective insurance policy

The WMO Commons addresses this coordination failure. By pooling resources, standardising data, and strengthening the global observing network, it reduces volatility while improving forecast accuracy, providing robust data to markets, and lowering risk across sectors.

It seeks to provide a collective insurance policy for the system. Built on principles of solidarity and shared benefit, it helps safeguard the supply chain against disruption, distributes risk across the global community, and ensures that the system remains robust, inclusive, and fit for purpose in a changing world.

Climate risk starts with data. And the strength of that data depends on a global system we all rely on, but too few invest in. The WMO Commons is about changing that.

Closing Critical Gaps

The WMO Commons leverages Member State contributions by mobilizing additional financial resources to address critical gaps and high-priority global system needs that deliver benefits across borders.

WMO very much appreciates the founding contribution provided by the United Arab Emirates, as well as their pledge to scale up their support.

Resources are allocated by WMO through the WMO Commons Annual Workplan, ensuring system-wide coherence, reducing fragmentation and maximizing collective impact

This includes:

- Overseeing the sustained operation and modernisation of its globally coordinated observing systems.
- Coordinating global meteorological data exchange and prediction infrastructure.
- Leading development, governance, and oversight of international standards and data policies.
- Stewarding coordination mechanisms that safeguard system integrity and interoperability.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PALAWAN NEWS

[CCC pushes stronger tracking of climate funds across ASEAN](#)

By: Emman Magpusao

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has called for stronger and more transparent systems to track climate-related spending across Southeast Asia, emphasizing the need to ensure public funds are used effectively for climate action.

During ASEAN Climate Week, Vice Chairperson Robert E.A. Borje said improved tracking systems would allow the public to see how government climate funds are spent and ensure they are directed to intended programs.

He cited the Philippines' Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET) system, which identifies and monitors government spending on climate-related projects.

Borje said the system strengthens transparency and accountability in public finance and helps ensure funds are used for initiatives that reduce risks from floods, typhoons, and extreme heat.

“For taxpayers and communities, this means climate funds are tracked and linked to programs such as safer roads, protected farms, and disaster risk reduction efforts,” the commission said in its statement.

Borje also stressed the importance of coordination among government agencies to avoid duplication and maximize limited resources.

ASEAN Climate Week, held from April 27 to May 1, served as a regional platform for countries to share practices on climate finance tracking and management.

The CCC said it will continue strengthening these systems to support infrastructure, agriculture, and communities increasingly affected by climate risks.

=END=