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By: AC Coloma

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[In Meeting With Bolkiah, Marcos Underscores Unity In Facing Global Woes](#)

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THE MANILA TIMES

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Environmental migrants, particularly from small island developing states (SIDS) constantly facing threats due to climate change, may soon find the Philippines their refuge once a bill that would allow them entry gets Congress' nod.

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The Philippine Delegation (PhilDel) ramped up its series of interagency meetings to further solidify preparations for the 60th Session of Subsidiary Bodies (SB60) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Bonn, Germany from June 3 to 13.

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By: Kristina Maralit

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has called for collective and inclusive action to address issues that are detrimental to the health of ecosystems and all life forms in the country.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

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State weather bureau PAGASA declared the start of the rainy season on Wednesday. In a statement, PAGASA administrator Nathaniel Servando said scattered rain showers, frequent thunderstorms, and Typhoon Aghon "signifie[d] the start of the rainy season in the country."

The weather agency said that "above-normal" rainfall is possible in some areas, especially towards the end of the year, due to the developing La Niña.

"PAGASA will continue to monitor the weather and climate situation of the country. The public and all concerned agencies are advised to take precautionary measures against the adverse impacts of the rainy season, Habagat, and the impending La Niña such as floods and rain-induced landslides," it said.

Aghon recently brought heavy floods to different parts of Quezon, Laguna, and Batangas, and intermittent rains in some parts of Metro Manila.

The death toll from Aghon has risen to seven, official figures showed Wednesday.

The first storm to hit the country this year made landfall on the central island of Samar late Friday before sweeping northwest to the most populous island of Luzon.

More than 8,000 people were forced to flee their homes as heavy rain caused widespread flooding, power outages and damage to crops.

About 20 storms and typhoons hit the Philippines or its surrounding waters per year, damaging homes and infrastructure and killing hundreds of people.

BUSINESS WORLD

[Open Philippines to climate change refugees from Pacific nations — congressmen](#)

Congressmen are seeking to open the Philippines to refugees from climate-stricken nations to provide them safe haven in times of natural disasters and emergencies.

House Bill (HB) No. 10490, filed last Monday, seeks to amend the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940 by allowing the Philippine President to admit environmental refugees from residents of developing island states in the Pacific Ocean for humanitarian reasons.

“It is a proactive measure that not only addresses the immediate needs of climate refugees but also sets a precedent for global responses to similar crises,” Party-list Rep. Samuel S. Versoza, Jr. said in a statement.

Home to at least 65 million people, the Pacific island nations of Kiribati, Vanuatu, and Fiji face imminent danger from intensifying tropical storms and increasing levels due to climate change, which could prompt its citizens to seek refuge in other countries, the authors of the bill said.

“The Pacific islands of Kiribati, Vanuatu, and Fiji are in imminent danger of being underwater in the next decade due to the rise of sea levels,” HB No. 10490’s explanatory note read.

Authored by Albay Rep. Edcel C. Lagman, Sr., Cebu Rep. Pablo John F. Garcia, Lanao del Sur Rep. Ziaur Rahman A. Adiong, Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace S. Barbers, and Mr. Versoza, the bill seeks to give flexibility to Philippine immigration laws by allowing “environmental migrants” access to the country “due to climate-change related harm.

“This legislation is a testament to our commitment to upholding human rights and our international responsibility,” Mr. Versoza said.

The implementing agencies of the proposed measure would be composed of the Department of Justice, Foreign Affairs, Bureau of Immigration, and the Commission on Human Rights.

FRANCE 24

Rich nations met \$100 bn climate finance goal two years late: OECD

Wealthy countries met their target of providing \$100 billion in annual climate aid to poorer countries for the first time in 2022 though two years later than promised, the OECD said Wednesday.

The failure to raise the money on time has eroded trust in climate negotiations and the OECD report comes as nations race to set a more ambitious goal by November.

