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MANILA BULLETIN

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By: Derco Rosal

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS WORLD

[Climate Change Commission urges LGUs to strengthen climate plans as dam levels drop](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) on Wednesday urged local government units (LGUs) to strengthen their Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs) as water levels in major dams continue to decline amid prolonged dry conditions and high heat indices.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[CCC cites stronger local climate plans as Luzon dam levels decline](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has warned that declining water levels in major Luzon dams underscore the urgent need for stronger local climate action plans to effectively address growing water security risks posed by prolonged dry conditions and extreme heat.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[8 dams below normal; 6 more at critical levels](#)

By: Josiah Antonio

Extreme heat has pushed six dams in Western Visayas to critical levels while eight major dams in Luzon have also started to go below their normal water levels.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ASIA NEWS NETWORK

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The centre will contribute to a more coordinated and effective ASEAN region in addressing climate change alongside international partners, while also supporting the climate change policy and goals of ASEAN member states.

With the consent of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, the Prime Minister's Office through the Brunei Climate Change Office (BCCO) announced that, upon receiving the Instrument of Full Powers by His Majesty, Minister of Development Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Muhammad Juanda bin Haji Abdul Rashid as Brunei Darussalam's representative to the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment (AMME), signed the Instrument of Ratification to ratify the Agreement to Establish the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change (ACCC).

The centre will contribute to a more coordinated and effective ASEAN region in addressing climate change alongside international partners while also supporting the climate change policy and goals of ASEAN member states, both in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the future negative impacts of climate change.

The minister signed the Agreement to Establish the ACCC on August 23, 2023 on the sidelines of the 17th AMME in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic. Subsequently, on February 10, 2025, the Agreement was signed by 10 ASEAN member states.

As part of Brunei Darussalam's process to ratify the agreement, the Instrument of Ratification signed by the minister on April 20 is deposited with the ASEAN Secretariat as the final step for Brunei Darussalam to ratify the Agreement.

Currently, the Agreement is in the process of being ratified by other ASEAN member states.

The Agreement will only enter into force and allow the centre to be fully established 60 days after the sixth ASEAN member state has deposited its Instrument of Ratification with the ASEAN Secretariat. The signing of the Instrument of Ratification by the minister signals Brunei Darussalam's commitment to the establishment of ACCC and its readiness to enact an Implementation Act to grant ACCC privileges and immunities as well as autonomy in line with what is accorded to diplomatic missions in Brunei.

Brunei Darussalam also contributed USD1.5 million to fund the centre's operations for the first three years after its establishment.

The Brunei Darussalam National Climate Change Council and the Brunei Climate Change Office will continue to play a key role in supporting the establishment of the ACCC and encourages other ASEAN member states to ratify the Agreement to Establish the ACCC.

The ACCC is an ASEAN regional initiative to establish a climate change centre to be hosted in Brunei Darussalam, aimed at strengthening regional cooperation among ASEAN member states and international organisations, as well as publish policy recommendations to better address climate change.

MANILA BULLETIN

[Philippine banks face strict new sustainability rules by 2027](#)

By: Derco Rosal

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) is pushing to integrate mandatory sustainability and climate-related reporting standards into the domestic banking sector as early as 2027, aligning the country's financial system with international governance benchmarks.

The initiative builds on existing frameworks established by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which previously mandated the adoption of Philippine Financial Reporting Standards S1 and S2. Those rules, covering sustainability and climate-related financial disclosures, closely track the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) to ensure local lenders meet a global baseline for comparable reporting.

According to the BSP, the shift is increasingly urgent as “climate change increasingly poses risks to financial stability and stakeholders demand more reliable and decision-useful information.”

For this transition, the BSP is proposing specific amendments to Section 153 of the Manual of Regulations for Banks (MORB).

It noted in a draft circular issued on May 15 that the move aims to “harmonize regulatory reporting requirements across the financial system, strengthening market discipline, improving the quality of sustainability information, and enabling stakeholders to make more informed assessments of banks' risks, opportunities, and resilience.”

