



NEWS ROUNDUP

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[Project TRANSFORM: Building resilience through collaboration](#)

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MANILA BULLETIN

[How mangroves help fight climate change](#)

By: Mat Richter

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[\[Opinion\] Coping with El Niño and climate change](#)

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By Anna Leah Gonzales

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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The scorching heat being experienced not only in the Philippines but in other countries as well serves as a stark reminder that it's about time we do our part in helping reverse climate change.

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[DOF signs 5 financing accords for P539-M projects under PSF](#)

By: Reine Juvierre Alberto

The People's Survival Fund (PSF) has been fully appropriated by the Department of Finance (DOF) to provide long-term financing of adaptation projects aimed at enhancing the resilience of communities and ecosystems to climate change.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[CCC commissioner underscores empowering women](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the critical role of women in addressing climate change and advocating for gender equality in ecological governance at the recent Advancing Women's and Girls' Climate Action through Rule of Law Multi-stakeholder Conference.

[Role of academe, youth, IPs vital in climate action](#)

The academe, youth and indigenous people (IP) communities are indispensable in fostering climate resilience and developing climate-active leadership, Climate Change Commission (CCC) vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje emphasized in a forum at the Northern Bukidnon State College.

[Sustainable, resilient agriculture gets boost](#)

The provincial government of Oriental Mindoro, with support from the Department of Trade and Industry and the CCC, established the CPC and PAC to stimulate and foster growth of sustainable food production and processing industry in the province. The projects are fully funded by the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) and the Korean International Cooperation Agency as part of their Climate Resilient and Inclusive Green Growth Project.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS MIRROR

Project TRANSFORM: Building resilience through collaboration

LOCAL government units (LGUs) across the Philippines are commending the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) flagship program, Project TRANSFORM, a multi-stakeholder initiative that aims to empower communities to combat climate change and achieve sustainable development.

Project TRANSFORM has been launched in Ormoc City in Leyte, Malimono, San Francisco, Norte, and Limay, Mariveles, and Orion in Bataan, Rizal province and Quezon City.

Ormoc City Mayor Lucy Marie Torres-Gomez, highlighting the city's role as a pilot site, emphasized the program's effectiveness. Having personally experienced the devastation

caused by typhoons and floods, Torres-Gomez has made climate change a top priority for her administration, noting that the program provides the city with useful resources like training on disaster management, greenhouse gas accounting, and biodiversity profiling.

"The ultimate gratification," said Torres-Gomez, "is not only seeing the environmental, social and economic improvement in the lives of our constituents, but being recognized by the DENR as a successful case study for LGU-based climate action that can be replicated across the nation."

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte echoed this sentiment, expressing gratitude for national recognition of their environmental efforts and looking forward to more green, sustainable, and inclusive climate initiatives for QCitizens.

Surigao del Norte Rep. Francisco Jose "Bingo" Matugas II cited the project's importance in improving disaster preparedness and sustainable development through public-private partnerships.

Project TRANSFORM's pilot testing areas include towns like Del Carmen, Burgos, Malimono, and San Francisco, all severely damaged by super typhoon "Odette," demonstrating how important the project is in helping communities at risk.

Rizal Governor Nina Ynares underscored the transformative impact of Project TRANSFORM on communities, saying, "It would help us based on the transformation of our communities into a more resilient and sustainable home, where our children, our future, and our dreams can be nourished and nurtured."

"Project TRANSFORM is one concrete application of how local governments may move together and continuous consultation with the DENR and all the stakeholders in government and in the private sector as well as academia," Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said.

The project's scope is broad, including land, air, and sea domains, with innovative land inventory systems and inclusivity-driven strategies.

Project TRANSFORM aligns with President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.'s climate directives and represents a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to climate action and economic prosperity.

In order to ensure a sustainable future for the Philippines, Marcos pushes for cooperation between the public and private sectors, businesses, academic institutions, and foreign partners. He also underlined the alignment of economic and climate change objectives.

“The building blocks of progressive, livable and sustainable communities will never be complete without appropriate and responsible action to mitigate and to adapt to the effects of climate change,” he said.

“Collaboration is the key: between and among government offices; between government and the private sector; between industries and the academe; between government and international partners. And most importantly, collaboration between and among our populace.”

