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[Security adviser calls for stronger public-private partnership to boost national resilience](#)

By: Pexcel John Bacon

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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[DOF ramps up climate financing push with Asean+3, Jica support](#)

By: Nyah Genelle C. De Leon

The Department of Finance (DOF) has ramped up efforts to strengthen climate and disaster financing locally and regionally.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[PhilRice innovations help farmers cut costs, adapt to climate risks](#)

By: Camille N. Gavino

Filipino rice farmers are gaining stronger support in reducing production costs and coping with climate-related risks through a range of technologies developed by the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice).

SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST

[Southeast Asia warned of 'Godzilla El Nino' whiplash threatening drought, floods, haze](#)

By: Biman Mukherji

Southeast Asia must brace itself for a punishing spell of climate whiplash, with an expected El Nino threatening drought-like conditions, flash floods, crop losses and haze across the region, experts have warned.

THE MANILA TIMES

[World risks year of severe fires fueled by climate change — researchers](#)

The world could face a year of “particularly severe” wildfires, fueled by climate change and a potentially strong El Nino weather phenomenon, after a record-breaking start to 2026, researchers warned Tuesday.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[Faith, government, academe for Cebu's push for climate resilience](#)

By: Myrtle Pasigan

Building a climate-resilient Cebu requires more than plans — it demands alignment, collaboration, and decisive action across all sectors.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[CCC urges LGUs to submit climate adaptation proposals before May 29](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has urged the local government units (LGUs) nationwide to submit Concept Notes (CNs) for the initial screening for the People's Survival Fund (PSF) before the May 29 deadline.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS WORLD

[Security adviser calls for stronger public-private partnership to boost national resilience](#)

By: Pexcel John Bacon

NATIONAL SECURITY Adviser Eduardo SL. Oban, Jr. on Wednesday urged stronger cooperation between government, businesses, and communities to build and sustain national resilience amid growing global and domestic disruptions.

Speaking during the Management Association of the Philippines General Membership Meeting, Mr. Oban said the Philippines must move beyond reactive crisis response and develop systems capable of anticipating and withstanding multiple threats.

“Leadership in action is best tested in times of destruction,” he said, “National resilience is not a government problem. It is a whole-of-nation endeavor.”

Mr. Oban warned that modern disruptions, including climate change, cyberattacks, disinformation, geopolitical conflicts, and economic instability, now overlap and intensify one another, placing greater pressure on national institutions and critical infrastructure.

He stressed that the Philippines remains vulnerable due to dependence on imported food, energy, and digital connectivity linked to global chains.

“Trust is the invisible infrastructure of institutions,” he said, noting that weakening public trust undermines collective response during crises.

Mr. Oban also highlighted the need for institutionalized public-private coordination mechanisms, saying businesses possess valuable real-time data and operational insights that could strengthen national preparedness.

Among initiatives discussed were improved crisis governance systems, enhanced coordination with disaster-response agencies, and partnerships with organizations such as the National Resilience Council and the Philippines Disaster Resilience Foundation.

He likewise underscored the role of strategic alliances and regional cooperation in strengthening the country’s resilience, particularly in maritime security, supply chains, and critical infrastructure protection.

Mr. Oban called on the private sector to become “co-architects of national security” by investing in preparedness, strategic reserves, infrastructure protection, and credible communication systems.

“The aim is resilience by design,” he said. “Systems that anticipate disruption, maintain continuity, and convert stress into strategic value.”

Former Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga also underscored the need for stronger collaboration between government and the private sector in disaster risk reduction and national resilience efforts.

DISASTER RISKS RESPONSE

Speaking on behalf of Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, Jr., Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga said the Philippines remains among the countries most exposed to climate related and disaster risks, which are further intensified by climate change and other emerging threats. She stressed that disaster preparedness, response, and recovery cannot rely on government alone.

Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga highlighted lessons learned from past disasters such as Super Typhoon Yolanda and the COVID-19 pandemic, where structured partnerships between government agencies, humanitarian groups, and private companies proved crucial in logistics, communications, and crisis coordination.

She said the government is now working on a strategic framework to institutionalize private sector engagement in disaster and disruption management, aimed at strengthening anticipatory actions, targeted response, and early recovery efforts.

She also encouraged businesses to move beyond donations and become “strategic and proactive partners” in resilience building by contributing logistics support, communications systems, emergency expertise, and risk management capabilities.

According to Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga, the government is likewise committed to easing coordination and reducing bureaucratic and humanitarian operations.

Former Interior Secretary Rafael M. Alunan III also warned that the Philippines faces “converging threats” from internal vulnerabilities, geopolitical tensions, climate change, and biological threats that could lead to widespread crises if not addressed immediately.

In his speech, Mr. Alunan said that corruption, political dynasties, poverty, and lack of civic awareness are among the country’s biggest challenges that weaken society’s ability to respond to crises.

He also highlighted the worsening tension in the South China Sea and the threat of climate change, including a possible super El Niño, sea level rise, and the destruction of coral reefs that are crucial to food security and livelihoods.

Mr. Alunan stressed that communities need to prepare for what he called a “YOYO” or “You’re On Your Own” scenario, where government aid and assistance may be delayed during a widespread disaster or war.

He said it is important to have community resilience frameworks that focus on clear leadership, adequate water, food and energy supplies, health preparedness, and social cohesion.

“Community resilience is not merely a disaster management concept. It is a doctrine for national survival,” Mr. Alunan said.

He also urged the public, businesses, and local communities to take immediate action and strengthen preparedness before the next major crisis hits.

CLIMATE HOME NEWS

[Scientists warn El Niño could intensify climate extremes in 2026](#)

By: Matteo Civillini

The emergence of a strong El Niño weather pattern this year in a world that is warming as a result of human-caused climate change could fuel “unprecedented” weather extremes, climate scientists have warned.