Such a move is expected to simplify reporting for banks operating under both the SEC and the BSP jurisdictions while enhancing transparency.

Given varying sizes of domestic players, the BSP is proposing that the guidelines should adopt a “tiered implementation schedule for universal and commercial banks (UKBs) and publicly listed banks, based on size and market capitalization, consistent with the principle of proportionality.”

This would ensure that the largest and most systemically important institutions lead the way.

In particular, the BSP noted that the implementation will begin in 2027 for Tier 1 banks, “with subsequent phases covering other institutions.” These later phases are intended to support capacity building and allow smaller players time to align with global benchmarks effectively.

Even for specialized lenders, the rules will be adjusted to fit their respective operational scale.

“For non-listed thrift, rural, cooperative, digital, and Islamic banks, the Circular prescribes tailored disclosure requirements,” the draft read.

These banks will continue following their existing disclosure requirements under the MORB, but with minor adjustments to support transparency while avoiding excessive administrative burden.

This latest proposal is a continuation of the BSP's 2020 Sustainable Finance Framework, which first integrated environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations into bank risk management.

Under stringent reporting, financial resources could be effectively channeled to economic activities that are environmentally sustainable, responsible, and resilient.

[The worst climate future is less likely, but the best one is slipping away, scientists say](#)

Scientists are jettisoning their worst and best case scenarios for a warming world as no longer plausible. That shows how modest gains in the fight to curb climate change have dialed back the most catastrophic of future heating but also confirmed that there's no chance to limit warming to the international goal set in 2015.

Researchers' new list of seven plausible carbon pollution scenarios for the future are pushing aside two staples of climate policy: the extremes on either end.

The extremes have become less probable in the past several years because of how we power our world. Carbon dioxide, released from the burning of gas, oil and coal, is chiefly responsible for warming. Increasing use of green energies, like solar, wind and geothermal, which don't emit carbon dioxide, have lowered top end carbon pollution projections. However, because those changes haven't been fast enough, the bottom end projections have risen.

The Paris climate agreement in 2015 set a goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times, or the mid-1800s, giving rise to the mantra "1.5 to stay alive," but now scientists say that even their best case scenario still shoots past that signature temperature mark. On the other end, those same new scenarios no longer include the coal-heavy future that would lead to 4.5 degrees Celsius (8.1 degrees Fahrenheit) of warming by 2100, a scary scenario that many scientific studies used in their future projections.

The new proposed worst case scenario has an end-of-the-century warming of about 3.5 degrees Celsius (6.3 degrees Fahrenheit), a full degree (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) less than the old scenario, while the updated best case future is a couple tenths of a degree Celsius (0.36 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than previously theorized, squeezing past the Paris goal, said climate scientist Detlef Van Vuuren of Utrecht University, lead author of a recent study laying out future scenarios.

"There is kind of a narrowing of the futures. It cannot be as bad as we thought, but it cannot be as good as we hoped," said Johan Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany.

The scenarios include a "middle" one where by the end of the century the world warms 3 degrees Celsius (5.4 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times, which is roughly the path society is currently on, scientists said. The world is now about 1.3 degrees Celsius (2.3 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times. Even tenths of a degree of warming cause problems for Earth's ecosystems, as species die off, fresh water becomes more scarce and extreme weather events, such as flooding and heat waves, intensify.

It's too late to keep below 1.5 degree goal

Because carbon pollution keeps rising globally and stays in the atmosphere for about century, the best case scenario is for warming to shoot past the 1.5 degree mark, peak at 1.7 degrees Celsius (3.1 degrees Fahrenheit) for maybe as long as 70 years, and eventually somehow come

back down below 1.5 degrees if a technology can be designed to remove massive amounts of carbon from the air, said nine of the 10 scientists interviewed for this article. The world is warming at a pace of a tenth of a degree Celsius (nearly 0.2 degrees Fahrenheit) every five years, they said.