MANILA BULLETIN

[How mangroves help fight climate change](#)

By: Mat Richter

Did you know mangroves absorb and store around four times more carbon than most tropical forests? A study in Nature Geoscience journal examined the carbon content of 25 mangrove forests across the Indo-Pacific region. It found that, per hectare, mangrove forests can store up to four times more carbon than other types of forests.

Commonly known for sheltering animals and protecting communities from flooding, coastal trees are a powerhouse at capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide. Conserving them shouldn't be up for debate, especially today when climate change looms large.

Despite their slew of environmental benefits, mangrove forests continue to face threats. In 1918, the Philippines had some 450,000 hectares of thriving mangrove forests, but by 2020, latest data from the DENR-Forest Management Bureau showed only 311,400 hectares were left.

How can we help?

Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) and DENR have teamed up to create a nationwide mangrove map to guide conservation projects, coastal management, and scientific research for mangrove forests.

"Amid the climate emergency and destruction of mangroves, everyone has the ability to make a difference by tracking and protecting our natural resources," said DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga.

The department seeks public help in mapping mangroves across the country. To lend a hand, take photos of mangrove areas, submit them through the app, and contribute to verifying satellite data for the National Mangrove Map.

"Using satellite imagery and spaceborne data, we can develop the methodologies and algorithms to make more frequent and timely monitoring possible, and ultimately this should be directed toward supporting more sound decision-making and policies," explained PhilSA Director General Joel Joseph Marciano Jr.

Protecting coastal trees is a win-win for us humans and the environment. As the International Day for Biological Diversity draws near, it's vital to acknowledge the significance of planting and, ultimately, conserving mangrove ecosystems that help fight the colossal challenges of climate change.

[Opinion] Coping with El Niño and climate change

The Department of Agriculture (DA) reported last week that El Niño's damage to agriculture has reached P6.35 billion. The prolonged dry spell is also drying up reservoirs, making communities struggle to meet basic water needs. El Niño has also disrupted schools and businesses; classes had been suspended and flexible work arrangements adopted to protect the population from heat-related illnesses.

Beyond the damage to our agricultural sector, the health risks, and the inconveniences caused by record-high temperatures, El Niño is also having a negative impact on our economy. In a recent article, "El Niño-nomics: How Intense Heat is Drying Up the Philippine Economy," written by economist JC Punongbayan and published in Rappler, I found out that there is already a study by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) which quantifies the effects of heat increases on our macro-economic indicators. Apparently, increases in temperature reduces gross domestic product (GDP) growth and leads to higher inflation. It brings down productivity not just in agriculture, but in manufacturing and services production as well.

All these underscores the need for all of us to do our share in addressing the challenges of El Niño, La Niña and other climate change phenomena.

El Niño forum

Last month, I was invited to be one of the speakers in the "El Niño Resilience Forum for Microenterprises" that was organized by ARISE Philippines and Restart-Micro-Enterprise, Inc. (RestartME) – two organizations that have been at the forefront of disaster and resilience management in the country. ARISE Philippines is a local network of ARISE (the Private Sector Alliance for Disaster-Resilient Societies), while RestartME is an NGO that extends financial and non-financial assistance to microentrepreneurs affected by disasters through selected microfinance institutions (MFIs).

Attended by more than 100 participants representing MFIs, NGOs, government and practitioners in the field of disaster risk reduction, the forum was a productive venue to assess the impact of El Niño and the adaptation measures that are needed to mitigate its adverse effects. I congratulate the organizers for fostering a deeper understanding of the current status and impact of this phenomenon in the country, and for promoting stakeholder engagement, especially to help MFIs and microenterprises. These sectors are most vulnerable to the ravages of climate change, yet, their role in our economic development cannot be gainsaid.

The briefing by Ms. Ana Liza Solis, OIC of the Climatology and Agrometeorology Division of PAGASA, on the widespread effects of El Nino not only on agriculture but on our water supply was very informative. She showed maps superimposing the provinces worst-hit by El Nino and how long its effects will be felt. Thus, farmers may have to shift to drought-resistant crops or stop planting altogether so as not to suffer losses. I can confirm, from several farm visits, that the effects of El Nino are evident: water sources are dwindling, soil is dry and cracked, crops are withered, and livestock are suffering. I can only surmise the long-term devastating effects of El Nino in agriculture, and how the livelihoods of our farmers hang in the balance.