Meteorologists expect El Niño – the natural climate phenomenon characterised by unusually warm sea-surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean – to develop as early as this month. Some forecasters say that this time around the event could become particularly powerful.

Scientists say the combination of El Niño and rising global temperatures could push 2026 to either the warmest or second-warmest year on record. A previous El Niño helped drive average global temperatures in 2024 to a record 1.55C above preindustrial levels.

Researchers warn that a strong El Niño risks supercharging extreme weather conditions, contributing to more severe fires and droughts in some regions and storms and floods in others.

El Niño meets global warming

Friederike Otto, professor in climate science at Imperial College London, said El Niño itself is “not the reason to freak out” but rather the fact that it is now happening on an increasingly warmer baseline.

“El Niño is a natural phenomenon that comes and goes,” she told journalists this week. “What makes it so dramatic is not the event itself and whether it’s a ‘Super El Niño’ or not, but that it is happening in a dramatically changing climate.”

“The records will still be broken because of human-induced climate change and the continued burning of fossil fuels,” Otto added.

The World Meteorological Organization will issue its next update on the prospects for an El Niño in late May, which it says will provide more robust guidance for decision-making on how to protect people and nature from associated impacts.

Even before the likely arrival of the El Niño pattern, 2026 has already been an “extraordinary” year for weather extremes, scientists at the World Weather Attribution (WWA) research group said.

Sea surface temperatures neared all-time highs in April, while Arctic sea ice reached its lowest level for a second-year running. In March, the United States saw a record-breaking heatwave that would have been “virtually impossible” without climate change, according to WWA analysis.

Dramatic wildfire risk

Across the globe, the wildfire season got off to a dramatic start. Record-breaking fires in Western Africa and the Sahel, as well as big outbreaks in India, Southeast Asia and parts of China, contributed to the world recording its largest burned area ever for the January-April period, according to Theodore Keeping, a WWA researcher.

He noted that the emergence of a powerful El Niño event could have a major effect on supercharging wildfires by increasing the likelihood of seeing “severe” hot and dry conditions in Australia, the US and Canada, as well as the Amazon rainforest.

“The likelihood of harmful extreme fires potentially could be the highest we have seen in recent history, if a strong El Niño does develop,” Keeping added.

DW

[Is caring about the climate unmanly?](#)

By: Tamsin Walker

Mike Smith had been a US fighter pilot for more than a decade when he took what he describes as a 'hard turn' out of the navy.

He decided to trade a life of deployment, fighter jets and cruise missile operations for one of planting trees and sustainability.

Though he didn't realize it at the time, the seeds for that change of pace and path were sown when he was just nine and watching a mega-fire burn through forest near his home in central Idaho.

The Lowman fire wasn't enormous by today's standards, but to a boy raised in the outdoors it felt apocalyptic. The blaze burned so fiercely it formed what looked like a nuclear mushroom cloud.

"It felt like the whole state was on fire at the time. It was just very, very memorable to me," Smith said.

The fire didn't only scar his memory, but the land it tore through. More than 20 years later, when Mike returned to Idaho with his wife to show her where he grew up, what he saw stopped him cold.

"You know, when you go back to the place you grew up, you see all the things that have changed. And so what became jarring was seeing the thing that hadn't changed. It was just black, still black dirt, 22 years later."

He started a company focused on post-fire reforestation for carbon offset production. He got involved in planting a couple of million trees and founded a climate tech company that helps businesses cut emissions.

Along the way, he became aware of more women in the climate space than men.

Do men and women relate to the climate crisis differently?

What Smith was seeing was not unique to his experience but is in fact a widely recorded phenomenon known as the green gender gap. In short, the idea that women are more concerned about the climate than men.

And as Amanda Clayton, a University of California political scientist found during her research on the topic, "the gender gap grows as a function of country wealth."

As countries get richer, it is more likely that women will be the ones expressing greater concern about climate change. But not because they are suddenly more concerned.

"It's actually that men tend to decrease their concern about climate change as countries become wealthier," Clayton said. "The growing gender gap is actually men's growing skepticism."

One reason seems to be a fear of the perceived costs — financial and cultural — of transitioning to a clean energy future. Costs that feel especially threatening to men raised with the traditional expectations of being the provider. This is where politics comes in because she also found that as countries get wealthier, climate change becomes politicized.

"And when climate change becomes a political issue on the right, we see political and industry elites starting to promote climate-skeptical beliefs," Clayton said.

This might involve narratives that target men more than women. Messaging around being forced to give up gas-powered vehicles; or the threat to jobs in the fossil fuel sector which is more male-dominated. In short, burning oil, gas and coal can become part of an identity sometimes referred to as petro-masculinity.

And as other recent research revealed, there is a direct link between climate change concerns and perceived threats to masculinity.

Different ways of talking climate to men

Psychologist Vidar Vetterfalk is working to get underneath this thinking. In his role with MÄN, a Swedish organization that engages men and boys to challenge stereotypical masculinities, he asks groups of males to express what they like about the natural world and their worries for its future.

"That creates a connection," he said, rather than assigning guilt and blame for the climate crisis.

Connection, he says, is exactly what is missing in masculinity norms, and although the experience is hard for many participants, it is also appreciated.

"A lot of men share already after the first round that they've never spoken with other men in this way before or listened together with other men in this way before."

Making climate action a mission

While the kind of men who show up to such workshops are likely already somewhat interested in climate, reaching those who have never engaged can be more difficult.

Mike Smith believes down-to-earth, blame-free conversations can go a long way to engaging men on why caring about the planet matters. And he has found his own background useful here.

"One thing, ex-fighter pilot, nobody ever gets to take my man card away," Smith said. "That gives me a little bit of room to maneuver when I'm talking about things that may be a little bit more traditionally coded as feminine."