“This is just physics,” said climate scientist Bill Hare, CEO of Climate Analytics, a policy institute. “We’re losing the ability to limit warming even by two degrees without strong action and people need to be aware of that and be aware that it’s a political failure. It’s not an act of God or anything. It is just because politicians in many places are not acting fast enough.”

The 1.5 goal is not just a number, said Cornell University climate scientist Natalie Mahowald, co-author of a U.N. science report detailing the harms of going higher than 1.5 degrees.

“There’s a lot of implications for, you know, not being able to meet the 1.5. And, of course, the people who will suffer the most are on the small island developing states,” Mahowald said. “Some of them will go underwater.”

Highest warming scenario changes spark debate

American Enterprise Institute’s Roger Pielke Jr. said changes to the highest end scenario matter because it was presented as a likely future that could come true if nothing changed. Thousands of scientific studies have been based on that highest warming scenario, called RCP8.5, even though research had already shown it to be improbable.

“It was always presented as where we were headed absent explicit climate policy,” even though it was based on out-of-date and incorrect coal-heavy energy theories, Pielke said in an email.

Keywan Riahi, lead author of the 2011 study that introduced that scenario, said when it was designed the high-end case was not where scientists thought the world was heading.

“It was never a likely case. It was basically, given the underlying studies in the literature at that time, a plausible higher bound of what possible emissions could look like. This is very different than if you would ask the question, what is now the most likely scenario,” said Riahi who is director of the Energy, Climate and Environment Program at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Austria.

It’s a success story, said Riahi, because “in the last 10 years or the last 15 years, the cost of renewables, particularly solar and wind, have fallen by almost 90%.”

“The risks of climate change have not disappeared,” responded study author and scientist Van Vuuren. “The good news is that we did not follow the most dramatic emission pathway. However, we are still heading towards a future with significant climate impacts; a future we should avoid.”

A big asterisk looms

While the upward curve of emissions is flattening, there's a factor that could still make the older high end temperature estimates come true, Mahowald, Rockstrom and Hare said. That's because the newest batch of scenarios only look at emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, which is the control knob that humans can turn.

Nature has another knob of its own referred to as climate feedbacks, which humans don't control. Scientists have had a hard time projecting climate feedbacks, and that can add another half a degree Celsius (nearly a degree Fahrenheit) of warming on top of what's caused by emissions.

Those feedbacks include release of massive amounts of heat-trapping carbon now being stored in the world's oceans, in forested areas and in the Amazon, along with changes to ocean currents and cloud reflectivity, Rockstrom said.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Pressure mounts at United Nations for climate change 'lifeline'](#)

The United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday considers a resolution reinforcing states' obligations to combat climate change, a long-awaited move toned down under pressure from major greenhouse gas emitters.

"We can't take any more disaster and destruction. We all have a right to a future, and this UN resolution is the lifeline — we need to grab it," said Vepaiamele, a 17-year-old from Vanuatu who testified at the International Court of Justice in 2024.

The General Assembly, driven by Pacific island nation Vanuatu, asked the ICJ that year for an advisory opinion on states' responsibility to honor their climate commitments.

The opinion issued last summer exceeded the expectations of climate advocates with the court ruling it was "unlawful" for countries to neglect their climate commitments, opening the door to "reparations" for affected countries.

To add momentum to that non-binding opinion, on which courts around the world can nevertheless rely, Vanuatu presented a draft resolution in January aimed at putting it into practice.

Adoption of the resolution could "mark a turning point in the global climate fight," said Alice Nell, who led action group Avaaz's global campaign backing the resolution.

But the text was altered significantly after negotiations among states, with climate change taking a back seat to national security or industrial interests in many countries.

The resolution would welcome the ICJ opinion "as an authoritative contribution to the clarification of existing international law" and calls on states to "comply with their respective obligations" to protect the climate.

'Watered down' text

It also emphasizes the measures needed to keep global warming limited to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, particularly "transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems."

That would be in keeping with a goal adopted by nearly 200 countries during a global climate meeting in 2023.