The situation calls for both government and private sector support to agriculture and agri-based microenterprises. Small farmers and microentrepreneurs are the most vulnerable to economic shocks, extreme weather events and natural disasters. They really need our help.

Developing resilience

MFIs provide financial and non-financial services to small farmers and microenterprises. How can they help their clients cope with El Niño and climate change?

First, they should encourage savings mobilization. MFIs can help their clients prepare for any eventuality by encouraging them to save more. Having savings means they have resources that they can draw upon to deal with the adverse effects of weather disturbances. MFIs should also provide clients with emergency funds and microinsurance. Agricultural insurance, as well as life and health insurance are critical safety nets for farmers and their families.

By conducting Credit with Education sessions during center meetings, MFIs can promote environmental awareness and understanding of climate change. Since MFIs operate at the grassroots level, this intervention will go a long way towards enabling people to mitigate the adverse effects of the El Niño and La Niña phenomena in their communities.

MFIs should partner with local government units, government offices and other groups to implement community projects like tree-planting, rain water harvesting, developing communal irrigation systems and similar activities.

MFIs could also encourage clients to plant trees and keep gardens in their backyards. There are more than 13 million microfinance clients nationwide, per Microfinance Information Data Sharing Inc (MIDAS) data. Imagine if all of them would plant one tree each. Perhaps, the two biggest MFI networks – MCPI and APPEND -- can collaborate and declare a one-day tree-planting activity for microfinance clients. What a great impact this could make!

[\[Opinion\] Record high temperatures: Is this climate change?](#)

The country has been experiencing extremely high temperatures in the last few weeks. As some skeptics argue, there are questions about whether this is due to climate change or just part of natural variability.

A new field of study called attribution science is providing answers to these questions. It aims to determine if specific weather conditions are significantly influenced by climate change and to what extent.

On May 14, the World Weather Attribution (WWA) released the results of a study on the heatwaves in Asia. The study showed that the heatwave events in the Philippines would not be possible without the effect of human-induced climate change. The temperature in the country is 1.2 degrees Celsius higher because of global warming, whereas the contribution of ENSO is only 0.2 degrees Celsius.

The impacts of these heatwaves are considerable, affecting various groups such as construction workers, transport drivers, farmers, and fishers. Many have lost their livelihoods, suffered income reduction, and are at risk of health problems. Offices and schools have been closed to minimize exposure to high temperatures, and there has been an increase in fatalities due to heat strokes.

Looking ahead, the study revealed that as the planet approaches 2 degrees Celsius warmer compared to pre-industrial times, extreme heat waves like the current ones will become more common.

To prepare for a hotter future, an integrated approach to heat adaptation is necessary, requiring multisectoral planning and implementation. Various cooling options such as trees or forests, water, and air-conditioning need to be evaluated while keeping in mind that increased use of electricity will lead to more carbon emissions. The design of buildings and houses must account for rising heat loads, with specific measures differing in rural and urban areas.

The bigger picture is that climate change is real. Now, more than ever, we need to get ready for a future where weather extremes wreak havoc on lives, livelihoods, and ecosystems.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH set to secure \\$10-M readiness support from Green Climate Fund](#)

By Anna Leah Gonzales

The Philippines is set to benefit from the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) USD10 million new program grant to enhance the government's readiness to address climate hazards.

In a statement late Thursday, the Department of Finance (DOF) said the GCF is an international fund under the global climate treaty, created to support low-emission development and climate resilience projects in developing countries.

The DOF said the grant would accelerate the implementation of climate-resilient projects in agriculture, energy, biodiversity conservation, environment, transportation, and waste, among others.

The People's Survival Fund (PSF), which champions adaptation, risk financing, and loss and damage implementation at the local level, is being considered to harness the potential of the grant.

"It is our desire that this partnership with the GCF will deliver a powerful message and serve as a promising model to the international community in striking collective action in addressing climate change," Finance Secretary Ralph Recto said.

"The projects that will be developed with the GCF will not only have a lasting impact on our local communities but also globally in building a more secure and sustainable world."

