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By: Jonathan Mayuga

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BUSINESS WORLD

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By: Mayang Azurin and Harshad Barde

It is official: The United Nations announced that the Paris Agreement's long-term goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C has not been met. Worse, this failure has been exacerbated by a triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution. The impacts are particularly severe in the Asia Pacific region. Our survival now hinges on two major imperatives from the Paris Agreement: to radically and swiftly transform how we operate our economy and to ensure that these transitions are fair, inclusive, and just for everyone.

MANILA BULLETIN

[Singapore wants to further 'warmer' ties with Philippines](#)

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NEWS5

[Marcos seeks UN Security Council slot, vows to address climate change, other global issues](#)

By: Rodolfo Dacleson II

Pres. Bongbong Marcos Jr. on Saturday vowed that the Philippines will advocate for addressing global issues if elected to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

[PH to bring key advocacies in bid for UN Security Council seat](#)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has expressed pride on Philippines' efforts in addressing climate change, disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, and sustainable development, as he vowed to bring the major advocacies if the country is elected to the United Nations Security Council for 2027-2028.

SG President Shanmugaratnam: PH-SG ties getting warmer and warmer under PBBM admin

Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam is seeing “warmer and warmer” diplomatic ties with the Philippines under the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Climate change and aircraft turbulence: Is there a link?

As the skies get bumpier, many are pointing fingers at a familiar culprit: climate change. The very real dangers of turbulence were seen just last week in the case of a Singapore Airlines flight, which ended up in damage, injuries and even death.

The importance of Philippine mangroves

By: Brian James Lu

This situation is truly alarming. A report by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) stated that half of the world’s mangrove ecosystems are at risk of collapse due to climate change. The IUCN, known for its Red List of threatened species, has now highlighted the threat to mangroves following studies in 36 different regions.

World Bank Group, IMF deepen joint effort to bolster climate action

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group said Friday they deepened joint efforts to bolster climate action.

SUNSTAR

12K students to get green skills training in Cebu, Manila

By: Earl Kim H. Padronia

Around 12,000 students from Metro Cebu and Metro Manila will be trained in the next two years to incorporate green initiatives into their technical-vocational skills training.

San Francisco, Camotes gets \$50,000

By: Claudine Flores

The municipality of San Francisco on Camotes Islands, Cebu will soon gather around 400 youngsters to create a youth-led climate solution funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

THE MANILA TIMES

[UN implements \\$122.6M projects in PH](#)

By: Bernadette Tamayo

The United Nations implemented projects amounting to over \$122.6 million (UN) in the Philippines in 2023 to support the country's sustainable development goals (SDGs).

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[USAID official speaks out on global biodiversity loss](#)

By: Bella Cariaso

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has expressed alarm over global biodiversity loss, and called for massive efforts to stop the crisis and prevent its catastrophic impacts.

UNDP

[Enhancing climate finance access is crucial for sustainable development in Bangladesh](#)

A four-day capacity development workshop titled "Climate Finance Access and Mobilization in Bangladesh" jointly inaugurated by the International Climate Finance Cell (ICFC), Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh Climate Development Partnership (BCDP), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) today (June 1) in Dhaka, to enhance understanding of climate finance, mobilize additional funds, engage key stakeholders, and utilize existing climate finance platforms. The workshop brought together over 45 participants from 16 ministries, divisions, agencies, research institutes, and academia across Bangladesh.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Borje: Protect marine ecosystem](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) called for sustainable actions to protect the country's marine ecosystems and coastal communities to bolster growth and development for fisherfolk as the nation commemorated National Fisherfolk's Day on 31 May 2024.

[CCC, Japan's environment agency seek stronger cooperation](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) met with the Japanese Ministry of the Environment (MOEJ) and discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in climate change action using best available science and data-based modalities.

[Climate commission urges enhanced risk avoidance measures](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the crucial role of the private sector in strengthening the Philippines' national risk management capacities and stressed the importance of enhancing risk avoidance measures during the Pan-Asia Risk and Insurance Management Association (PARIMA) Conference in Manila on 30 May 2024.