He also believes men are more likely to get interested in climate action if they see how it can improve their own lives — by installing solar or driving electric vehicles to save on fuel costs, for example. Seeing 'manly' men going green can also help to change thinking and behavior.

This is something car companies have also begun tapping into. Some are now marketing EVs as major man machines that can charge drills or become generators if a storm cuts off power.

"They're just trying to make electricity seem masculine rather than gas and oil seeming masculine," Clayton said. "And I'm here for it, if that's what you need in order to convince groups that have a cultural attachment to fossil fuels."

But ultimately, Smith says it's all about creating the same kind of motivation that made him join the Navy as a young man.

"Most people, what they really need is a sense of purpose and drive and mission," he said. "I think that's maybe the key to where we can go with masculinity and climate."

FOREIGN POLICY

[There's No Such Thing as Climate Policy](#)

By: Daniel Propp

Federal climate policy has effectively ceased to function in the United States. Since retaking power last year, the Trump administration has relentlessly and systematically stripped back incentives and regulations aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

On the foreign-policy front, the United States is now absent not only from the Paris Agreement, but also the International Panel on Climate Change, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (officially as of January 2027), and most other international fora concerned with the climate crisis. The administration has also dismantled many federal offices that implement climate policy, including the State Department's Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, and the White House's Climate Policy Office.

It is trite but still worthwhile to note that the impacts of these actions will extend far beyond the next U.S. election. As greenhouse gases continue to accumulate in the atmosphere, the effects of climate change—including extreme weather, sea level rise, and disease outbreaks—will make Americans poorer, sicker, and more vulnerable.

The next president will face the daunting challenge of rebuilding U.S. climate policy. But amid the wreckage left by the Trump administration, the next leader will also have more latitude than any in recent memory to reimagine how the U.S. government addresses the climate crisis. The next U.S. administration would do well not only to learn from previous policy regimes, but also to reconsider the very concept of “climate policy.”

On the heels of successive victories in the 1970s, the U.S. environmental movement—heretofore concerned primarily with local pollution—found itself confronting a challenge of global proportions. Advances in climate science, most famously highlighted by Dr. James Hansen's 1988 testimony to Congress, showed that greenhouse gases released by fossil fuel combustion were changing the composition of the atmosphere, with potentially catastrophic and worldwide consequences.

Alarm over global warming, later termed climate change, motivated a raft of policies to slow greenhouse gas emissions. The U.S. government began subsidizing wind and solar energy in the hope that they would eventually supplant more carbon-intensive sources of electricity. It also signed onto the UNFCCC, laying the groundwork for decades of international coordination on climate.

As scientists' understanding of the climate grew, so did the realm of what was considered climate policy. Carbon dioxide, it turned out, was leaking from nearly every sector of the economy, including cars, power plants, factories, farms, and landfills. And carbon dioxide wasn't

the only cause of climate change; so-called super pollutants such as methane and hydrofluorocarbons were also raising temperatures. It became clear that mitigating climate change would require addressing a multitude of emissions sources. It would have to be an all-of-society effort.

Efforts to address emissions, too, spawned their own complexities. Carbon-free energy would require more copper and lithium, demanding increased attention to these supply chains. The uneven burden of—and responsibility for—climate change demanded that policy interventions consider preexisting inequities. All the while, new tensions emerged as nations stumbled unevenly towards emissions reductions.

By the time U.S. President Joe Biden took office, the slate of climate-related issues facing policymakers had grown dizzyingly broad. Recognizing this, Biden pledged a “whole-of-government” approach to climate change, enlisting the capabilities and portfolios of each federal agency. He established a Climate Policy Office within the White House to coordinate among them. Led first by Gina McCarthy and then by Ali Zaidi, this small team became the heartbeat of the Biden administration’s climate platform.

The approach yielded major victories. The Biden administration announced an ambitious new emissions reduction target, reoriented federal procurement toward low-carbon technologies, tightened vehicle emissions standards, imposed new restrictions on coal power plants, created a detailed plan for reducing methane emissions, and employed 15,000 young people in the nation’s first-ever Climate Corps. Along the way, it obligated more than \$97 billion of federal funds to clean energy, electric vehicles, conservation, and other provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). If preserved, these interventions would have prevented hundreds of millions of tons of greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere.

The approach also encountered challenges. The Department of Energy may have spent as little as 39 percent of its IRA funding before the clock ran out on Biden’s term. The Loan Programs Office, the workhorse of the department’s support for clean energy, ended the administration with more than 160 outstanding loan applications worth more than \$200 billion. Among the reasons for the delays, according to Energy Department employees at the time, were frequent and significant interventions by the White House that failed to empower the office to move expeditiously. Others faulted the White House’s interest in advancing multiple, sometimes conflicting, aims at once.

Elsewhere, the administration’s climate ambitions ran headlong into agency priorities. In 2021, Biden pledged to end public financing of fossil fuel infrastructure abroad. This announcement caused tension at two public financing agencies, the U.S. Development Finance Corporation and the Export-Import Bank (EXIM). Employees at both organizations viewed their ability to finance natural gas plants as a valuable tool for enhancing electricity access, bolstering diplomatic relations, and displacing dirtier energy sources. Many chafed at what they saw as impractical political restrictions, and EXIM continued to support fossil fuel projects.

Lastly, the procession of top-down, explicitly climate-oriented policies left an easy list of targets for a subsequent administration already intent on unwinding environmental protections. Rather than addressing the systemic drivers of rising electricity prices, the Trump administration blamed them on “ideologically motivated regulations,” a useful pretext for slashing much of the Biden administration’s energy policy.