The DOF hosted the GCF's four-day mission to the Philippines on May 7-10 to bolster its access to climate finance, promote locally-led adaptation, catalyze sustainable development initiatives, and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change across the archipelago.

Among the highlights of the visit was a meeting between GCF leaders and Recto on May 9 to further explore more areas of collaboration.

The Philippines currently serves on the GCF Board with Undersecretary Maria Luwalhati Dorotan Tiuseco as an Alternate Board Member, representing the developing countries of the Asia Pacific.

The country receives funding from the GCF for two single-country and six multiple-country projects, and five readiness grants amounting to USD139.9 million.

Four priority project proposals estimated at USD188 million are in the pipeline for GCF funding, which will leverage at least USD119 million worth of co-financing from the government and other partners.

"Through our partnership with the Department of Finance, we are committed to unlocking the full potential of climate finance in the Philippines," GCF Director for Mitigation and Adaptation German Velasquez said.

"Our focus is on identifying and supporting projects that not only address climate challenges but also promote sustainable development and resilience."

SUNSTAR

[\[Opinion\] School-buildings and other buildings should follow climate-adaptive designs](#)

One real long-term solution to our country's problems during the dry and rainy seasons is having climate-adaptive designs for all our school buildings.

Many school buildings have poor ventilation. Poor ventilation makes indoor temperatures unbearable in the classrooms. Classrooms are also workplaces—the workplaces of teachers and non-teaching personnel. The workplace and occupational health standards stated in laws and rules of the Department of Labor and Employment should be followed.

Classrooms and school buildings should be regarded as special structures requiring standards that are higher than the minimum because they are used by our children. Classrooms and school buildings should have special provisions in the National Building Code and Structural Code of the Philippines.

I suggest the following measures to the DPWH and DepEd:

1. Redesign, build, and renovate classrooms and school buildings to comply with new ventilation standards and green architecture regulations.
2. Classrooms should have higher, insulated, and stronger ceilings, more secured roofing, and larger windows.
3. School buildings in typhoon-prone locations should have special designs to make them resistant to typhoons.
4. School buildings in flood-prone locations should have cisterns and protective barriers that divert the flow of flood waters and drain the campus of accumulated rainwater.
5. Campuses should also have dengue-proofing designs to minimize mosquito breeding, and
6. Functioning clean restrooms and handwashing stations.

Most capital outlays for new public school buildings should be sourced from public-private partnerships (PPP) and official development assistance of the bilateral and multilateral kinds to reduce the burden on the national budget. There should be a loan facility private schools can tap for affordable loans. Education infrastructure bonds with long maturities can also spread over time the capital outlays cost.

THE FILIPINO TIMES

[Climate change worsened PH heatwave in April, study shows](#)

By: Kristin Erika Agustin

Human-induced climate change has worsened the heatwave that the Philippines and other Asian countries have experienced in April, a recent study showed.

World Weather Attribution (WWA) released a report that the climate change caused by human activities has altered the intensity of the 15-day April heatwave in the country, causing temperatures to rise above 40°C.

Using climate models and observation, the research group found that the influence of human-caused climate change in extreme heat showed a strong increase in likelihood and intensity.

“In the Philippines, the change in likelihood is so large that the event (extreme heat) would have been impossible without human-caused climate change,” the research group said.

They added that the current El Niño also had an effect on the heatwave and made it 0.2°C hotter.

The heatwaves, scientists said, are likely to occur once every 10 years during El Niño and once in 20 years without its influence.

Heat-related illnesses

“Heatwaves are arguably the deadliest type of extreme weather event and while the death toll is often underreported, hundreds of deaths have been reported already in most of the affected countries, including Palestine, Bangladesh, India, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, and the Philippines,” WWA said.

As of April 29, the Department of Health has recorded a total of 77 heat-related illnesses in the Philippines, with seven people reportedly dead.

“The seven are reported deaths, but this is inconclusive to heatstroke due to insufficient data,” DOH Epidemiology Bureau head Dr. Vito Roque Jr. clarified in a Senate panel briefing.

Among the regions with the most cases recorded is the Central Visayas with 66 cases, followed by Soccsksargen with six cases, the Ilocos Region with four cases, and Calabarzon with one. Soccsksargen reported six deaths due to the rising heat index, while Calabarzon had one death.