[PBBM lauded for signing PENCAS law](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) lauded President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.'s signing of Republic Act 11995 (RA 11995), also known as the Philippine Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System (PENCAS) Act, citing that the institutionalization of national resource accounting will protect and promote ecological balance and advance climate resilience of the Philippines.

RAPPLER

[\[Opinion\] Climate finance: A call to action for the Philippines](#)

By: Tony La Vina and Javvy Gamboa

In international climate negotiations, 2024 is the year of climate finance. Much attention at the upcoming 60th sessions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Subsidiary Bodies or SB60 in Bonn, Germany, this June and at the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November will be dedicated to the progress – if not the success – in negotiating the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG).

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS MIRROR

Measuring PHL's rich biodiversity

By: Jonathan Mayuga

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed into law on May 22 a bill seeking to measure the Philippines' natural resources.

On the same day, as part of the country's celebration of the International Day of Biodiversity, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) launched the "Sukat ng Kalikasan [SnK]" framework and toolkit.

Republic Act (RA) 11995, or the Philippine Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System (Pencas) Act, establishes a comprehensive information system and accounting framework that will consider the role of our natural capital and its impact on the economy.

It tasks the Philippine Statistic Authority (PSA) along with the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and Department of Science and Technology (DOST) "to collect, generate, and analyze data on the country's natural capital"

The Pencas Act is the Philippines' first law establishing a system to measure the country's natural resources and stop unchecked development and resource exploitation.

Ecosystem and natural capital accounting

Resources—such as plants, animals, air, water, soils, ores, and minerals, and ecosystem services, like air and water filtration, flood protection, and carbon sequestration—are natural capital that is not measured and often taken for granted in the economic equation, as there is no existing system of accounting for natural resources.

With the enactment of the Pencas law, concerned government agencies will be tasked to put in place an accounting system that will put value to, and finally account for, the country's ecosystem and natural capital, the way goods and services are also accounted for in the GDP.

Measuring nature

The "Sukat ng Kalikasan," or "Measurement of Nature" framework and toolkit, that was developed and created by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and national government agencies—including the DENR, PSA, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, National Economic and Development Authority,

National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and National Commission for Culture and the Arts—aims to measure the country’s ecological, socioeconomic and cultural values and baselines.

In a speech during the launch of Sukat ng Kalikasan, DENR Undersecretary Ernesto D. Adobo Jr. who represented Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, said its approach will improve the accuracy of determining conservation targets and measuring ecosystem services.

Yulo-Loyzaga noted that SnK will strengthen Pencas’s implementation because the former will allow “more effective natural resource management to reduce biodiversity loss, increase private sector engagement and investment, and make more resilient communities and a more resilient economy.”

Rich biodiversity

One of 18 mega-biodiverse countries with two-thirds of the earth’s biodiversity and 70 percent to 80 percent of the world’s plant and animal species, the Philippines ranks fifth in the number of plant species and maintains 5 percent of the world’s flora.

The Philippines, an island archipelago with 30 million hectares of land, 15 million hectares of classified forests, over 7 million hectares of Protected Areas, 36,000 kilometers of coastline, and 2.2 million square kilometers of territorial seas, is also one of the world’s biodiversity hotspots because of the rapid rate of biodiversity loss.

The DENR chief believes the Pencas law will serve as a tool for determining the contributions of ecosystems to economic development and, therefore, contribute to a science-based approach to the management of natural resources and improving climate and disaster resilience.

The SnK seeks to strengthen the law’s implementation by allowing for “more effective natural resource management to reduce biodiversity loss, increase private sector engagement and investment, and make more resilient communities and a more resilient economy.

A welcome development

Executive Director Gerry Arances, of Manila-based think-tank Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development, when asked to comment, said the signing of Pencas into law “was a welcome development.”

He told the BusinessMirror in an email on May 29 that the devastating El Niño followed by Typhoon Aghon clearly showed how important it is for the country to be protecting the country's ecosystems, especially in view of strengthening its climate resilience.

