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ABS CBN

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By: Katrina Domingo

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By: Jintamas Saksornchai

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CNN

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By: Mohammed Tawfeeq and Laura Paddison

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REUTERS

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THE MANILA TIMES

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By: Franz-Michael "Dan-Dan" Mellbin Danish ambassador to the Philippines and Palau

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

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[Philippines seeks to be 'space-capable, space-faring' by 2030: DFA](#)

By: Katrina Domingo

The Philippines seeks to be a “space-capable and space-faring country by 2030,” Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo said on Tuesday.

Manalo gave the statement in Tokyo where he held a press conference with his Japanese counterpart Hayashi Yoshimasa.

“We recognize the growing importance of the space-based technologies in various aspects of modern society, including climate change and disaster risk resilience,” he said in a speech.

“To realize our goals, we require democratic access to these technologies, a level playing field, and an inclusive and predictable governance regime in both the maritime and outer space domains,” he said.

The Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA), established in 2019, is the first of its kind in Southeast Asia, Manalo said.

Under Republic Act 11363, the PhilSA is mandated to contribute to the development of the Philippines’ national security and development, space education, space research, space industry and capacity building, among others.

“The Philippines aims to establish a pool of trained space scientists, engineers and communicators that will be critical for the country’s future space program and increasing public awareness on its value and benefits,” according to the PhilSA’s website.

“Through international partnerships and collaborations, the Philippines will become a key player in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and global space community by providing significant contributions and capabilities on space S&T applications,” it read.

In 2022, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. told PhilSA to ensure the “mapping” of the country’s “bio-assets” and make this information readily available to government agencies.

BUSINESS MIRROR

Pacific Island leaders say rich countries not doing enough to fight climate change

By: Jintamas Saksornchai

Pacific Island leaders are criticizing rich countries for not doing enough to control climate change despite being responsible for much of the problem, and for profiting from loans provided to vulnerable nations to mitigate the effects.

Leaders and representatives from Pacific Island nations demanded at a UN climate change conference Monday in Bangkok that the world make more effort to put aside differences in combating the environmental impact, especially as their countries emerge from the economic devastation of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prime Minister Mark Brown of the Cook Islands said the finance model for combatting climate change—giving out loans to reduce the impact—is “not the way to go” for countries in his region with such small populations that produce “inconsequential amounts of carbon emissions” but suffer the most from the effects.

He encouraged a shift toward grants or interest-free loans to help ease the financial burden on poorer countries.

“All we’re doing is adding debt to countries that have come out of Covid with increased debt, and to me it is actually quite offensive that we would be required to borrow money to build resilience, and to borrow from the very countries that are causing climate change,” he told The Associated Press.

Brown said his country lost an estimated 41 percent of its GDP because of the pandemic, “a loss of a decade’s worth of prosperity.”

He said he will give this message to leaders when he represents his tiny South Pacific nation with a population of about 17,000 at a summit later this week of the Group of Seven leading industrialized nations in Japan, where he hopes to be able to speak on a more equal footing to the leaders than as “a grateful recipient” to “benevolent donors.”

Palau President Surangel S. Whipps Jr. agreed that financing opportunities are “few and difficult,” and criticized wealthy countries for failing to commit to provide the financial help they had promised, which he said represents only a tiny portion of their prioritized expenditures such as the military.

“We didn’t cause the problem, but now they’re going to make money off of us by giving us a loan so we can pay back with interest,” he told The Associated Press. “So now you have to adapt, but we’ll give you money and make money off of you by giving you that money to adapt. That doesn’t make sense.”

Whipps said Palau’s economy relies heavily on tourism, which is greatly threatened by the impact of climate change. The country’s economic security is also a major issue in Palau’s negotiations with the US on the “Compacts of Free Association,” a broader agreement that will govern its relations with Washington for the next two decades. Those ties grant the US unique military and other security rights in the islands in return for substantial aid.

Whipps said the administration of President Joe Biden has promised approximately \$900 million over the 20-year period. While the amount is “definitely less” than what his country would have wanted, Whipps said he is largely satisfied with the terms, renegotiated from what was achieved during the administration of former President Donald Trump.

While there are some concerns that the US Congress will cut foreign aid and in turn affect this funding, Whipps said he expects Washington will honor the agreement, which he hopes can be signed by both sides in Papua New Guinea next week.