Among school-aged children, 67 heat-related illnesses were reported from ages 12-21 years old, affecting the Ilocos Region and Central Visayas, but recorded no deaths.

“We, the Department of Health, laud the noble intention to shift the conduct of classes to alternative delivery modes in response to extreme heat in the country and thereby mitigate the advent of heat-related illnesses,” Roque said.

School closure due to extreme heat

The extreme heat, according to WWA, has also forced school closures in South and Southeast Asia increasing dropouts and education gaps, especially for low-income families.

“These regions have previously also incurred school lockdowns during COVID-19, increasing the education gap faced by children from low-income families, enhancing the risk of dropouts, and negatively impacting the development of human capital,” the WWA said.

In the Philippines, schools have also suspended face-to-face classes due to increasing heat index, with some areas falling under the danger level.

Aside from schools, the heatwave has also impeded the livelihoods and health of some workers, including construction workers, farmers, transport drivers, and fishermen.

“The recurrent heat events and associated impacts every year in these regions in the past few years have enabled heatwaves to be recognized as a serious hazard of concern in most countries, with proper guidelines and action plans in place,” the group said. “At the same time, cross-sectoral collaborative strategies that focus on providing immediate relief during the hot days are needed.”

THE MANILA TIMES

[Mindoro pushes use of renewable energy](#)

By: Ire Joe Laurente

Amid the warning alerts because of thinning power supply in different parts of the country, stakeholders here are pushing for the harnessing of renewable energy sources like solar, wind and hydro.

In a roundtable discussion held at the Bishop Warlito Cajandig Conference in Barangay Salong here on May 17, the organizing Diocesan Social Action Center (DSAC), the Center for Energy, Ecology and Development (CEED), and Lumina Ventures presented the result of a research paper showing that coal remains the dominant energy source in the country, leaving room to explore and advance the adoption of renewable energy (RE).

"In an archipelagic country like the Philippines, establishing RE zones complements the push for a decentralized renewable energy system. However, RE zones must be seen by local governments as a critical element in pursuing local economic and sustainable development," a research paper stated.

The Department of Energy previously identified what it considers as Competitive Renewable Energy Zones which included Occidental Mindoro in Luzon, Bohol in Visayas and Bukidnon in Mindanao.

But after the conduct of research in Occidental Mindoro, it was deemed important to cover Oriental Mindoro as well based on the proposed one-island approach.

"Under the current energy policy, the main player in energy provision, besides national regulatory agencies, is the private sector. What role can LGUs play in expanding energy access, where 9.5 million or a tenth of Filipinos still have no electricity? And for the rest of the country, what role can LGUs play to ensure a just energy transition to clean sources? This research aims to explore the opportunities and constraints for subnational authorities to expand their role in ensuring a just energy transition and in expanding the accessibility of renewable energy," the research paper added.

A published study of the CEED also analyzed outages data from 2019 to 2023 and confirmed coal plants as the top reason for red and yellow alerts, comprising 51.23 percent of recorded forced outages during said period.

"In the past five years, 51.23 percent of recorded incidents of forced outages were attributed to coal plants. Data show even relatively new fossil fuel plants suffer from forced outages. April 2024's series of red and yellow alerts show that 68.7 percent and 76.0 percent of downed capacity for Luzon and Visayas grids respectively came from coal plants," the CEED study stated.

In a text message on May 18, Fr. Edu Gariguez, head of the DSAC, said that with the current power situation in the country, particularly in Mindoro, it is time for industry players and stakeholders to consider harnessing RE sources.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Philippines gets P575 million to address climate change](#)

By: Louise Maureen Simeon

The Philippines has secured a financial boost of P575 million (\$10 million) to ramp up its programs aimed at addressing the worsening impacts of climate change.

In a statement, the Department of Finance said the Philippines is set to benefit from the new program grant of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) worth P575 million.

This came after the GCF recently concluded a four-day mission in the country to improve access to climate finance and catalyze sustainable development initiatives that would mitigate impacts of climate change.

The GCF is an international fund under the global climate treaty, the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was created to support low-emission development and climate resilience projects in developing countries such as the Philippines.