"We hope that this law would be implemented in a manner genuinely reflective of its ambitions, including ensuring the meaningful participation of communities and citizens in policy- and decision-making," Arances said.

At the same time, Arances urged the government to correct the business-as-usual policy directions, which he said undermined the preservation of the country's ecosystems and natural resources.

"Ending continued fossil fuel dependence and other detrimental activities, and shifting to sustainable options, such as renewables, should be the order of the day. In this way, we, as a country, can pave the way for resilience building, thriving ecosystems, and empowered citizens," he said.

Accounting costs of devastation, destruction

Anti-mining group Alyansa Tigil Mina, meanwhile, underscored the importance of having an information system and a way of accounting for our natural resources or natural capital, not only in terms of knowing their contribution to the economy but also the costs when these are devastated or destroyed.

Jaybee Garganera, told the BusinessMirror via Viber on May 29 that regarding mining industry, he hopes the accounting system that will be set up will help determine the social and ecological costs of mining in specific areas.

"These are needed in the cost-benefit analyses of past, present and future mining projects, and in evaluating whether certain projects are even worth pursuing," he said.

Revise policies, guidelines

He also urged the DENR to immediately revise its policies and guidelines to align its current systems and processes for mining permits to reflect these indicators and standards of Pencas.

"We also strongly recommend that all DENR monitoring, assessment, and audit processes and systems align their tools and methodologies along Pencas," he said.

In the same vein, he said local governments should consciously strive to do resource valuation in their land, use planning and decision-making in allowing or not mining projects in their localities.

Finally, he said the Supreme Court should be asked to update its rules on environmental procedures for the Writ of Kalikasan and the issuance of Temporary Environmental Protection Orders (Tepo), considering the added value of the Pencas law.

A milestone legislation

For its part, the Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) commended the Philippines for the “milestone legislation.”

ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim, said via Messenger that the Pencas Act is the first of its kind in the Asean, and it puts the country ahead in achieving the goals of the UN Global Biodiversity Plan, by meeting Target 14, on integrating biodiversity into socio-economic strategies.

It states in particular “the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, poverty eradication strategies, strategic environmental assessments, environmental impact assessments and, as appropriate, national accounting, within and across all levels of government and across all sectors.”

Lim recalled that in 2021, the ACB, together with the Asean member states, organized a webinar series on the Economics of Biodiversity, Prof. Sir Partha Dasgupta, a renowned economist, and the lead of the Dasgupta Review, an independent global report on the economics of biodiversity, was its speaker.

“He directed his talk to the Asean member states, and as he shared the important findings of the Dasgupta Review, he observed how the Asean region may be undervaluing their natural resources as these are not considered in the GDP as a metric for healthy and robust economies,” said Lim, a former director of DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau.

A milestone, beneficial law

As a mega biodiverse country, the Philippines will stand to gain much with RA11995, Lim, an international biodiversity expert said.

“The country has struggled for decades to translate the benefits we derive from our rich biodiversity into tangible and measurable contributions to economic growth,” she said.

This insufficient awareness and understanding have led to overexploitation and development projects that disregard impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity, she added.

“The direct and indirect effects of this could be what we are already experiencing today—climate change, new and emerging diseases, food and water crises, etc—all of which, in one way or another, can be linked to biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation,” Lim explained.

She pointed out that with the Pencas, “efforts in protecting biodiversity is expected to become a whole-of-society, a whole-of-government approach as it provides the mechanism to demonstrate that a healthy biodiversity is beneficial to everyone.”

“We look forward to the effective implementation of the Pencas [law]. The ACB stands ready to support the Philippines in moving this pioneering piece of legislation forward,” she said.

BUSINESS WORLD

[Opinion] Leaving millions behind

By: Mayang Azurin and Harshad Barde

It is official: The United Nations announced that the Paris Agreement's long-term goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C has not been met. Worse, this failure has been exacerbated by a triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution. The impacts are particularly severe in the Asia Pacific region. Our survival now hinges on two major imperatives from the Paris Agreement: to radically and swiftly transform how we operate our economy and to ensure that these transitions are fair, inclusive, and just for everyone.