Brown said efforts to tackle climate change and build resilience to its impact, such as better infrastructure and greater water and food security, require lots of money, especially for island nations with small populations. He said \$1.2 billion a year for the region to spend on climate adaptation and mitigation measures would be “a starter.”

“The fact remains that the underlying solution to assist countries that are facing the impacts of climate change is to build resilience, and building resilience takes money,” he said.

CNN

[Syrian president Assad invited to COP28 climate summit by the UAE](#)

By: Mohammed Tawfeeq and Laura Paddison

The United Arab Emirates has invited Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to attend the United Nations' COP28 Climate Summit, which will take place from November 30 in Dubai.

The UAE embassy in Damascus said in a post on Twitter on Sunday that Assad had received an invitation to attend COP28 from Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, president of the UAE and ruler of Abu Dhabi.

Syria state-run news agency SANA also confirmed the invitation on Monday.

If Assad attends, it would be his first global summit since the start of the country's brutal civil war in 2011, and could cause diplomatic tensions for countries which continue to impose sanctions on his regime.

The UN climate summit has already attracted controversy for appointing as its president Sultan Al Jaber, the CEO of the state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, one of the world's biggest oil and gas producers.

A COP28 spokesperson told Reuters in a statement this week: "COP28 is committed to an inclusive COP process that produces transformational solutions. This can only happen if we have everyone in the room."

In March, Assad visited the UAE on an official invitation for the first time since the Syrian civil war began. It was also his first visit to an Arab state since 2011.

Earlier this month, Arab nations agreed to re-admit Syria into the Arab League despite repeated objections from the United States to ending the more than decade-long isolation of a regime that it holds accountable for the deaths of more than 300,000 civilians and displacement of millions in the country's civil war.

GMA NEWS

DFA chief promotes rules-based global order, highlights PH-Japan ties

Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo on Tuesday promoted the importance of a rules-based global order to the Philippines and its intention of closely working “bilaterally, regional, and multilateral fora” with other nations including Japan.

Manalo is currently in Tokyo, Japan to participate in the Munich Leaders Meeting (MLM) and engage in policy discussions from May 14 to 16.

During his remarks before the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo, Manalo shared his perspective on the rules-based order and highlighted three key points.

“The rule of law ensures equity in the global commons. The Philippines recognizes the significance of equitable rules in governing our maritime domain. We take pride in our active involvement in the negotiations for the 1982 UNCLOS, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the future Treaty on the High Seas, through which we demonstrate our commitment to promoting fair and inclusive governance of the maritime commons,” he said.

He also emphasized that the Philippines is on the cusp of attaining “upper middle-income country status” and is projected to become the “16th largest economy in the world” by 2040.

“The strength of the Philippine economy lies in our robust economic fundamentals and a demographic sweet spot. Our primary agenda is to uplift the quality of life of all Filipinos, particularly the marginalized, and securing a peaceful and stable regional environment is paramount to this objective,” he said.

“Multilateralism must thrive as a unifying force and a platform for inclusion and empowerment of nations and their citizens. A rules-based global order forms the foundation for the kind of multilateralism that overcomes differences among actors, facilitates global action in response to challenges such as public health emergencies, humanitarian crises, and climate change, and addresses emerging risks and threats that jeopardize us collectively,” he said.

Manalo said the Philippines consistently endeavored to make multilateralism “more constructive, inclusive, and equitable.”

"The Philippines has played a bridging and moderating role in many multilateral settings where polarities threaten consensus. We will continue to play this role, as it aligns with our overarching objective of fostering international cooperation," he said.

PH-Japan strategic partnership

The DFA chief said the bilateral ties in the coming years between the two countries will be acquiring "stronger contours" across many sectors including in the following areas:

- economic security and resilience through cooperation in critical infrastructure, advanced technologies, and climate-smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;
- more robust people-to-people connections;
- a stronger focus on humanitarian assistance and disaster response as well as marine environmental protection, maritime domain awareness and maritime law enforcement, to implement the 1982 UNCLOS, and,
- new workstreams in cyber-cooperation including connectivity and cyber-security, and, space cooperation, including space domain awareness.

"The Philippines and Japan share a commonality which no other nation in Asia possesses, with the exception of South Korea – our treaty alliance with the United States, our historic and important relationship with America stands alongside our huge economic relationship with China. Hence, our two nations must continue to engage both China and the United States constructively, and support calls for Beijing and Washington to responsibly manage their strategic rivalry," he said.