In 2009, developed nations promised to raise \$100 billion a year by 2020 to help low-income countries invest in clean energy and cope with the worsening impacts of climate change.

More than a decade later this target was finally met for the first time in 2022 with \$115.9 billion raised, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development said.

"This achievement occurs two years later than the original 2020 target year," said the OECD, which tracks official figures on climate finance pledges.

Climate finance can come from governments in the form of bilateral aid, multinational development lenders like the World Bank, or the private sector.

Most of the \$100 billion disbursed in 2022 went to climate action that limits the release of heat-trapped greenhouse gases, the OECD said, mainly in clean energy and transport improvements.

The \$100 billion target is nowhere near what experts say developing nations will need for renewable energy and adaptation measures like coastal defences against rising seas.

A panel convened by the UN estimates these countries -- excluding China -- will need \$2.4 trillion a year by 2030 to meet their climate and development needs.

Many developing economies least to blame for the greenhouse gases that stoke global warming are among the most exposed to the costly and destructive effects of worsening weather extremes.

'Creative accounting'

Climate finance is a thorny issue at the annual UN climate talks and negotiators have been working this year to try and set a new goal to replace and go beyond the \$100 billion target.

The hosts of this year's COP29 in gas-rich Azerbaijan have made the matter a priority and hope to have an ambitious agreement inked during the summit in November.

Negotiators meet next week in Bonn for crucial midyear talks where sticking points over this new financial target will be thrashed out.

Some parties want China and other major emerging economies to chip in, while there is disagreement over how much should be raised, how the money is managed, and who is eligible for it.

Some developing nations want their climate action to be contingent on receiving financial aid.

India, for example, has proposed that developed countries provide \$1 trillion in climate finance every year from 2025 -- 10 times the current target.

Climate activist Harjeet Singh said the process had been "riddled with ambiguity and inadequacies".

"This isn't the time for creative accounting or fiscal loopholes. Rich countries urgently need to step up, clear these smokescreens, and deliver real, substantial financial support," he said.

MANILA STANDARD

MMDA lists identified flood-prone areas in Metro Manila

By: Joel E. Zurbano

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has identified several flood-prone areas in the National Capital Region (NCR) that the public should avoid, especially during rush hours and heavy downpours.

With around 20 tropical cyclones entering the country annually, the MMDA also reminds the public to heed warnings and take all precautions to protect their health and ensure safety during bad weather conditions.

Some of the major flood-prone areas identified in the metropolis are:

- Taft Avenue and Espana Boulevard in Manila
- Araneta Avenue and Epifanio de los Santos Avenue near Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City
- Maysilo Circle in Mandaluyong City

Other areas prone to flooding are located in different cities:

- JP Rizal Street in Barangay Tañong and San Agustin, Gen. Luna Street in Barangay Concepcion-Ibaba in Malabon City
- Naval Street, Barangay Sipac Almacen, Gen. Pascual Street, C-3 Road, and Sampaguita Street in Barangay Tanza Uno in Navotas City
- Susano Road, Dagat-Dagatan Avenue, Boni Serano Ave., A. Mabini Street, Macarthur Highway in Caloocan City
- Santiago Street, MH Del Pilar Street, and Karuhatan Road in Valenzuela City

Flood-prone areas in south Metro Manila include:

- EDSA -Taft Avenue, Roxas Boulevard, and Buendia Avenue in Pasay City
- Washington Street, Pasong Tamo, and the South Super Highway corner Faraday in Makati City

– TionQUIAO Road near Samuel Street and A Canaynay, Real Street from Alabang-Zapote Road going to Casimiro – Kantarilla Creek, and Gatchalian Avenue in Las Piñas City

– National Road near City Hall and JPA Subdivision in Muntinlupa City

– West Service Road, Canaynay Road, and Sucat Avenue in Parañaque City

MMDA chairman Romando Artes said his agency is implementing flood mitigation programs in these areas with the help of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and local government units.