However, the creation of an "International Register of Damage" to compile evidence of "damage, loss or injury attributable to climate change" has vanished from the current text, an initial draft of which was viewed by AFP

The biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions routinely oppose any mechanism that could force them to pay reparations to victims of climate disruption.

The draft resolution nonetheless states that according to the ICJ, a state in violation of its climate obligations may be required to pay “full reparation to injured states.”

Climate advocates now hope the idea of a damage registry will be reconsidered, bolstered by a report from the UN chief.

Despite the watered-down text, it is unlikely that its adoption will be by consensus, as was the case for the 2024 resolution, according to diplomatic sources, who expect a vote will be requested by at least one of the reluctant states.

Some holdouts have already submitted amendments to the text which was sponsored by more than 60 countries.

Oil-producing nations including Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Nigeria, and Iran have submitted amendments that would remove some references cementing the ICJ’s opinion as a guiding framework for climate action.

Vanuatu has warned against further weakening the text by straying from the ICJ line.

“The world is watching,” said Lee-Anne Sackett, Vanuatu’s special envoy for climate justice.

“The question before us is not whether climate change is real or urgent, but whether the United Nations will collectively uphold the rule of law in the face of it.”

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Fair weather, chance of sudden rains expected across PH Thursday

By: Ma. Teresa Montemayor

Warm weather will continue to prevail across most parts of the country as the easterlies remain the dominant weather system affecting Luzon and the Visayas, the weather bureau said Thursday.

In its 4 a.m. forecast, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, and the Visayas will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms caused by the easterlies.

Mindanao will similarly experience partly cloudy to cloudy conditions with isolated rain showers but driven by localized thunderstorms.

Despite the general warmth, the weather agency warned the public that severe thunderstorms could trigger sudden flash floods or landslides in vulnerable areas.

Meanwhile, coastal waters across the archipelago, including Northern Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao, are expected to remain slight to moderate, as light to moderate winds blow from the east, northeast, and southeast.

The sun rises at 5:27 a.m. and sets at 6:18 p.m.

VATICAN NEWS

[What indigenous communities teach us about climate change](#)

By: Federico Citterich

“They really have a perfect relationship with the environment,” says Bernardo Groschopp as he sits down in front of me. Around us, the Drake Passage is growing increasingly rough – the so-called “Drake Shake”. The waves reach a height of almost seven metres, and we can barely stay seated without falling.

I had the pleasure of meeting Groschopp, the historian aboard HX Expeditions’ MS Fridtjof Nansen, during my latest press trip to Antarctica with the company. On our way back to Ushuaia, Argentina, he delivered a lecture on indigenous populations and kindly agreed to chat with me right afterwards.

“I’ve had interactions with populations from both the Arctic and Tierra del Fuego,” says Groschopp. His remark highlights one of the key differences between the Earth’s two polar regions: the Arctic is home to indigenous peoples, while Antarctica – a frozen continent isolated from the rest of the world – has none. To encounter the southernmost indigenous communities, one must travel to the far south of South America, in Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego.

A long-lasting relationship with the environment

“But regardless of their origin, they really do care about the environment in the same way,” Groschopp adds. As he goes on to explain why, he says something I will hardly ever forget.

“Some time ago, a colleague of mine went fishing with the Sámi, an indigenous community of the Arctic Scandinavia,” he recalls. “At one point they stopped fishing and when my colleague asked why, they replied – almost confused – that they had already caught what they needed, so there was no need to fish anymore.”

Listening to him, I couldn’t help thinking about how differently we tend to treat the environment. Where those fishermen stopped once they had what they needed, we often keep going – catching more fish, extracting more resources, pushing natural systems far beyond what they can sustain. And in doing so, in addition, we frequently end up with more than we actually need, much of which eventually ends up as waste.

“On the contrary, these indigenous populations use everything they can from what they catch or gather,” Groschopp notes. “Meat, skin, bones – everything is utilized and nothing is wasted.”

As he explains this, I notice that one of the slides from his presentation is still on the screen, showing a group of Arctic indigenous people hunting a seal. That’s when a new question comes to my mind: how is climate change–driven migration of animals affecting these communities?