"Whilst every now and then, current and future challenges and transformations may make it seem that the relationship is treading on unfamiliar ground, the Philippines and Japan can always draw on the strength of our enduring values underpinning our Strategic partnership, and thus, chart a solid course towards mutual benefit, peace, and prosperity for our peoples in the years and decades to come," he added.

The Munich Security Conference, which is the host and organizer of the MLM, the Munich Security Meeting in Tokyo "aims to connect European and American leaders with their counterparts in the Indo-Pacific region to discuss ideas on how to contribute to regional and global stability."

Manalo joined policymakers and experts in sharing insights on a range of issues, including the Indo-Pacific security architecture, nuclear security, and new partnership opportunities arising from the shifting geopolitical landscape in the region and beyond, according to the DFA.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

Industry divided on sugar imports; DA readies P65B projects

By: Jed Macapagal

Stakeholders are divided on the government's importation of additional 150,000 metric tons (MT) of sugar this year but all agree on the need to further stabilize the price and to boost the country's stock of the commodity.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) will pursue four new projects that will improve the local agri-fisheries sector with a total funding of P65.3 billion.

DA's monitoring of public markets in the National Capital Region yesterday showed prevailing retail price of sugar ranges from P86 to P110 per kilogram for refined sugar, P80 to P90 per kg for washed sugar and P78 to P95 per kg for brown sugar.

Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) millsite monitoring showed composite price of raw sugar as of April 30 was 3,247.56 per 50 kg bag.

Butch Lozande, secretary general of the National Federation of Sugar Workers, said in a statement the group opposes this new round of sugar importation as the 440,000 MT of sugar earlier allowed to enter the Philippines has yet to arrive in full.

Lozande said the Department of Trade and Industry in partnership with the DA or SRA must set a price cap on the commodity.

Manuel Lamata, president of the United Sugar Producers Federation of the Philippines, said the additional imports is necessary to pull down retail prices of sugar.

Lamata also said the move is "good for consumers" and will not cause "damage to farmers."

He t did not elaborate.

Last Monday, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who is also the concurrent DA secretary, approved the importation of 150,000 MT.

The 440,000 MT allowed to be imported under Sugar Order No. 6, s. 2022-2023, as well as the 64,050 MT under the minimum access volume mechanism, will not be able to cover the 3.1 MMT demand for the year.

SRA, in its forecast inventory, said the country will have a negative ending stock of 552,835 MT by the end of August. As of May 7, the country had sufficient supply of raw sugar with a stock of 160,000 MT.

Meanwhile, Arnel De Mesa, DA assistant secretary for operations, presented the four new major projects as part of the National Farmers' and Fisherfolk's Month celebration last Monday.

DA said the programs are in partnership with international funding institutions such as the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization.

The projects are Adapting Philippine Agriculture to Climate Change (APA); Philippine Fisheries and Coastal Resiliency Project (FishCoRe); scaled-up Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP); and Mindanao Inclusive Agriculture Development Project (MIADP).

APA has a project cost of P2.3 billion and aims to increase the resilience of agri stakeholders in areas vulnerable to climate change particularly in Cordillera, Cagayan Valley, Bicol, Northern Mindanao and Soccsksargen.

FishCoRe targets to improve management of fishery resources and enhance the value of fisheries production in select fisheries management areas covering 24 provinces with P11.42 billion project cost.

The scale-up PRDP expands the coverage to 82 provinces nationwide with a total project cost of P45.01 billion and aims to improve farmers' and fisherfolk access to markets and increase their incomes from agri-fishery value chains.

MIADP is a P6.63- billion project focusing on 26 ancestral domains in Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Davao Region, Soccsksargen, Caraga and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao to sustainably increase their agricultural productivity, resiliency and access to markets and services.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Ako Bicol solon pitches solar-powered water system to solve crisis, protect environment](#)

By: Gabriel Pabico Lalu

A water system harnessing solar energy to supply households can be the solution to the country's looming crisis while ensuring that the environment is protected, Ako Bicol Rep. Elizaldy Co said.

Co, in a statement, said that such a system is already available in Bicol Region, where solar power was deemed sufficient to provide water supply to "rural, upland, and poor communities" in the area.

The lawmaker, who heads the House Committee on appropriations in charge of crafting the annual national budget, said this after Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno admitted that the country may face a water crisis by 2040.