In case pumping stations are insufficient, the MMDA will open the floodgates of the sewerage treatment plant in Manila Bay as needed to allow floodwaters to flow freely and recede quickly in flooded areas.

The MMDA also appealed to the public to stop throwing garbage on the streets, especially during the rainy season. The trash includes plastic bags, styrofoam, plastic cups, and leftover food.

Artes emphasized the importance of managing trash properly to prevent massive flooding.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Making PH agriculture smart

Information is power, it's been said. And in agriculture, correct and timely information can mean the difference between a painful loss because of a failed crop and a sizable profit that should encourage a farmer to keep on working the land instead of giving it up altogether to pursue alternative ways to earn money.

But for far too long, most smallholder farmers in the Philippines did not have access to information that they can actually use to boost their farm's output and earnings and escape the grip of poverty.

The Marcos administration can alter that dire situation by pushing for the widespread adoption of agriculture-focused technologies such as Project Sarai (Smarter Approaches to Reinvigorate Agriculture as an Industry in the Philippines). Developed by the University of the Philippines Los Baños and funded by the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology, Project Sarai aims to provide farmers and other stakeholders with site-specific crop advisories using advanced satellite technology to help increase the quantity and quality of farm yield and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change.

Agriculture 4.0

Project Sarai, which focuses on the country's major crops—rice, corn, banana, coconut, coffee, cacao, sugarcane, soybean, and tomato—has already demonstrated tangible benefits on the ground, helping farmers know the kind of crops they should plant, where and when they should plant them, and how to deal with pests and diseases.

This it was able to do through the crop advisories that Project Sarai said integrate local weather data and drought forecast with farm management activities, specifically nutrient and water management, and proactive pest and disease monitoring.

Knowing when it will rain, for example, helps farmers know when to minimize water use and save on irrigation expenses. Project Sarai's fertilizer application and pest management components also help farmers decide when to apply fertilizer, harvest, and know when the pest incidence is becoming a problem long before it becomes a major issue.

Technology experts believe that extensive use of practical information acquired from Project Sarai can dramatically improve farm productivity, and bring the Philippines closer to the era of what is called Agriculture 4.0, also called smart farming or digital agriculture where digital tools including satellite imagery and drones are added as input just as much as water, seeds, and fertilizer.

Average Filipino farmer

As Iloilo businessman Jessraf Palmares, president of the National ICT Confederation of the Philippines (NICP), said in a recent convention in Baguio City, “we have to approach farming in a scientific way.”

“If you have no data, you cannot manage anything,” added Bukidnon businessman and NICP trustee Roberto Tinsay.

Indeed, the Philippines has no choice but to embrace technology as the land dedicated to agriculture will not likely increase but the population will, thus the only path left is to increase the yield from the available land, partly through harnessing data.

In the first quarter, farm output growth weakened to 0.05 percent to P428.99 billion, a slowdown from the 2.1-percent expansion recorded in the same period last year but just as agricultural inputs and credit extension and seed technology can add to the output, agriculture technology can be a game changer, too.

The application of technology to boost agricultural production and make the farms profitable should also help the young Filipinos interested in farming, given that the average Filipino farmer is nearing 60 years old, and even they discourage their children from taking up farming because of their own difficulties eking out a decent living from their farm.

Crowdsourcing data

“Magtanim ay ’di biro (Farming is no joke),” goes the sad refrain, after all.

But equipped with practical knowledge, the next generation can sing a new tune and Project Sarai as well as other technologies being developed by the country’s research and development units, including state universities, can help them do just that.

By crowdsourcing data from the ground, government agencies such as the National Economic and Development Authority can craft policies on how to respond to climate change, for example, all by using accurate information from the farmers themselves.

This way, those in the field have a direct input in the data that are used to inform agriculture policies that will directly affect them and perhaps lure the next generation to come in and take over the farms, too, with the entrepreneurial approach to agriculture.