Under Trump, the White House has reversed the Biden administration’s fuel economy standards, repealed its coal power plants rule, nullified its emissions reduction target, stopped enforcing methane regulations, canceled \$2.5 billion of the Department of Energy’s clean energy awards under the IRA, and attempted to halt wind farm development—all while citing the previous administration for elevating climate concerns over economic opportunity.

The delays and transience that characterized the Biden administration’s climate agenda were not the results of mismanagement or misplaced priorities. Rather, they were the consequences of an outdated policy paradigm that no longer suits the climate challenge.

Climate policy refers to government actions to address both the negative impacts of human activity on the climate, or mitigation, and the negative impacts of a changing climate on society, or adaptation. In the 1990s, when national governments first came together to address climate change, this definition encompassed a manageable set of interventions. Today, however, the bounds of what constitutes climate policy have grown so broad as to be meaningless.

This is evident in the basic functions of government. Today’s architects of climate policy are united by little more than a shared concern about greenhouse gas emissions. The daily concerns of a diplomat negotiating a climate agreement bear a paltry resemblance to those of a program manager allocating sustainable farming grants. The regulator tracking methane emissions from oil and gas wells has little overlap with the administrator setting rules for climate-resilient housing.

All can reasonably be said to be administering climate policy—and indeed their actions materially advance mitigation and adaptation—but there is almost nothing in their quotidian tasks to suggest that they share the same policy domain. Attempting to group these disparate roles under a single umbrella ignores an underlying truth: There is no such thing, functionally or thematically, as climate policy.

Policy domains are defined by a distinct set of concerns, instruments, and implementing agencies. Monetary policy addresses inflation and employment through interest rates, reserve requirements, and discount rates; it flows primarily through the U.S. Federal Reserve. Education policy promotes improved learning outcomes and school stewardship through funding allocation, standards, and research; it is chiefly implemented by the Education Department.

Even foreign policy has a defined issue (events outside the country), a defined set of tools (diplomacy, economic pressure, and military force), and a group of implementing agencies

(including but not limited to the State Department, the Defense Department, and the Commerce Department).

That climate change affects nearly every U.S. agency—and nearly every agency has a plausible toolkit for addressing it—suggests that climate policy is no longer a meaningful policy domain.

None of this is to denigrate the urgency of the climate crisis, nor to suggest that responsibility for addressing it should not be shared throughout the U.S. government. Global temperatures are likely to surpass 1.5°C of warming by the end of the decade, with potentially dire consequences for all facets of life. Seeing climate policy for what it really is—an awkward grouping of distinct policy realms—opens up new opportunities to make federal climate action more potent, more endemic, and more durable.

The emergence of centrally organized climate action was originally a practical expression of the issue's urgency and scale. After Hansen's congressional testimony, sustained activist campaigns pressed the U.S. government to move decisively, with demands for action intensifying as the window of opportunity grew narrower.

Successive Democratic administrations endeavored to answer the call for bold leadership by proposing and enacting increasingly ambitious and high-visibility policies. Having the White House coordinate and promulgate these policy agendas demonstrated a level of serious intent that could not be replicated by quieter and more dispersed interventions, however effective.

Moreover, the nature of the climate crisis itself appeared to lend itself to top-down policymaking. For much of the 21st century, climate progress has found itself crosswise of market forces. The clean energy technologies necessary to limit greenhouse gas emissions could not yet compete on cost with fossil fuels, nor were private investors inclined to splash out the trillions of dollars required to get the economy on track for net zero. It was clear that correcting these market failures would require robust, carefully planned government intervention.

This was not an outcome that individual agencies, or even individual governments, could achieve by acting independently. Climate change was a collective action problem requiring a coordinated solution.

While these pressures remain, the math has shifted. Wind turbines and solar panels are now the most affordable sources of electricity even without government support, and batteries are increasingly cost-competitive with fossil fuels. In some countries, renewables have become sufficiently attractive to trigger a rapid and unplanned energy transition, undercutting the case for centrally planned climate action. Meanwhile, shifting politics and a cost-of-living crisis—exacerbated by high oil prices following the closure of the Strait of Hormuz—have led climate advocates to opt for affordability messaging, reducing pressure on the federal government to foreground climate concerns. Under the current circumstances, grouping climate concerns under a unified policy platform could undercut rather than advance climate progress.

International climate agreements offer a cautionary example. Nearly every year since 1995, national governments have sent representatives to a summit of the UNFCCC to hammer out a global plan of action. This process has delivered momentous achievements, most famously in 2015, when the landmark Paris Agreement compelled countries to develop increasingly ambitious emissions reductions targets. But the shortcomings of the process were long apparent. Wrangling 195 parties and all greenhouse gas-emitting sectors into a single pledge limited the ambition and enforceability of these agreements, constraining their ability to bend the emissions curve.

Though these agreements provided valuable direction to global climate action, the urgency of the crisis now demands more targeted and concrete interventions. Recent trade disputes with China threatened to choke off U.S. developers' supply of cheap clean energy components, endangering the United States' ability to decarbonize its electricity grid. In this environment, the most important international climate agreement the next administration makes is unlikely to be a UNFCCC accord, but instead a bilateral trade agreement to ensure the continued flow of clean energy technologies.

Absorbing this objective into a more expansive climate agreement would only serve to divert diplomatic resources away from a measurable, enforceable output. In this case, as in others, the construct of climate policy obscures action on more defined issues.

This is about more than mere semantics. Retiring the prevailing definition of climate policy could enable the Democratic Party to pursue a fundamentally new approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation, one better suited to the nature of the federal government. Rather than centralizing decision-making in the White House, the next Democratic administration should empower the experts at federal agencies to use the tools at their disposal to reduce emissions.