"I firmly believe that access to clean and safe water is a basic human right. We cannot afford to wait until 2040 to take action," Co said on Monday.

"We must act now to address the water crisis and ensure that every Filipino has access to safe and clean water," he added.

Co was referring to a recent statement from Diokno where the Finance secretary urged local government units to invest in potable water systems using the revenues they receive due to the Mandanas-Garcia ruling.

Diokno said this is needed to address current water supply issues but at the same time, avoid a crisis in the future.

According to Co, local governments can adopt a system, where solar energy is used to pump and distribute the water from the station to the households. Aside from ensuring a continuous water supply, Co said it would allow water cooperatives to explore cleaner means to distribute water, as most systems rely on diesel fuel — a non-renewable source of energy.

"We must prioritize water security, especially in areas that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The solar-powered water supply system is just one of the many solutions that we can implement to ensure access to clean and safe water for all," he said.

Co said that 19th Congress' House of Representatives, led by Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, had allocated P10 billion in 2023 for this exact system, incorporate under the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). The system would be based on the one used by the party-list group.

Several areas in the country, particularly those near Metro Manila have experienced water shortages in recent years, as the Angat Dam can no longer address the needs of a growing population in the metropolis.

A lot of observers and experts have suggested that the government push through with the construction of the Kaliwa Dam in Quezon province, but this has been opposed by pro-environment groups that insist the structure would trample on the ancestral domain of indigenous people in the area.

The groups also claim that the Kaliwa Dam would only cause flooding.

However, the possibility of an El Niño season in the country raised discussions on Kaliwa Dam, as the droughts may lead to fewer rains during the dry season.

Just this May 2, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration announced that there is an 80 percent possibility that El Niño may emerge between June to August 2023, and last until the early part of 2024.

The active phase of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is characterized by above average sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, causing dry spells and droughts in affected Pacific-area countries like the Philippines.

DA launches P65.3-B agri-fishery development projects with World Bank, UN

By: Jean Mangaluz

The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Tuesday said that it launched four different agri-fishery projects worth P65.3 billion together with the World Bank and the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization.

According to the DA, these projects include adapting the country's agriculture, fisheries management, market access, and boosting productivity across different regions.

The DA said that the Adapting Philippine Agriculture to Climate Change has a budget of P2.3 billion, which aims to boost the climate resilience of agricultural stakeholders in Cordillera, Cagayan Valley, Bicol, Northern Mindanao, and Soccsksargen regions.

The second project, which is the Philippine Fisheries and Coastal Resiliency Project, costs P11.422 billion and aims to "improve management of fishery resources and enhance the value of fisheries production," said the DA.

Meanwhile, the Scaled-up Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) will expand its coverage to link farmers to markets across and increase their income in the country with a project cost of P45.014 billion, said the DA.

"The [Mindanao Inclusive Agriculture Development Project], on the other hand, will focus on 26 ancestral domains in Regions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and BARMM to sustainably increase their agricultural productivity, resiliency, and access to markets and services with a project cost of P6.625 billion," said the DA.

"We will press on with our collaboration with members of the House and Senate as we support new legislation for the expansion of opportunities in our rural areas," DA Senior Undersecretary Domingo Panganiban said in a statement.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Bamboo offers business opportunities to oil spill-affected towns

By: Miguel Gil

A private-sector think tank for the agriculture sector has lauded various agencies' efforts to introduce bamboo farming as a supplementary livelihood for communities affected by a recent oil spill in this province.

In an interview on Tuesday, Flor Tesoro, president of the Philippine Bamboo Society of Advocates, said that bamboo cultivation promises huge dividends, but only if farmers are given access to the skills and technology needed to turn the raw material into high-value finished products.

"Bamboo can be processed into many useful products, but farmers often lack the know-how and capital to go into manufacturing. That's where you can really make money," he said in Filipino.

Tesoro, formerly an undersecretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), urged concerned government agencies to take the training they offer beyond the bamboo-planting aspect and help farmers move further up the value chain.

He said government financial institutions should make seed money available to bamboo farmers who want to start small manufacturing businesses, especially after they have passed manufacturing and marketing courses.

The bamboo advocate was reacting to a recently-concluded three-day bamboo production seminar spearheaded by the Agriculture Training Institute (ATI) in Naujan town.