In response to these challenges, the concept of a circular economy (CE), defined by the UN as "a sustainable system where resources are used efficiently and waste is reduced through a continuous cycle of reuse and regeneration",² has gained prominence in development policy and investment arenas. However, to ensure this new approach to economic planning is equitable, CE must address the concerns of the workforce likely to be disrupted during the transition.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a major convenor and financier of poverty reduction, climate action, and circularity with a commitment to making transitions just for vulnerable sectors³ as a pillar of its operational strategy "to leave no one behind." To date, however, its 2009 Safeguards Policy, designed to avoid and mitigate the negative impacts of its development projects, has yet to encompass the rights of the informal workers, constituting 1.3 billion persons or 65% of the world's informally employed workforce⁴.

Resource conservation, particularly in developing countries, heavily depends on informal waste workers with waste pickers occupying the lowest and most impoverished rung of the waste value chain. Waste pickers are characterized as individuals who collect items and materials from public spaces, open dumpsites or landfills, and/or waste bags and bins on streets and sell the recyclables they find to traders. Often unsung heroes, they play a pivotal role in climate action by reintroducing used resources back into the economy for human consumption, despite enduring harsh working conditions, health risks, social stigma, harassment, low income, and limited access to social services. Most waste pickers in the Asia Pacific region hail from traditionally marginalized communities or minority groups.

Just how many of them are in the region to warrant attention? In India, nearly 3 million informal waste workers are responsible for recycling almost 20% of the country's waste⁵.

In Vietnam, these workers purchase 30% of waste in cities and carry out more than 90% of recycling activities⁶. Indonesia has around 3.7 million organized waste pickers, who, in Jakarta alone, contribute to the reduction of the volume of waste by 30%⁷. Hordes of informal waste workers appear in various studies: In China (6 million)⁸, Thailand (1.5 million)⁹, and the Philippines (100,000)¹⁰ which are underestimated given the lack of government-led databases. A development bank without an agenda for this sector is massively failing millions of poor people in the transition.

Four types of ADB projects are harming informal waste workers. First, the unabated promotion and financing of fossil-based waste-burning technologies such as waste-to-energy (WtE) incinerators and Refuse-Derived Fuel (RDF). Financing these false solutions brazenly tagged as “zero emissions,” “clean energy,” or “recycling technologies,” not only steals the livelihoods of waste pickers but also stifles the potential for climate action. Instead of benefiting from high-value waste materials, waste pickers are sidelined, undermining the entire informal waste economy. ADB does not seem to learn from funding the Timarpur-Okhla Waste Management Plant which it eventually withdrew after communities protested the pollution coming from it in 2010. It continues to burn tons of Delhi’s recyclables, effectively wiping out emissions savings from approximately 962,133 tCO₂e through the waste pickers’ recycling efforts.

ADB has not monitored the impacts of its support for WtE incinerators in Vietnam (Binh Duong¹¹ and Can Tho¹²), Indonesia (Solo and South Tangerang), Thailand (Songkhla¹³), Malaysia¹⁴, China, Marshall Islands¹⁵, and the Maldives¹⁶. The Bank was also instrumental in creating profitable and risk-free operations for industry polluters in emerging markets through technical assistance projects. The TAs in Cambodia¹⁷, Indonesia¹⁸, and Bangladesh¹⁹ are all designed to deliver reports that end up justifying the deployment of WtE and RDF or to facilitate partnerships²⁰ with WtE corporations, even in a country like the Philippines where legislated bans are in place. ADB supported one of the world’s leading plastic polluters, Procter & Gamble, in crafting feasibility studies for establishing WtE incinerators in Angeles²¹, Cabuyao²², and Dagupan²³. In a world where global leaders are already tackling a treaty to address plastic pollution, ADB’s support for false solutions is extending the lifelines of polluters.