The impact of a changing climate

“In the past – Groschopp says – the Inuit, an indigenous community of North America, travelled all the way to Greenland following the marine animals they depended on as a warmer climatic period affected their migration patterns.” Indeed, many animal species respond to warming climates by migrating toward higher latitudes in search of suitable environmental conditions.

“Now, however, most Inuit are no longer nomadic,” Groschopp explains. “This means that when animals migrate they have to adapt and shift to hunting different species.”

But that is not always possible. Some animals require different boats, weapons, or travel distances, which can make the hunt too costly or dangerous; in some regions – moreover – there may simply not be many substitute species that provide similar amounts of food or materials.

But climate change poses other challenges for these communities as well. “Just think about thawing permafrost in the Arctic,” Groschopp adds. “Many indigenous populations live on land that was once permanently frozen, but as permafrost thaws the ground can collapse, damaging houses, roads, and water systems.”

Just as I thought he was done and I was about to ask another question, Groschopp continued, listing a whole range of other problems that thawing permafrost creates for Arctic communities.

“Combined with reduced sea ice – he explains – permafrost thaw can make Arctic coasts more vulnerable to erosion from waves and storms, forcing communities to relocate. Or again, it can alter the course of streams and rivers, making traditional hunting routes unreliable.”

But that’s not all. Thawing ground also alters vegetation and wetlands, affecting animal behaviour and movement patterns. “And that brings us back to the issue of species migration,” Groschopp notes.

“I think it’s striking how many problems thawing permafrost can create for these communities,” he then adds. “And we should not forget that this process also releases enormous amounts of greenhouse gases such as methane and carbon dioxide, creating a feedback loop that further alters Arctic environments.”

Those invisible margins

Climate change is not the only force reshaping the lives of indigenous communities. Across both the Arctic and the southern tip of South America, political borders – drawn decades or even centuries ago – continue to affect how these people can move across lands their ancestors once travelled freely.

“Geopolitics has a major impact on the lives of these communities,” Groschopp explains. “Of course, what is happening today affects them deeply, but decisions made in the past – such as the drawing of borders – also continue to shape their lives.”

“Years ago – Groschopp continues – these people could move from one place to another without restriction, whereas today they need a visa to cross national borders.”

A shared knowledge

Borders may divide the Arctic and the southern tip of South America into nations, but the environmental changes unfolding across these regions ignore such boundaries. And in many cases, the first people to notice these changes are the communities that have lived in these landscapes for generations.

Today, scientists are increasingly working with them to better understand these transformations. Hunters, fishers and local residents often notice shifts in sea ice, wildlife movements or seasonal patterns long before they appear in scientific datasets. By combining this knowledge with modern scientific tools such as satellite data and climate models, researchers are gaining a more complete picture of how rapidly these environments are evolving.

But that’s not all. “These communities not only collaborate with scientists and researchers, but they also share their knowledge with explorers,” Groschopp points out. “At the beginning of the twentieth century, for example, Nansen and Amundsen spent time living with Inuit communities, learning from them how to survive and travel in polar regions.”

Fridtjof Nansen and Roald Amundsen are among the most famous polar explorers in history. Both Norwegian, they played a central role in the exploration of the Arctic and Antarctica at the turn of the twentieth century. Nansen led groundbreaking expeditions across Greenland and the Arctic Ocean, while Amundsen became the first person to reach the South Pole in 1911.

“But indigenous communities had been sharing their knowledge with explorers long before that,” Groschopp says.

One well-known example comes from the ill-fated Franklin Expedition. In 1845, British explorer Sir John Franklin set out with two ships, HMS Erebus and HMS Terror, in search of the Northwest Passage through the Canadian Arctic. The expedition disappeared with all 129 men on board, and for more than 160 years, the wrecks remained missing.

“However, the Inuit knew where the accident had happened,” Groschopp notes. “For more than a century, we simply didn’t listen to them.”