The GCF's latest grant to the Philippines will accelerate the implementation of climate-resilient projects in the sectors of agriculture, energy, biodiversity conservation, environment, transportation and waste, among others.

The People's Survival Fund, which champions adaptation, risk financing and loss and damage implementation at the local level, is being considered to harness the potential of the grant.

Finance Secretary Ralph Recto said projects to be developed with the GCF would not only impact local communities but will also help build a more secure and sustainable future.

The Philippines currently receives funding from GCF for two single-country and six multiple-country projects and five readiness grants valued at \$139.9 million.

Meanwhile, four priority project proposals worth \$188 million are in the pipeline for GCF funding that will leverage at least \$119 million worth of co-financing from the government and other partners.

The GCF mission also focused on private sector involvement in financing climate solutions, as well as employing innovative approaches and technologies in driving sustainable development.

When climate change hits home

By: Mary Ann LI. Reyes

The scorching heat being experienced not only in the Philippines but in other countries as well serves as a stark reminder that it's about time we do our part in helping reverse climate change.

A report from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) noted that as Earth's climate changes, it is causing extreme weather across the planet. Record-breaking heat waves on land and in the ocean, drenching rains, severe floods, years-long droughts, extreme wildfires and widespread flooding during hurricanes are all becoming more frequent and more intense, it said.

It emphasized how human actions since the Industrial Revolution, primarily the burning of fossil fuels, have caused greenhouse gases to rapidly rise in the atmosphere. As carbon dioxide, methane and other gases increase, they act as a blanket, trapping heat and warming the planet. In response, Earth's air and ocean temperatures become warm, affecting the water cycle, shifting weather patterns and melting land ice – all impacts that can make extreme weather worse.

Meanwhile, Carbon Brief, a UK-based website covering latest developments in climate science and policy, revealed how scientists have published more than 400 peer-reviewed studies looking at weather extremes around the world. The result is mounting evidence that human activity is raising the risk of some types of extreme weather, especially those linked to heat.

An article from National Geographic likewise stressed that while climate change has not been proven to directly cause individual extreme environmental events, computer modeling of real data has shown that it has influenced the frequency and intensity of these events.

Is it too late? Probably, but if each and every one starts contributing even just a little effort to make this world a better place for future generations, then maybe, we might still be able to change the course of events.

Last year, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) launched Project TRANSFORM or Transdisciplinary Approach for Resilient and Sustainable Communities, a local government unit-led multi-stakeholder partnership model that aims to engage LGUs in environment and natural resources governance particularly in increasing their capacities for ENR management, climate and disaster resilience, and socio-economic development.

According to the DENR, the project has been launched in Ormoc City in Leyte; Malimono, San Francisco and Burgos in Surigao del Norte; in Limay, Mariveles and Orion in Bataan; in Rizal province; and in Quezon City and will be replicated in other LGUs.

Project TRANSFORM is composed of five modules developed by the DENR and the Energy Development Corp. that will be introduced to the LGUs to strengthen their existing programs in various areas such as biodiversity, greenhouse gases (GHG) accounting, financial literacy, disaster management and nature-based solutions. Under the GHG accounting module, DENR will bank on carbon accounting to determine how an area contributes to GHG that causes warming and climate change.

Training on disaster preparedness and response and knowledge sharing on earthquake awareness, climate scenario analysis and protocols will be under the disaster management module while carbon policies to grow back forests and natural habitats will be under nature-based solutions module.

Last March, the project was also launched in Sarangani Province. DENR Undersecretary Marilou Erni explained how Project TRANSFORM is one way by which the department is able to harness science and technology and local and traditional knowledge to enhance both policy and practice.

The experience is transforming the mindset of our population about climate change – from apathy to participatory.

Aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Paris Agreement, Sustainable Development Goals and the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, Project TRANSFORM also aims to help communities mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. DENR Secretary Mari Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga recently emphasized that the vision of DENR goes beyond safeguarding the environment to include empowerment and inclusivity, as she highlighted the need to acknowledge different needs, viewpoints and contributions to society.

She said that “by fostering a culture of inclusivity, we can harness the untapped potential of marginalized communities, empower local enterprises and build a more resilient and sustainable economy that benefits everyone.”