Second, waste infrastructure projects often require the closure of landfills or construction of new ones such as those funded by ADB in Cambodia²⁴, Uzbekistan²⁵, Mongolia, Myanmar²⁶, and India²⁷ which also poses harm to this sector. Contrary to safeguards appraisals claiming these projects only have “limited” involuntary resettlement and “temporary” economic impacts, waste pickers face permanent losses in income and social services when displaced. Whether it is the state or a corporation, project proponents often flag occupational hazards for outlawing the access of waste pickers, thereby gaining

monopoly ownership to the city's waste. Waste pickers are then exposed to bribery, harassment, and violence just to regain access.

Compensation schemes for the displacement of waste pickers in landfill closures also exploit the systemic structures that cause their poverty. In the Bank's project in Myanmar, child waste pickers were not paid for loss of income from forcible resettlement as a result of the landfill closure because they are children while the adults were given entitlements. Waste pickers were also not compensated for their loss of homes as they did not own official land titles.

From seeing the role of the informal workers in the waste sector and the harms they face to consulting them meaningfully in the development of policies, projects, and roadmaps — the sector has been missing and neglected in the Bank's agenda.

The ADB has the opportunity to improve millions of lives through the ongoing revision of its safeguards policy³⁰ by finally recognizing the fundamental human dignity and protecting the rights of informal workers as leading agents in the circular economy. The ILO Recommendations 193, 204, and 205³¹ guide member-states on ensuring a just transition. Sustainable and inclusive waste management systems established by waste pickers in Vietnam, the Philippines, India, etc. can provide insight on operational mechanisms for ensuring such a just transition.

We highly recommend the proactive creation of consultation spaces for the informal waste sector in the formulation of the Bank's policies, programs, projects, and investment roadmaps in pursuit of hearing the voices of those who are at great risk of being left behind.

Finally, the ADB should complement these efforts by committing to a phase-out from false solutions and directly investing in upgrading and protecting livelihoods within the informal waste economy. The ADB must shift its financing to transformative and equitable climate solutions, embracing zero waste alternatives.

(The authors are part of GAIA, a network of grassroots groups as well as national and regional alliances representing more than 1,000 organizations from 92 countries. GAIA envisions a just, zero waste world built on respect for ecological limits and community rights, where people are free from the burden of toxic pollution, and resources are sustainably conserved, not burned or dumped.)

Third, large-scale privatized recycling projects without integrating the participation of the sector are also pernicious. Recycling is often thought to yield only positive results but with

new policies incentivizing initiatives for recycling, businesses saw a lucrative field in competition with the existing informal waste sector. The \$300 million loan for Indorama Ventures²⁸ in Thailand aimed at directly recycling 50 billion plastic bottles until 2025 did not assess the potential economic displacement of waste pickers, on top of the environmental breaches of the two recycling plants which include the presence of around 120 hazardous chemicals, fires, spillage, impacts on workers' health, and absence of community engagement. Privatized recycling projects only target high-value materials, like PET bottles or cardboard, reducing waste pickers' incomes and leaving behind an unsustainable value chain of only low-value recyclables, which will eventually collapse as seen in developed economies.

Fourth, the introduction of waste collection models that are exclusionary of the existing systems that waste pickers have built. The ADB has been hailing the use of digital technologies in the collection and sorting of plastic waste as “modernizing,” “efficient,” and “innovative”²⁹ — without fully assessing how the new collection system can either assist or displace the vulnerable sections in the waste value chain.

MANILA BULLETIN

Singapore wants to further 'warmer' ties with Philippines

By: Betheena Unite

Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam told President Marcos that he is looking to embark on various agreements with the Philippines as he intends to further their already "warmer" relationship.

"We're seeing opportunity to take forward our relationship ... but it's a warm relationship that's getting warmer under your leadership," Shanmugaratnam told Marcos during their bilateral meeting on Friday, May 31.

The Singaporean leader also cited the strengthened economic relationship between the Philippines and Singapore including efforts of the two countries to drive investors in various sectors.

Shanmugaratnam said he is looking forward to embarking various agreements with the Philippines and other related concerns.

Marcos, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of continuing the vibrant relationship between the two countries.