The 21 training participants from this oil spill-affected town were composed of agriculture extension workers and farming enthusiasts, according to the ATI.

The actual training was carried out by the Urban and Biodiversity Research Development and Extension Center (UBRDEC) under the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau.

In the nearby municipality of Gloria, also reeling from the oil spill's effects, the local government unit also completed a bamboo cultivation demonstration earlier this month.

Tesoro also pointed out that bamboo has been proven to absorb heavy metals from the soil.

While stopping short of saying that bamboo can also help filter out the petroleum contaminants in the environment, he said “this is certainly worth further study.”

“Bamboo is a good vehicle for inclusive growth,” said Tesoro.

Rice Congress to tackle emerging threats to productivity

By: Pot Chavez

The upcoming 6th International Rice Congress (IRC), to be hosted by the Philippines for the first time, will focus on providing holistic science-based solutions to the combined impacts of climate extremes, looming rice crisis, conflict, and economic shocks to the rice value chain.

The quadrennial IRC will be held at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City on Oct. 16 to 19.

It is co-organized by the Department of Agriculture (DA).

“We look forward to meeting long-time partners and collaborators as well as new players in the agri-food, climate change, and nutrition sector and learn from each other,” Jean Balié, director general of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), said in a statement on Tuesday.

This year’s theme is “Accelerating Transformation of Rice-Based Food Systems: From Gene to Globe.”

Previous IRC editions were held in Beijing (2002), New Delhi (2006), Hanoi (2010), Bangkok (2014), and Singapore (2018).

Undersecretary Leocadio Sebastian, who heads the DA’s rice industry development arm, said participants can expect to “learn about recent advancements in genetic, digital, and nature-based solutions, offering valuable insights to address the various challenges faced by the rice industry in the Philippines.”

He emphasized that the IRC is responsible for one of the priority areas of the Philippine government, which is achieving food self-sufficiency and improving the lives of Filipino farmers.

The IRC is the world’s largest gathering of rice scientists, industry experts, policy-makers, entrepreneurs, as well as other interested parties from academia and civil society.

The event allows international stakeholders in rice research and production “to share the results of their work; intelligence on market trends, drivers, and developments; and together learn about factors that affect the rice industry and technologies in the short and long term,” according to the Rome-based Global Forum on Agricultural Research.

REUTERS

[Pro-nuclear countries pitch atomic role in Europe's green transition](#)

By: America Hernandez

Pro-nuclear countries made the case the energy form is central to Europe's transition to a low carbon economy on Tuesday, against a background of deep disagreement in the European Union over its role in meeting climate commitments.

Long-standing divisions over nuclear energy in the 27-member bloc deepened this year after countries clashed over whether low carbon nuclear power should count towards renewable energy goals.

Tensions also flared between France, Spain and Germany - Europe's biggest energy consumer, which shut its last nuclear reactors last month - over whether planned infrastructure projects should be able to use nuclear power as an energy source.

The 16 governments meeting in Paris urged the EU to use its energy policies, including green industrial subsidies, to support nuclear. Brussels has said only certain advanced nuclear technologies will receive EU incentives for green industries.

EU Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson told the meeting the EU budget is not allowed to be used for nuclear generation, but planned electricity market design reforms could in theory help the sector obtain outside financing more easily.

She also said the European Commission will in early 2024 provide a study of European nuclear infrastructure and has asked countries to submit investment plans detailing their needs for new nuclear generation, including job requirements.

In addition to Simson, the meeting brought together representatives from 14 EU countries including Belgium and the Netherlands, plus Italy as an observer and the United Kingdom as a non-EU guest.

Representing host nation France, which typically gets more than two-thirds of its power from nuclear generation, Energy Minister Agnes Pannier-Runacher said the pro-nuclear countries would probably reconvene next month.

COMPETITIVENESS AND THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

The European Union as a whole has about 100GW of installed nuclear capacity, producing roughly a quarter of EU electricity.

A declaration signed by participants of Tuesday's summit estimated that if an additional 50GW of new nuclear projects come online by 2050 as planned, it would create more than 450,000 jobs and contribute 92 billion euros (\$101.27 billion) to Europe's GDP.

In addition, when accounting for the fossil fuel imports that would not be required, it would add 33 billion euros to the EU trade surplus.