Incidentally, the Paris Agreement offers a useful template for how this approach could work. The genius of this framework was in its acknowledgement of its own limitations. Realizing that few countries would agree to rules set by an external authority, the authors allowed each signatory to propose their own emission reduction plans—based on what their governments perceived to be achievable—and exposed them to public scrutiny to elevate their ambition.

A similar arrangement for the federal government would see each agency wield its own policy tools and expertise for progress on climate. Federal agencies would submit to the White House a plan for addressing climate change within their particular domain, along with a measurable emissions reduction target for the ensuing years. Each agency would rely on its own experts—with their years of experience in that domain—to assess where emissions reductions can be achieved and what levers that agency might pull to realize them.

The role of the White House would be more limited than under previous administrations, but nevertheless important. The Climate Policy Office (or its successor) would be charged with accepting and evaluating agencies' climate plans. White House officials would operate more as

accountants than as policymakers, tracking each agency's progress against its targets. Certain cross-cutting initiatives would still likely require White House coordination.

But whenever possible, the next administration should resist the urge to roll out splashy, top-down programs, instead allowing climate considerations to quietly permeate the regular operations of federal agencies. Decentralizing and diffusing climate action into the federal bureaucracy would make it more targeted and likely to last. It would acknowledge that though most Americans want the federal government to tackle climate change, fewer prioritize it over public safety, the cost of living, or the economy. Climate action embedded into agency policymaking would reframe it as complementary to other objectives, not a competing priority.

All this would make rolling back climate progress a more complicated task for later administrations. In Trump's second term, the White House moved quickly to rescind Biden's climate directives, such as the Executive Order on Catalyzing Clean Energy Industries and Jobs Through Federal Sustainability, which committed the federal government to procuring clean energy. More distributed climate initiatives, particularly those lacking an explicit climate rationale, would require far more time and effort to identify and eliminate. Energy procurement plans at each federal agency implemented without the direction of an executive order would become at least more challenging to roll back than with the stroke of a president's pen.

This approach certainly comes with risk. It demands trust in civil servants and would require a substantial rehiring effort, with so many federal employees already in exodus. It may also fuel a perception that a future administration is not prioritizing climate action, which could come with political blowback. But the climate-concerned public has already grown frustrated with agendas that over-promise and under-deliver; a quiet yet effective approach is exactly what is needed. With discipline and sustained commitment, each of these risks is manageable—and well worth the potential upsides to emissions reduction and climate resilience.

If Democrats retake the White House in the 2028 elections, they will have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rebuild the U.S. government's climate apparatus from the ground up. To capitalize on this opportunity, policy leaders must begin by interrogating the basic premise of climate policy that has undergirded previous platforms—and that process must begin today.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Consensus: Climate finance needed, now more than ever](#)

The ongoing US-Israeli war against Iran has triggered yet another global energy crisis. With an estimated 74 percent of the world population living in countries that are net importers of fossil fuels as of 2022, the closure of the Strait of Hormuz—the narrow pathway through which one-fifth of global oil typically transits—has once again exposed the vulnerability of fossil fuel-reliant economies.

This has placed governments under immense pressure to adopt alternative support policies that support the development of national energy mixes less reliant on the volatile fossil fuel markets. At the same time, the escalating threat of global warming is intensifying calls for governments to move beyond climate pledges and provide concrete plans on how to transition away from oil, gas, and coal.

In this context, green finance becomes even more critical for long-term resilience. The Asian Development Bank defines green finance as a type of “future-oriented finance” that simultaneously supports financial industry development, environmental improvement, and economic growth.

Within this broader framework is a subset known as “climate finance,” which refers to financial resources and instruments that are used to support action on climate change. These include grants provided by multilateral funds, market-based and concessional loans from financial institutions, sovereign green bonds issued by national governments, and resources mobilized through carbon trading and carbon taxes.

Major barrier

Discussions at a recent global conference in Santa Marta, Colombia—where governments from 60 countries convened to accelerate the transition from fossil fuels to cleaner energy—stressed a common point: While many countries and regional governments are not opposed to shifting away from fossil fuels, the lack of financing remains a major barrier. Debt, limited fiscal space, and the high cost of financing cleaner energy projects continue to deter progress.

Nicolas Lippolis, founder and executive director of the Centre for Energy, Finance, and Development, noted that although climate finance is a global challenge, it is even more pronounced at the subnational level.

This is especially evident in developing regions, where borrowing costs for renewable energy can be several times higher than in wealthier economies—averaging about 15 percent in parts of Africa, compared with roughly two percent in Europe and North America. Meanwhile, in many Asian economies, aligning growth and sustainable development presents greater challenges due to their growth models being very resource- and carbon-intensive.

Central role

While continued investment in oil and gas may appear cheaper in the short term, it risks locking countries into a “debt-fossil fuel trap,” where reliance on oil and gas revenues to service debt and maintain energy access leaves little room to invest in sustainable alternatives.

Governments play a central role in encouraging the flow of private finance in green growth through policies and financial instruments. Some have sought to use fossil fuel revenues themselves as a way to help finance the transition. However, experts warn that fossil fuel revenues can be volatile, tied to global energy prices, and are likely to decline over time as countries reduce production and consumption.

Wealthier regions, meanwhile, are attempting to close the financing gap through policy and market mechanisms. A commonly cited example is the carbon market—a green market launched and developed by governments where carbon credits are traded. These systems require companies to pay for or limit their emissions.

By assigning a price on carbon and rewarding efforts to reduce or remove emissions, such markets can help raise the billions needed to build low-carbon, climate-resilient economies. As of 2024, carbon pricing covers 28 percent of global emissions and has generated over \$100 billion.

Several countries and regions have implemented carbon market mechanisms tailored to their national contexts, with varying levels of maturity and scope. Examples include European Union Emissions Trading System (EU ETS), China’s national ETS, and Brazil’s national ETS.