"I'm glad that we had an opportunity to call on you ... it is really important that we continue ... as you say, warmer relationship between our countries ... and the call of the time is for us to be strengthened relationship," Marcos said.

The Chief Executive noted the significant exchanges between the Philippines and Singapore particularly on people-to-people, and efforts to address climate change, and the government's bid to the Loss and Damage Fund Board.

"I am very happy to continue that relationship," Marcos added.

The Singapore leader, for his part, expressed his intention to visit the Philippines this year.

Marcos is in Singapore to deliver a keynote message before the 21st edition of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore.

Marcos made history for being the first Philippine leader to deliver a keynote message before the global security and defense dialogue.

NEWS5

[Marcos seeks UN Security Council slot, vows to address climate change, other global issues](#)

By: Rodolfo Dacleson II

Pres. Bongbong Marcos Jr. on Saturday vowed that the Philippines will advocate for addressing global issues if elected to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Marcos touted the efforts by the Philippines in handling climate change, sustainable development, disarmament, and nuclear non-proliferation in his speech during the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in a bid to earn a position in the UN body.

“We will bring our experience as a trusted partner, credible pathfinder, and committed peacemaker when elected to the (United) Nations Security Council for the term of 2027-2028,” said Marcos.

The UNSC has the power to establish peacekeeping operations, enact international sanctions, and authorize military action. It is also the only UN body authorized to issue resolutions member-states should uphold.

The Philippines is vying for one of the five non-permanent member slots allocated for African and Asian states. The last time the country secured a position in the council was in 2004-2005 during the term of former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Marcos also expressed his hope of amplifying the Indo-Pacific region’s voice in the global conversation on “lethal autonomous weapon systems” and the development of responsible outer space and cyberspace norms through “multilateralism.”

“In all our multilateral engagements, we seek to bridge global conversations with our unique regional perspectives,” said Marcos. “Just as Indo-Pacific states must determine our own destiny, so too must we be active participants in charting the future of the world.”

Marcos pivoted his foreign policy to a “friend to all” approach.

He has been criticized by cause-oriented groups for making “empty promises” and doing “lip service” on pertinent issues instead of creating concrete solutions.

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

[PH to bring key advocacies in bid for UN Security Council seat](#)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has expressed pride on Philippines' efforts in addressing climate change, disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, and sustainable development, as he vowed to bring the major advocacies if the country is elected to the United Nations Security Council for 2027-2028.

"I'm proud of the Philippines' efforts to build bridges on issues ranging from climate action to disarmament and non-proliferation, from sustainable development to equitable global health cooperation," President Marcos said in his keynote address at the opening of the 21st edition of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore.

"In all our multilateral engagements, we seek to bridge global conversations with our unique regional perspectives. In all our multilateral engagements, we seek to bridge global conversations with our unique regional perspectives. Just as Indo-Pacific states must determine our own destiny, so too must we be active participants in charting the future of the world. We must shape the rules. We must build those bridges," he said.

It is in this context that the Philippines is actively seeking to amplify Indo-Pacific voices in global conversations on the issue of lethal autonomous weapon systems, President Marcos said.

The country is also seeking regional consensus regarding the development of norms of responsible behavior in outer space and cyberspace, he added.

"We will bring our experience as a trusted partner, credible pathfinder, and committed peacemaker when elected to the [United] Nations Security Council for the term of 2027-2028," President Marcos told the Shangri-La Dialogue.

Beyond the regional horizon, Marcos recognized the importance of upholding multilateralism, saying it remains the single viable platform for collective action against transcendent global challenges.

Nations must therefore step back from the precipice of paralysis and should transcend geopolitics, find common ground, and work to strengthen global institutions, the President pointed out.

This, however, requires active leadership on the part of middle powers, which have the capacity to cross political and ideological lines, forge genuine consensus, and lead credible efforts towards decisive multilateral solutions, President Marcos told the IISS dialogue.

The Dialogue hosted more than 550 delegates from the defense and security establishments of more than 40 nations around the world.