The Quezon City government has expressed its commitment to ensure an integrated and whole-of-society approach in tackling the effects of climate change through the said project. Yulo-Loyzaga welcomed the QC government’s 14-point agenda in which environmental protection and climate action are at the core of the city’s intervention.

According to her, because every LGU has different capacities, strengths and vulnerabilities, each needs to constantly balance hazards and exposure through evidence-informed decisions, policies, actions and programs. “We must work together to identify your high-risk priority areas, understand the root causes of vulnerability and identify and invest in appropriate environmental protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction strategies,” Yulo-Loyzaga added.

Meanwhile, the municipality of Del Carmen in Siargao has been included as one of the pilot municipalities for the project. This town was among the worst hit by super typhoon Odette on Dec. 16, 2021.

According to the 2022 World Risk Index, the Philippines topped the list of disaster risk hotspots out of 193 countries. The problem is, every time disaster strikes, we do not know what to do. But we can’t let the DENR and LGUs do all the work. We can help mitigate climate change in our own homes by being mindful of our energy and water usage, by using more energy-efficient appliances, by segregating our wastes, by supporting more sustainable means of transportation, by cutting down on car trips and taking public transportation instead, just to name a few.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS MIRROR

[DOF signs 5 financing accords for P539-M projects under PSF](#)

By: Reine Juvierre Alberto

The People's Survival Fund (PSF) has been fully appropriated by the Department of Finance (DOF) to provide long-term financing of adaptation projects aimed at enhancing the resilience of communities and ecosystems to climate change.

This, after Finance Secretary and PSF Chair Ralph G. Recto signed five financing agreements for local adaptation projects and approved two new projects.

In a social media post on Thursday, the DOF said the five climate adaptation projects signed by Recto, amounting to P539.4 million, were approved by the PSF board in October 2023.

These projects will be implemented in Borongan City, Eastern Samar; Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte; Mountain Province; Maramag, Bukidnon; and Catanauan, Quezon, the DOF added. Meanwhile, the amount to earmark the two new climate adaptation projects reached a total P432 million, which will benefit Surigao del Sur and Ilocos Norte.

In 2023, 11 projects and six project development grants were approved. With the two new projects, the PSF appropriation of P1 billion has been fully committed, the DOF said.

To finance adaptation programs and projects of local government units (LGUs) and accredited local and community organizations, the PSF was established under Republic Act 10174 in 2012.

The DOF, as the PSF Secretariat, initiated measures to expedite the use of funds and streamline the project proposal process, which resulted in the formulation of a Financing Agreement template.

The DOF collaborates with the Climate Change Commission PH (CCC) on projects and programs, including the PSF and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

The CCC is the government's lead policy-making body tasked to coordinate, monitor and evaluate government programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local and sectoral development plans towards a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

The fund is managed by a multisectoral PSF Board, composed of the Secretary of Finance as Chair, the Vice Chairperson of the CCC, the Budget Secretary, the Socioeconomic and Planning Director-General, the Interior and Local Government Secretary, the Chairperson of the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), representatives from the academe and scientific community, the business sector, and the nongovernment organization sector.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[CCC commissioner underscores empowering women](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the critical role of women in addressing climate change and advocating for gender equality in ecological governance at the recent Advancing Women's and Girls' Climate Action through Rule of Law Multi-stakeholder Conference.

CCC Commissioner Rachel Anne S. Herrera underscored the importance of empowering women as leaders in climate action and ensuring their full participation in decision-making processes.

“As representatives of government, institutions, and sectors, we must ensure that women climate advocates are not only represented but empowered to lead the charge in climate action,” she emphasized. “Climate justice and the rights of women and girls are intertwined, and it is imperative that we address the gender disparities exacerbated by climate change.”

Acknowledging the disproportionate impact of climate disasters on women, Herrera stressed the need to amplify women's voices in climate discourse. She emphasized the importance of communication in spreading awareness about the intersectionality of gender and climate issues, advocating for policies that eliminate barriers to women's access to resources and representation.

“The CCC recognizes that women are agents of change, capable of managing resources and driving community resilience,” Herrera stated. “Empowering women and strengthening legal frameworks that address their needs are vital steps towards achieving climate justice and gender equality.”