As former agriculture secretary William Dar said back in 2020, engaging the youth in agriculture was “imperative” to ensure that the Philippines will be able to produce enough food to feed its own growing population.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Solons push bill offering refuge to foreign climate change migrants

By Zaldy De Layola

A group of lawmakers on Wednesday underscored the importance of having a law that would address the critical issue of climate-induced migration, particularly of those living in Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific, who are disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate change.

To show utmost concern and commitment to upholding international responsibility, members of the House of Representatives filed House Bill (HB) 10490, or "An Act Amending Section 47 of Commonwealth Act No. 613, otherwise known as the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940."

HB 10490 seeks to establish protections for environmental migrants or climate change refugees and highlights a commitment to humanitarian duty and the Filipino tradition of offering refuge in times of global crisis.

Representatives Edcel C. Lagman Sr. (Albay, 1st District), Robert Ace S. Barbers (Surigao del Norte, 2nd District), Pablo John F. Garcia (Cebu, 3rd District), Ziaur-Rahman Alonto Adiong (Lanao del Sur, 1st District) and Samuel S. Verzosa Jr. (Party-list, Tutok to Win) introduced the bill.

"As a nation that has historically opened its doors to refugees, we must recognize and respond to the new challenges posed by climate change," Adiong said.

He said the bill proposes the inclusion of a new paragraph, Section 47 (c), in the Philippine Immigration Act, allowing the President to admit foreign nationals who are environmental migrants seeking protection from climate change-related harms.

This amendment, he added, is a direct response to the escalating crisis faced by populations in low-lying island nations, who are at risk of losing their homes due to rising sea levels and severe weather events.

Research from the Intercontinental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) underscores the urgency of this issue, highlighting the imminent threats to habitability, safety, and human dignity in SIDS.

The bill proponents said the amendment is designed to facilitate a dignified and legally sound approach to assisting those forced to leave their countries due to environmental changes.

"This legislation is a testament to our commitment to upholding human rights and our international responsibility," Versoza said. "It is a proactive measure that not only addresses the immediate needs of climate refugees but also sets a precedent for global responses to similar crises."

He also said the Philippines, with its own experiences of severe weather impacts, is positioned as a leader in advocating for the rights and protections of climate refugees on the international stage.

By recognizing and addressing the plight of climate refugees, the country reaffirms its role as a compassionate and proactive member of the global community, he went on to say.

Barbers, meanwhile, said the bill's passage is eagerly sought, emphasizing the urgency of action required to mitigate the profound human impacts of climate change.

"It now moves to the legislative process, where it will be subject to debates and further refinements," he added.

POLITIKO

[In Meeting With Bolkiah, Marcos Underscores Unity In Facing Global Woes](#)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., in his bilateral meeting with His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah of Brunei on Tuesday, emphasized the need for nations to stand united in the face of global challenges, such as climate change and geopolitical tensions.

During the meeting, Marcos cited the need for the two countries to unite amid the changing regional and global landscape.

“The landscape of our region and of the world is changing in fundamental ways. The challenges brought by climate change, environmental degradation, and geopolitical tensions find it necessary for nation-states to cooperate more closely and more effectively,” Marcos said during the meeting, as quoted by a Presidential Communications Office (PCO) news release.

“I am therefore honored to discuss the state of our countries’ relations, as well as exchange views on regional and international developments with the world’s longest-reigning current monarch and the longest-serving current head of state.”

Marcos is visiting Brunei upon Sultan Bolkiah’s invitation.

Also on Tuesday, the two leaders witnessed the signing of agreements on key areas, such as tourism, agriculture, and maritime cooperation to further strengthen the four-decade-old ties of the two countries.

During his meeting with the Sultan, the President fondly recalled the time when his father, the late President E. Marcos Sr., visited Brunei in the early days of the bilateral relationship with the Sultanate in 1984.

He also thanked the Sultan for the warm welcome accorded to him and the Philippine delegation.

Marcos also acknowledged Brunei’s assistance to the Philippines, especially during the early days of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic when it donated test kits and vaccines to the country, and the help it extended to the victims of Super Typhoon Yolanda and Typhoon Odette.