Soon after the expedition vanished, in fact, Inuit living in the region began sharing what they had seen with British search parties. They spoke of encounters with exhausted European sailors travelling south across the ice, and of ships trapped and later abandoned in the frozen waters. They also reported finding objects that clearly belonged to the expedition, as well as camps and bodies left behind along the route. “It’s only thanks to them that we finally found the wrecks,” Groschopp adds.

“I think it’s very ironic,” he continues. “These people know so much about regions that we know so little about, and they care deeply about them. Yet we often fail to listen to them, and in doing so we also endanger them.”

This failure is not new. Many of these communities were displaced or persecuted by early Europeans in their own homelands, in some cases to the point of near extinction. As a result, entire systems of knowledge and cultural traditions have been irretrievably lost – sometimes simply because there were no surviving generations to pass them on, and often because those who encountered them did not consider their preservation important.

“If anything, we should be learning from them far more and showing them the respect they deserve,” Groschopp adds.

As he spoke, his voice almost broke with emotion, his Argentine accent suddenly more pronounced. A reminder that he comes from the same lands where many of the communities he speaks about still live – and that he understands them perhaps more deeply than many of us ever will.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS WORLD

[Climate Change Commission urges LGUs to strengthen climate plans as dam levels drop](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) on Wednesday urged local government units (LGUs) to strengthen their Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs) as water levels in major dams continue to decline amid prolonged dry conditions and high heat indices.

The CCC said water security has become an urgent concern, noting that key dams in Luzon have recorded lower water elevations based on monitoring by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

Angat Dam in Bulacan, which supplies over 90% of the capital's potable water, dropped to 177.05 meters as of Wednesday, down from its normal high level of 210 meters, PAGASA said in its dam monitoring.

Other major dams, such as Ambuklao, Binga, San Roque, Pantabangan, and Magat, also recorded lower water levels.

Ipo and La Mesa dams, meanwhile, saw slight increases during the same period.

"For a water-stressed, disaster-prone country, climate change is not simply an ecosystem issue with economic consequences. It is an existential issue for our economy, for our communities, and for our families," Robert E.A. Borje, vice chairperson and executive director of CCC said in a statement.

"Buhay, kabuhayan, at kinabukasan nating lahat ang nakataya, and water sits at the center of that reality [Life, livelihoods, and our future are all at stake, and water sits at the center of that reality]," he added.

Under the Climate Change Act, LCCAPs serve as the main framework for integrating climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction into local development planning. The CCC said these plans should go beyond disaster response and focus on long-term resilience building.

The commission called on LGUs to integrate drought risks, El Niño conditions, and water scarcity into local planning tools such as Comprehensive Land Use Plans and development investment programs.

It also urged the adoption of measures such as watershed protection, rainwater harvesting, climate-responsive land use planning, early warning systems, and stronger community preparedness.

The CCC said these local efforts are aligned with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) under the Marcos administration, which prioritizes water security, food security, ecosystem resilience, and climate-resilient infrastructure.

As climate risks intensify, the commission called for a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to strengthen adaptive capacity and reduce climate-related losses and damages at the local level.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[CCC cites stronger local climate plans as Luzon dam levels decline](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has warned that declining water levels in major Luzon dams underscore the urgent need for stronger local climate action plans to effectively address growing water security risks posed by prolonged dry conditions and extreme heat.

In a news release Wednesday, CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje highlighted the importance of anticipation, especially for local government units (LGUs), to be able to address the issue through science-based, forward-looking planning, and in the formulation and implementation of their Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs).

“For a water-stressed, disaster-prone country, climate change is not simply an ecosystem issue with economic consequences. It is an existential issue for our economy, for our communities, and for our families,” Borje said.

“Buhay, kabuhayan, at kinabukasan nating lahat ang nakataya (Our life, livelihood, and future are at stake), and water sits at the center of that reality.”

Monitoring by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) showed that major dams in Luzon, particularly the Angat Dam, have recorded low water levels.

Angat Dam in Bulacan, which serves as the main water source for Metro Manila, has dropped to 177.41 meters on May 19, far below its normal level of 210 meters.