By engaging with various stakeholders, including women and girls, the CCC endeavors to create a more inclusive and effective approach to tackling environmental challenges.

“We recognize the key role of women in transformative climate action, and as object and instrument of policy, the CCC is committed to promote gender mainstreaming in all aspects of our work,” said CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje.

The CCC has partnered with the International Development Law Organization to host the three-day conference in Mandaue City from 7 to 9 May. Co-organized by the Philippine Commission on Women, Philippine Earth Justice Center, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the event underscores the urgency of collective action in addressing the intertwined challenges of gender inequality and climate change.

Supreme Court Associate Justice Maria Filomena D. Singh delivered the keynote address on the opening day, emphasizing the indispensable contribution of women and girls to the preservation of our planet.

Role of academe, youth, IPs vital in climate action

The academe, youth and indigenous people (IP) communities are indispensable in fostering climate resilience and developing climate-active leadership, Climate Change Commission (CCC) vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje emphasized in a forum at the Northern Bukidnon State College.

“Education is a powerful tool in the fight against climate change. It equips us with the knowledge and skills to understand complex ecological issues and find innovative solutions. But education alone is not enough. We need action, and that is where you come in,” Borje said during his keynote speech.

He noted the importance of evidence-based research in informing public policies, with the academe serving as a crucial source of data and knowledge. Borje also stressed the academe’s role in raising awareness, fostering dialogue and inspiring action within communities.

In the Philippines, climate education is integrated into the education system, with subjects across various fields incorporating disaster risks reduction management, climate change, and climate change adaptation concepts.

Also, the academe contributes in the field of climate research and development, mobilizing Filipino expertise to understand climate change and guide policy and programmatic responses.

The IP communities, on the other hand, play a vital role in managing resources sustainably, conserving ecosystems and biodiversity, and passing down indigenous knowledge from one generation to the next to sustain their communities and the environment.

The Commission reiterated its commitment to educating all Filipino people about climate science, its dangers and potential solutions to foster climate-smart and climate-conscious individuals, industries and communities across the country.

Sustainable, resilient agriculture gets boost

The provincial government of Oriental Mindoro, with support from the Department of Trade and Industry and the CCC, established the CPC and PAC to stimulate and foster growth of sustainable food production and processing industry in the province. The projects are fully funded by the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) and the Korean International Cooperation Agency as part of their Climate Resilient and Inclusive Green Growth Project.

In his last official visit to the United States last May 2023, Marcos committed his utmost effort to boost climate-smart agriculture in the Philippines, institutionalizing a ministerial-level study group to advance the matter.

Months following the visit, the president directed the Department of Agriculture to urgently modernize agriculture and ensure food security for Filipinos through science-based agri practices.

On a more recent note, Marcos also welcomed former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, president of the Assembly and Chair of the Council of Global Green Growth Institute, last February and reinforce GGGI financial and technical interventions towards building climate resiliency in the country.

GGGI's current notable area of work in the country includes boosting climate-smart agriculture and food production which fueled the establishment of the CPC and PAC.

In support of Marcos' initiatives and recognizing the threats that climate change poses to national food production, agriculture and livestock, the CCC highlighted the urgency of supporting the development of climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture across the archipelago through research, development, investments, policies and projects.

"Many Filipinos work in the agriculture sector. One in every four Filipinos, or over 10 million people, depend entirely on agriculture to support themselves and their families. Climate change-induced disasters such as extreme droughts and tropical cyclones, threaten their livelihoods. In the first quarter of this year alone, agricultural losses have already doubled our initial farmer support funds of PHP10 billion. This underscores the critical importance of the agricultural sector," said CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje in his message of support.

Food security amid climate change is included as one of the sectoral outcomes in the draft National Adaptation Plan of the Philippines. It entails mechanisms that ensure the climate-proofing of the Philippine agriculture sector by empowering farmers to use climate information and services and climate-benign technologies to enable sustainable food production.

In response to the president's call for a climate-smart agriculture sector, the CCC is committed to build the capacity of farming communities and cooperatives to adapt to the devastating effects of climate change.

By forming partnerships with international, local and private organizations, and through the implementation of robust green policies and projects, the CCC aims to further strengthen policy framework and create an enabling environment for a climate-smart and climate-resilient agriculture industry in the Philippines.

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