Likewise, the President also thanked Brunei for its help to the Philippines during the oil crisis in the 1970s.

Sultan Bolkiah, meanwhile, thanked Marcos for accepting his invitation to visit Brunei, noting that the latter's state visit is customary to both countries in strengthening their friendship and ties.

"I'm looking forward to further enhancing our friendship in areas of future interest, which I believe will greatly benefit our countries and people," the Sultan said.

On the second and last day of Marcos' state visit to Brunei on Wednesday, he will meet with the Sultanate's energy sector.

He will cap his visit with a state banquet at the Istana Nurul Iman, the official residence of the Sultan of Brunei.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Bill for 'environmental migrants' in PH filed](#)

By: Red Mendoza

Environmental migrants, particularly from small island developing states (SIDS) constantly facing threats due to climate change, may soon find the Philippines their refuge once a bill that would allow them entry gets Congress' nod.

House Bill 10490, which will amend Section 47 of Commonwealth Act 613 or the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, was filed by Reps. Edcel Lagman, Pablo John Garcia, Zia Alonto Adiong, Samuel Versoza Jr. and Robert Ace Barbers last May 27.

The bill's authors highlighted a commitment to humanitarian duty and stressed the Filipino tradition of offering refuge in times of crisis, as research from the Intercontinental Panel on Climate Change underscores the urgency of the issue.

"As a nation that has historically opened its doors to refugees, we must recognize and respond to the new challenges posed by climate change," Adiong said.

Versoza said the bill was a "testament" to the Philippines' commitment to uphold human rights and international responsibility.

"It is a proactive measure that not only addresses the immediate needs of climate refugees but also sets a precedent for global responses to similar crises," Versoza added.

As proposed, the bill will include a new paragraph in the Philippine Immigration Act that will allow the President of the Philippines to admit foreigners who are "environmental migrants" seeking protection from climate change-related harms.

"This amendment is a response to the escalating crisis faced by populations in low-lying island nations, who are at risk of losing their homes due to rising sea levels and severe weather events," the authors said.

The authors believe that the Philippines, despite experiencing its own severe weather impacts, is also positioned as a leader in advocating for the rights and protections of climate refugees on the international stage.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Rainy season starts in Philippines after 'cruel summer'](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

After a scorching dry season, state weather bureau PAGASA on Wednesday declared the start of the rainy season in the Philippines.

In a statement, PAGASA said the recent scattered rain showers, frequent thunderstorms, Typhoon Aghon (international name: Ewiniar), and the southwest monsoon (habagat) marked the onset of the rainy season in the country.

Additionally, a high chance of La Niña developing by the July-August-September period increases the likelihood of above-normal rainfall conditions in some parts of the Philippines, especially towards the end of the year.

PAGASA, however, noted that breaks in rainfall events, also known as monsoon breaks, may occur and last for several days or weeks.

“The public and all concerned agencies are advised to take precautionary measures against the adverse impacts of the rainy season, Habagat, and the impending La Niña such as floods and rain-induced landslides,” the weather agency said.

Aghon, the first tropical cyclone to hit the country this year, left the Philippine Area of Responsibility this afternoon after battering the eastern section of the country with strong winds and heavy rain.

The Philippines faces an average of 20 cyclones entering or developing within its area of responsibility annually, destroying homes and crops and claiming the lives of hundreds to thousands.

Global temperatures hit record highs last year, with the World Meteorological Organization highlighting a particularly rapid warming trend across Asia.

Exceptionally hot weather also affected the Philippines and other parts of Asia in April and May, triggering school closures, threatening power grids, and damaging crops.

Scientists from the World Weather Attribution Group said the extreme temperatures last month were made worse and more likely by human-caused climate change.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH further strengthens preps for UN climate meeting in Germany](#)

The Philippine Delegation (PhilDel) ramped up its series of interagency meetings to further solidify preparations for the 60th Session of Subsidiary Bodies (SB60) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Bonn, Germany from June 3 to 13.