Czech Energy and Industry Minister Jozef Sikela said the large amounts of CO2-free baseload electricity nuclear energy can provide are an affordable way to achieve decarbonisation while providing enough power for industry.

"This is also about price and affordable energy for European households, which is extremely important for the social contract and for the competitiveness of European industry," he said.

But nuclear generation is not renewable, and relies on non-renewable fuel, which in many cases has been provided by Russia.

Bulgarian Energy Minister Rosen Hristov said his country last year signed new contracts for nuclear fuel with France's Framatome and Canada's Westinghouse, enabling it to stop relying on Russia.

Nuclear power also produces radioactive waste, which anti-nuclear countries including Austria say should encourage governments to focus instead on renewable energy such as wind and solar, to cut CO2.

Climate campaigners also say the focus should be on renewables.

"Every euro invested in new nuclear will not be invested in the energy transition," Greenpeace campaigner Pauline Boyer said at a protest outside Tuesday's meeting.

"None of the new reactors announced by the French government will be ready before, at best, some 15 years, whereas the next decade will be crucial to get Europe on the right climate trajectory," she added.

THE MANILA TIMES

[\[Opinion\] Manila meet to tackle ways to turn 'blue' shipping industry 'green'](#)

By: Franz-Michael “Dan-Dan” Mellbin Danish ambassador to the Philippines and Palau

The world needs a greener shipping industry. Only global action can achieve this. So today, 21 Asian and Pacific nations meet in Manila to — hopefully — set sails toward a greener future.

THE green transition is one of the greatest challenges the shipping sector has ever faced. Necessary changes include a global green shipping framework, energy efficiency, new technologies, investments in renewable energy, and new harbor infrastructure as well as public-private partnerships. All on a massive scale.

However, time is not on our side. The devastating impact of climate change is acute for countries such as the Philippines and the Small Island Pacific States, while air pollution threatens health in many ports and fossil fuel spills and discharges continue to damage marine life and ecosystems.

That is why this week, the Philippines, in partnership with Denmark and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), has invited over 21 Asian and Pacific nations to a conference to discuss how to get started on a pathway toward decarbonizing the shipping sector in the region and globally.

The conference will look at both the opportunities and challenges of greening the blue economy. It will look at the actions needed for international as well as coastal shipping as well as highlight how the transition will impact current and future maritime professionals.

Opportunities include new green jobs, opportunities to partake in green corridors and the development of a green value chain. Up-skilling and re-skilling maritime professionals will play an important role. As will the future close integration of green energy and shipping infrastructure.

Still, change is difficult. And a green transition in the shipping industry is especially challenging due to the size and scope of the ships involved. Additionally, shipping plays a critical role in the international economy. This is especially true for this region's many island states, making it necessary to combine the need for urgency with practical and cost-effective measures.

Navigating toward sustainability

Fortunately, there are options to expedite the industry's transition to greener shipping while balancing the costs. Energy efficiency and improved boat design are great examples. Lots of coastal boats and ships can easily reduce their energy consumption through simple technical improvements — and make money doing so.

At the top of the list is bringing clean fuels to international shipping and electrification for much of coastal shipping. This will take time, money and effort to move toward a decarbonized shipping sector, but it can be done. The key is to work out a solution within the IMO that, on one hand, creates an economic incentive to go green while allowing for a balanced timeline that takes into account the economic and logistical needs and limitations of developing countries.

Meanwhile, several key commercial actors in the shipping industry — including Danish shipping companies — are already embracing the introduction of more sustainable solutions that go far beyond current IMO goals of halving emissions from international shipping by 2050. Underlining that more ambitious goals are both technically and economically feasible when the IMO state is to agree on a new climate strategy at MEPC80 in July.

I am delighted that the Philippines and Manila are hosting this key international shipping event in line with the government's new ambitious Maritime Industry Development Plan (2028) for the Philippine shipping industry that was recently launched by President Marcos, the Department of Transportation and Marina.

For Denmark, our hope is that this week's conference can contribute to paving the way for agreeing on a new ambitious IMO target for a climate-neutral shipping sector. Meanwhile, Denmark looks forward to continued close cooperation with our Philippine partners on the greening of shipping, as well as other critical issues such as the welfare of Filipino maritime professionals and the digitalization of seafarer's books.

Only a global agreement in the IMO can ensure such a rapid and cost-effective transition. Let Manila become the city that launches the shipping industry toward a bright green future!

=END=