PAGASA also recorded lower water elevations in Ambuklao, La Mesa, San Roque, Pantabangan, Ipo, and Magat dams.

The CCC reiterated its earlier warnings that “climate risks are no longer distant projections, but realities already affecting communities and critical resources across the country”.

Amid these realities, the CCC urged LGUs to integrate climate adaptation measures, such as sustainable water management, watershed protection, rainwater harvesting, and early warning systems, into their local development plans.

Under the Climate Change Act, LCCAPs serve as the primary mechanism for mainstreaming climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction into local development planning.

These plans are intended not only for disaster response but more importantly for preparedness, risk prevention, and long-term resilience-building.

The CCC also highlighted that these efforts support the country's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) under the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., which prioritizes water security, food security, ecosystem resilience, and climate-resilient infrastructure.

"The NAP emphasizes anticipatory and preventive action to reduce climate-related losses and damages, especially at the local level where climate impacts are most directly experienced," the CCC said.

As climate variability intensifies, Borje said the CCC is pushing for a more coordinated whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to safeguard vulnerable communities and strengthen their adaptive capacity.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

8 dams below normal; 6 more at critical levels

By: Josiah Antonio

Extreme heat has pushed six dams in Western Visayas to critical levels while eight major dams in Luzon have also started to go below their normal water levels.

According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) yesterday, San Roque Dam has the largest gap at 227.3 meters against its normal water level at 280 m. Angat Dam is now at 177.05 m against its normal water level of 210 m and Pantabangan Dam is now at 187.97 m compared to its 216 m normal water level.

Ipo Dam is at 100.04 m, slightly lower than its 101.1 m normal water level, La Mesa Dam is at 79.89 m against 80.15 m and Magat Dam at 182.78 against its normal level of 193 m.

The bigger dams are also now below their normal water levels, with Ambuklao Dam at 740.82 m against its 752 m normal water level while Binga Dam is at 567.91 m compared to 575 m.

GMA News reported that six dams in Western Visayas are now at critical water level.

The dams reported were Barotac Viejo River Irrigation System, Panakuyan RIS dam, Sibalom Diversion Dam, Tipuluan Dam, Solong Dam and Mambusao RIS dam.

The National Irrigation Administration said it is putting mitigation measures in place to help farms and farmers cope with the effects of the dry season.

The Climate Change Commission said that water stress and prolonged dry periods are among the climate-related hazards that local government units must anticipate and address through science-based, forward-looking planning, particularly through the formulation and implementation of local climate change action plans.

Danger heat index

PAGASA yesterday said 39 areas were at danger-level heat index with Catarman, Northern Samar recording the highest at 47 degrees Celsius followed by Baler, Aurora at 46 degrees Celsius.

Dagupan City, Pangasinan; Tarlac City; Virac, Catanduanes; Roxas City, Capiz; and Maasin, Southern Leyte recorded 45 degrees Celsius.

The areas that logged 44 degrees Celsius were Tuguegarao City; Echague, Isabela; Camiling, Tarlac; Daet, Camarines Norte; Siquijor; Dipolog, Zamboanga del Norte and Butuan City.

Bacnotan, La Union; Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya; San Jose, Occidental Mindoro; Puerto Princesa City and Cuyo, Palawan; Iloilo City, and Guiuan, Eastern Samar hit 43 degrees Celsius.

The remaining areas that recorded 42 degrees Celsius are Laoag City, Ilocos Norte; Aparri, Cagayan; Casiguran, Aurora; Iba, Zambales; Muñoz, Nueva Ecija; Subic Bay, Olongapo City; San Ildefonso, Bulacan; Hacienda Luisita, Tarlac City; Infanta and Alabat, Quezon; Coron and Aborlan, Palawan; Legazpi, Albay; Masbate City; Dumangas City, Iloilo; Borongan, Eastern Samar; Davao City and Surigao City.

Meanwhile, PAGASA said the easterlies will cause partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms in Metro Manila and parts of Mindanao.

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