National competitiveness

In the United States, California has used carbon markets and low-carbon fuel standards to generate investment and guide its energy transition.

Looking ahead, the long-term imperative for green finance remains strong as the world faces more energy volatility. Another role the government must undertake, therefore, is to invest in infrastructure that will result in improved long-term management of resources, by strengthening national competitiveness while attracting private-sector capital into domestic green markets.

By directing investment toward environmentally sustainable technologies such as clean energy, developing countries can bypass the development model of “grow first, clean up later,” thus reducing costs, speeding up technology adoption, and moving directly toward more eco-efficient infrastructure.

[DOF ramps up climate financing push with Asean+3, Jica support](#)

By: Nyah Genelle C. De Leon

The Department of Finance (DOF) has ramped up efforts to strengthen climate and disaster financing locally and regionally.

The finance department added it is pushing for deeper ASEAN+3 cooperation while securing Japanese support for sustainable finance initiatives.

In a statement on Wednesday, the DOF said it called on regional peers during the recent ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting to pursue deeper financial cooperation that would deliver "tangible outcomes" in disaster financing.

"The Philippines highlighted the need to advance regional cooperation on Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (DRFI), particularly through enhanced risk-sharing mechanisms and financing solutions to help economies better prepare for and recover from natural catastrophes and other external shocks," the DOF said.

Separately, the DOF recently secured support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) following the signing of an agreement for the "Project on Strengthening Sustainability and Transparency Framework."

The project is designed to improve climate disclosure frameworks, strengthen greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory and reporting systems, and enhance monitoring of climate-related initiatives.

Under the agreement, Jica will dispatch Japanese experts on climate change, sustainable finance, sustainability reporting, and transparency and GHG inventory systems, while the DOF will lead policy integration and implementation.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will also participate in the project's implementation.

The project will run from 2026 to 2029.

It builds on Jica's broader support for climate action in the Philippines, which includes its 35 billion Japanese yen, or around P13.6-billion, Climate Change Action Program–Subprogram 2 policy-based lending package.

Notably, the developments come as the Philippines continues to face a significant climate financing gap.

The DOF's Sustainable Finance Roadmap showed that the country currently mobilizes only around \$2.5 billion to \$3 billion in annual climate finance, far below the estimated \$12 billion to \$15 billion needed each year.

This gap has since been flagged by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), which noted that the country's current Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET) system remains insufficient and is still largely focused on adaptation rather than mitigation efforts.

PIDS warned that without adequate financing, climate change could reduce the country's economic output by 6 percent to 8 percent by 2040 under moderate scenarios, and by as much as 13.6 percent under more severe assumptions.

Meanwhile, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) flagged the absence of detailed projections of climate-related fiscal risks in the country's Medium-Term Fiscal Framework and debt sustainability analyses.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) likewise pointed to the lack of quantitative studies on the macroeconomic impact of climate shocks, limiting the government's ability to conduct evidence-based assessments and policy planning.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[PhilRice innovations help farmers cut costs, adapt to climate risks](#)

By: Camille N. Gavino

Filipino rice farmers are gaining stronger support in reducing production costs and coping with climate-related risks through a range of technologies developed by the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice).

During the observance of National Intellectual Property Month in April, PhilRice highlighted farmer-centered innovations that help address rising fertilizer prices, water scarcity, and labor costs while improving farm productivity.

Data from the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) showed that PhilRice has produced more than 400 intellectual property assets, including 53 patents, 53 utility models, 12 industrial designs, 11 trademarks, and 284 copyrights supporting rice production and farm efficiency.

According to PhilRice Intellectual Property Management Office head Jerry Serapion, digital tools such as Rice Crop Manager provide field-specific fertilizer recommendations that help farmers optimize fertilizer use and reduce unnecessary expenses.

The platform complements other PhilRice-developed technologies such as PalayCheck and the Minus-One-Element Technique, which assist farmers in diagnosing soil nutrient deficiencies and improving fertilizer application.

As climate risks continue to affect agricultural production, PhilRice is also promoting stress-tolerant rice varieties and water-saving practices such as alternate wetting and drying, which help farmers manage limited water supply during dry periods.

The institute has also developed digital tools such as eDamuhan to guide farmers in crop management decisions, including adjusting planting schedules and managing farm inputs under changing field conditions.

To further reduce production costs, PhilRice promotes mechanization technologies such as flatbed dryers, mechanical weeders, and mini combine harvesters, which help lessen labor requirements and fuel expenses while improving efficiency.

Beyond farm production, the institute also supports livelihood opportunities through value-added products, including patented gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) rice congee and fortified rice-based snacks now produced by women and youth agripreneur groups.

Several of these technologies have already been adopted by farmers and licensed to local manufacturers, improving accessibility and enabling wider use across rice-growing communities.

PhilRice's innovation efforts have also received recognition from IPOPHL and the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development for strengthening patent protection and technology transfer.

PhilRice Business Development Division head Fidela Bongat said the institute continues to train researchers in patent drafting and technology transfer while working closely with cooperatives and manufacturers to expand the reach of these innovations.

"Our goal is to ensure that strong research outputs have clear routes to protection and industry partnership, so that technologies developed by PhilRice can benefit farmers and communities," Bongat said.

By expanding access to practical innovations and strengthening technology transfer, PhilRice continues to help farming communities become more resilient, productive, and sustainable—contributing to the broader goal of making life better through more livable rural communities.

SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST

[Southeast Asia warned of 'Godzilla El Nino' whiplash threatening drought, floods, haze](#)

By: Biman Mukherji

Southeast Asia must brace itself for a punishing spell of climate whiplash, with an expected El Nino threatening drought-like conditions, flash floods, crop losses and haze across the region, experts have warned.