Drawing from experiences and challenges during previous conferences, the PhilDel to the SB60, composed of representatives from different national agencies, continued a series of preparatory interagency meetings.

The meetings are aimed at discussing ways forward for the upcoming negotiations, as well as evaluate and assess outcomes of previous UNFCCC sessions.

During the meetings, Climate Change Commission (CCC) Vice Chairperson and Executive Director, Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, and Head of Delegation, led key discussions, particularly in developing and strengthening various approaches and strategies to address possible challenges as well as build consensus.

Borje emphasized the importance of communication throughout the entire sessions of SB60.

He said constant internal and external communication and coordination will help the delegates to effectively navigate the complexities of the negotiations.

As a member of the G77, a coalition of developing nations in the United Nations, the Philippines can harness valuable support, solidarity, and resources to navigate the negotiations within the UNFCCC process and advance its interests in addressing climate change.

“Our participation in SB60 aligns with the guidance of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to optimize opportunities to articulate and emphasize the Philippines’ principled position on climate change,” Borje said.

The first PhilDel preparatory assembly was attended by the CCC, Department of Finance, Department of Foreign Affairs, National Youth Commission, Department of Agriculture, Department of Energy, Department of Environment and Natural Resources,

National Economic and Development Authority, Presidential Communication Office, Department of Labor and Employment, and Philippine Information Agency.

SB60 is a subsidiary body that helps and negotiates with the conference of the parties to assist the technological, methodological, and scientific matters related to assessing global climate change.

The PhilDel continues to prepare for the upcoming SB60. Further interagency meetings are anticipated to equip its members with the necessary knowledge and resources for the conference.

The CCC remains committed to address the challenges brought by climate change through active participation in these UNFCCC sessions.

THE MANILA TIMES

Climate commission: Protect ecosystems

By: Kristina Maralit

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has called for collective and inclusive action to address issues that are detrimental to the health of ecosystems and all life forms in the country.

The CCC said that biodiversity-rich ecosystems act as natural carbon sinks, absorbing large amounts of heat and carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and oceans, thereby helping to regulate temperature and climate.

Recognizing the value of biodiversity to address climate change and its effects, CCC Vice Chairman and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje sought collective action to protect the country's biodiverse ecosystems.

"Biodiversity is crucial for ecosystem balance and our well-being, and it's increasingly threatened by climate change. We must work together to protect natural habitats, adopt sustainable practices, and support strong environmental policies. By acting now and by being part of the plan, we can ensure a resilient world for future generations," he said.

The Philippines is one of the 18 mega-biodiverse countries in the world. Its ecosystems, ranging from wetlands, tree forests, mangrove forests, and coral reefs, house between 70 and 80 percent of the world's plant and animal species, making the country a hotspot for biodiversity conservation.

Currently, drivers of habitat and biodiversity loss in the country include illegal logging and fishing, mining, pollution, sea and land-use conversion, animal trafficking and poaching, and climate change.

In the Philippines' draft National Adaptation Plan, ecosystems and biodiversity are identified as one of the eight key sector outcomes, making Philippine biodiversity and ecosystems a priority area for adaptation efforts.

The 2023–2028 Philippine Development Plan also emphasizes strategies to improve and protect the country's biodiversity, primarily through intensified monitoring, protection, management and rehabilitation.

Recognizing the ecological services that biodiversity-rich ecosystems provide, the CCC actively seeks further ways to establish mechanisms that effectively aid the protection, conservation, and preservation of our biodiversity and ecosystems.

The International Day for Biological Diversity is celebrated annually on May 22 to emphasize the importance of public education and awareness about biological diversity. The UN designated this date during the General Assembly and Convention on Biological Diversity on Feb. 8, 2001.

This year, the theme "Be part of the Plan," encompasses the need for a whole-of-society approach in protecting biodiversity.

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