The threat is also landing at a fragile moment for emerging economies, as geopolitical tensions, higher energy costs and pressure on remittances leave governments and households with less room to absorb climate shocks.

Sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific were already rising rapidly in late April, signalling the expected return of El Nino next month, according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

The weather phenomenon typically brings hotter and drier conditions to Southeast Asia, damaging agriculture, straining water supplies and amplifying the risk of forest fires.

But experts said the same heat could also make sudden bursts of rainfall more dangerous, increasing the risk of localised flooding even during a broadly dry spell.

“Things get a lot hotter, nevertheless – and this is something that is kind of a little counterintuitive – but it can also mean that localised flooding increases,” said Andy Smith, chief operating officer of Fathom, a firm that uses scientific tools and intelligence to understand the climate’s impact on water risk.

Rising heat brings heavier and more intense storms, putting pressure on drainage systems and threatening rice and palm oil production across the Asia-Pacific.

Smith cautioned that Southeast Asian nations needed to plan for water conservation to ensure they had enough resources to see through the event, adding that erratic weather could last well beyond the typical monsoon rainfall from May to October.

“What we’ve seen is that a strong El Nino has been followed by severe flooding, because when the wetter conditions return, they themselves are amplified,” Smith said.

Extensive academic studies by Fathom showed that Southeast Asia was the most exposed region of the world to such flooding, he added, noting that the pattern of weather variability – dry weather followed by floods – was seen repeatedly in the region in 1997, 2015 and 2016.

According to the WMO, El Niño typically occurs every two to seven years and lasts around nine to 12 months. An El Niño event is frequently followed by La Niña, which brings diametrically opposite weather conditions, but not always.

A stronger El Niño has a higher probability of transitioning into La Niña.

La Niña leads to wetter conditions in parts of Australia, Southeast Asia, India, southeast Africa and northern Brazil, while causing drier conditions in parts of South America.

“It does the opposite in terms of how the heat transfer plays out in the Pacific. So you get drier conditions in South America and then much, much wetter conditions in Asia-Pacific,” Smith said.

While the two different weather phenomena had always existed, climate change was increasing the impact of each of them, he said.

Many climate models predict that a “super El Niño” is likely to occur this year, with ocean temperatures rising two degrees or more above average. Some models suggest it could become the strongest on record.

At the Singapore Dialogue on Sustainable World Resources last Thursday, the city state’s Minister for Sustainability and the Environment Grace Fu warned attendees that Southeast Asia could face severe haze, as well as intense land and forest fires later this year, driven by a “Godzilla El Niño”.

“Southeast Asia faces a perfect storm caused by a double whammy of geopolitical developments and climate change,” Fu said.

Regenerative agriculture, crop rotation and responsible land use practices would maintain ecological balance and sustain consistent agricultural produce, she said, urging the use of other climate-smart technologies as well, such as soil monitoring and precision irrigation.

Higher vulnerability

Geopolitical tensions such as the Iran war have increased emerging economies’ vulnerability to extreme weather, straining government budgets because of soaring oil and gas prices, as well as higher import costs from shipping disruptions.

“While El Niño affects large areas, its impacts are most severe where climatic exposure overlaps with structural vulnerability,” said Kareff Rafisura, economic affairs officer at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

According to the ESCAP Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2026, the risks are unfolding this year within a complex climate and socioeconomic context marked by higher debt levels and persistent global economic uncertainty.

“This comes at a time when remittances, which have been an important source of income for countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, are being

affected, weakening a key buffer that has historically helped households cope with shocks,” Rafisura said.

Conflict in the Middle East has raised worries about future employment for legions of workers from South and Southeast Asia.

“Together, these pressures leave governments and households less able to absorb climate shocks than during previous El Nino cycles,” Rafisura said.

El Nino events had repeatedly brought drought, forest fires, agricultural losses and water stress to Asia – patterns reinforced even during a weaker El Nino event in 2018–19, she said.

“These impacts provide clear signals of risks concentrated across food, water, health and livelihood systems,” she added.

THE MANILA TIMES

[World risks year of severe fires fueled by climate change — researchers](#)

The world could face a year of “particularly severe” wildfires, fueled by climate change and a potentially strong El Nino weather phenomenon, after a record-breaking start to 2026, researchers warned Tuesday.

“This year the global fire season has got off to a very fast start,” said Theodore Keeping, a researcher at Imperial College London.

The area scorched by wildfires so far is 50 percent higher than average for this time of year, Keeping said in a press briefing.

This is before El Nino has even formed.

El Nino is the warm phase of a natural climate cycle in Pacific Ocean temperatures and trade winds, which influences global weather patterns and increases the likelihood of droughts, heavy rainfall and other climate extremes.

It also adds heat to a planet already warmed from burning fossil fuels.

Some weather agencies forecast the coming event will be even stronger -- possibly rivaling a “super” El Nino three decades ago.

“The likelihood of harmful extreme fires potentially could be the highest we’ve seen in recent history if a strong El Nino does develop,” said Keeping, who is part of World Weather Attribution (WWA), a network of climate scientists.

Fires have already burnt a total area exceeding 163 million hectares between January and the first week of May, according to data from the Global Wildfire Information System (GWIS).

The total burned area is around 20 percent higher than the previous record since global tracking began in 2012, Keeping said.

Records were broken in several countries in west Africa and the Sahel region, as well as Sudan and South Sudan, he said.

The United States and Australia have also seen unseasonably large areas burnt this year.

WWA co-founder Friederike Otto, a climate science professor at Imperial College London, also warned that “there is a serious risk” that the combination of climate change and El Nino could result in “unprecedented weather extremes” this year.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[Faith, government, academe for Cebu's push for climate resilience](#)

By: Myrtle Pasigan

Building a climate-resilient Cebu requires more than plans — it demands alignment, collaboration, and decisive action across all sectors.

This was the central message of the Cebu Climate Action Summit 2026 (CCAS 2026), where the Climate Change Commission (CCC), national government agencies, local leaders, faith-based organizations, and other stakeholders pushed for stronger integration of local development plans with national climate policies.

At the core of that effort is the National Climate Change Action Plan, which the CCC has identified as a key framework guiding local government units (LGUs) in developing science-based programs — including Local Climate Change Action Plans, Annual Investment Plans, and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management initiatives.

Cebu's exposure to climate hazards has increased, with flooding, heavy rainfall, sea level rise, and landslides increasingly threatening communities, livelihoods, and infrastructure. From 2021 to 2025, the province recorded nearly P14 billion in damages from major typhoons, including Odette, Tino, and Uwan.

For CCC Secretary Robert EA Borje, the challenge is not the absence of plans but the lack of alignment in implementing them.

“We do not lack plans. We lack alignment. If conditions are changing, our development path cannot remain the same. When systems align, risk is reduced before it becomes loss,” Borje said.

He added that climate risks have shifted from isolated events to interconnected threats cutting across multiple sectors.

“We are no longer dealing with isolated hazards, but with risks that move across systems,” he said.

Cebu Governor Pamela Baricuatro echoed that assessment, noting that shifting weather patterns are already changing daily life in the province.

“The challenges are changing, the rain is no longer what it used to be. What used to be a simple downpour can now mean flooding, disruption, and danger,” Baricuatro said.

She said the summit was designed to help communities better understand the climate crisis and identify how they can respond.

“This is our way of helping stakeholders better understand the issues, the challenges, and more importantly, how each of us as individuals, communities, and organizations can take part,” she said.

Inclusivity was also a key theme. Corazon Clarin, president of the Cebu Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Network, called for the integration of persons with disabilities into disaster preparedness and climate action planning.

The summit also drew on moral and spiritual perspectives. Cebu Archbishop Alberto S. Uy called for a reflection that leads to concrete steps.

“From our Christian perspective, creation is not just a collection of resources. It is a gift. And a gift must be received with gratitude, used responsibly, and shared generously. When we forget this, we will begin to treat the earth not as a gift, but as an object,” he said.

Uy encouraged simple but collective actions — reducing waste, conserving energy, and cutting unnecessary consumption — as meaningful contributions to addressing climate change.

“We may say, ‘Gamaya ra man akong mahimo (There’s only so much I can do),’ but if millions say that, nothing changes. If millions act, everything changes,” he added.

From the academic sector, Edgar Gahisan, community extension services director of the University of Southern Philippines Foundation, said the summit’s insights could be brought directly into classrooms and partner communities.

“The knowledge that I got through this summit can be re-introduced or re-echoed in my classroom and in our partner beneficiaries for outreach projects because many people should know and learn the impacts of climate change,” Gahisan said.

He also highlighted the value of digital mapping tools introduced at the summit for identifying disaster-prone areas and improving community preparedness.

“People should know these apps so that they can map out disaster-prone areas, they can have knowledge to protect themselves and enough preparedness to really reduce or mitigate the impact of climate change and disasters,” he said.

The summit was organized by the Provincial Government of Cebu through the Cebu Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office. It drew more than 200 stakeholders from government, civil society, academe, faith-based institutions, and the private sector — reflecting the whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach to climate action called for by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[CCC urges LGUs to submit climate adaptation proposals before May 29](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has urged the local government units (LGUs) nationwide to submit Concept Notes (CNs) for the initial screening for the People's Survival Fund (PSF) before the May 29 deadline.

In an interview on Wednesday, the PSF Board said the fund is targeting LGUs with limited capacity, as the government seeks to expand climate adaptation projects in communities vulnerable to disasters and environmental risks.

The CCC said the People's Survival Fund is intended to help LGUs finance climate adaptation projects that are often beyond the capacity of regular local government budgets, and that LGUs that will pass the initial assessment will be invited to submit a full proposal.

"The PSF helps LGUs by providing dedicated climate finance for adaptation projects that address climate risks such as flooding, drought, landslides, and sea level rise," the PSF Board said.

"Through the PSF, LGUs can strengthen local resilience, protect livelihoods and infrastructure, and integrate climate adaptation into local development planning," it added.

The CCC said the Department of Finance, which chairs and serves as the secretariat of the PSF Board, opened submissions for concept notes on climate adaptation initiatives earlier this month.

Established under Republic Act 10174, the PSF receives at least PHP1 billion annually from the national budget through the General Appropriations Act.

The fund may also be supplemented by grants, donations and contributions from development partners and the private sector.

The agency said there is no set number of LGUs targeted for approval under the ongoing call for submissions, and instead, applications will be evaluated based on project quality, climate rationale, readiness, and alignment with national adaptation priorities.

There is also no fixed ceiling for project costs under existing guidelines, as funding depends on the project scope, readiness, and expected adaptation impact, it added.

The CCC said eligible projects include those that cover water resource management, agriculture and fisheries, land management, health systems, infrastructure development, and the protection of natural and coastal ecosystems.

Meanwhile, to help more LGUs access the fund, the CCC vowed to provide technical assistance and conduct capacity-building activities, including nationwide information caravans and support for proposal development.

CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E. A. Borje said expanding climate finance mechanisms remains essential in building a climate-resilient Philippines, particularly for communities considered most at risk from climate-related disasters, in line with the climate resilience agenda of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

Interested applicants may submit concept notes through the PSF Board Secretariat until May 29, 2026, or access additional information through the official Facebook page of the DOF.

“The People’s Survival Fund is a critical tool to translate climate policies into concrete action on the ground. We encourage our local governments and partners to develop proposals that respond to their specific climate risks and protect their communities,” Borje said.

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