[SG President Shanmugaratnam: PH-SG ties getting warmer and warmer under PBBM admin](#)

Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam is seeing “warmer and warmer” diplomatic ties with the Philippines under the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

“We’re seeing opportunity to take forward our relationship ... but it’s a warm relationship that’s getting warmer under your leadership,” President Shanmugaratnam told President Marcos on Friday.

President Shanmugaratnam also cited the strengthened economic relationship between the Philippines and Singapore including efforts of the two countries to drive investors in various sectors.

Shanmugaratnam said he is looking forward to embarking various agreements with the Philippines and other related concerns.

President Marcos is embarking on a working visit to Singapore where he was invited to deliver a keynote message before the 21st edition of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore.

President Marcos made a history for being the first Philippine leader to deliver a keynote message before the global security and defense dialogue.

President Marcos extended his gratitude to the Singapore government for their warm welcome to the Philippine delegation. He emphasized the importance of continuing the vibrant relationship between the Philippines and Singapore.

“I’m glad that we had an opportunity to call on you ... it is really important that we continue ... as you say, warmer relationship between our countries ... and the call of the time is for us to be strengthened relationship,” President Marcos said.

The chief executive noted the significant exchanges between the Philippines and Singapore particularly on people-to-people, and efforts to address climate change, and the government’s bid to the Loss and Damage Fund Board.

“I am very happy to continue that relationship,” President Marcos added.

The Singapore leader, for his part, expressed his intention to visit the Philippines this year.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Climate change and aircraft turbulence: Is there a link?](#)

As the skies get bumpier, many are pointing fingers at a familiar culprit: climate change. The very real dangers of turbulence were seen just last week in the case of a Singapore Airlines flight, which ended up in damage, injuries and even death.

Flight SQ321, a Boeing 777-300ER, was heading from London to Singapore on May 21 when it encountered severe turbulence, plunging 54 meters (178 feet) in a matter of five seconds.

Dozens among the 211 passengers and 18 crew members were injured, while a 73-year-old British man died of a suspected heart attack.

Just days later, 12 people on a Qatar Airways flight from Doha to Dublin were injured due to turbulence.

For aviation experts and researchers, the increasing intensity and frequency of these jarring events is linked to climate change and the science is there to back it.

Global warming and clear-air turbulence

While investigations continue into the recent incidents, experts say what the planes encountered was clear-air turbulence (CAT), which occurs in cloudless regions and causes violent buffeting of aircraft.

“Clear-air turbulence is wind shear turbulence related to fast-moving streams of air that may collide, creating swirls of disturbed air,” Doug Drury, a professor and head of aviation at Australia’s Central Queensland University, told Anadolu.

“As the name implies, it is clear and therefore not seen by pilots ... CAT can last for some time before it dissipates.”

Another academic, Damian Devlin, explained that this specific type of turbulence typically occurs at higher altitudes, usually above 15,000 feet, particularly between the core of a jet stream and the surrounding air.

Unlike turbulence caused by thunderstorms, low-altitude temperature inversions, thermals, strong surface winds, or local terrain features, CAT tends not to be visible to the pilots, satellite, or radar, he added.

Building on this, Mohamed Foudad, a postdoctoral researcher in turbulence modeling at the University of Reading, said while it is not possible at this stage to determine the specific type of turbulence that happened with these two recent flights, “both incidents occurred near the subtropical jet stream, which creates favorable conditions for clear-air turbulence.”

Research from the University of Reading published last year found that “clear-air turbulence ... has increased in various regions around the world.”

It said “at a typical point over the North Atlantic – one of the world’s busiest flight routes – the total annual duration of severe turbulence increased by 55%, from 17.7 hours in 1979 to 27.4 hours in 2020.”

The study explicitly linked the increase to climate change, saying “the increases are consistent” with its effects.

“Warmer air from CO2 emissions is increasing wind shear in the jet streams, strengthening clear-air turbulence in the North Atlantic and globally,” read the study.

Foudad, who worked on separate research on past and future trends in CAT over the Northern Hemisphere, told Anadolu: “We already found an increase in CAT frequency in recent decades over several regions (for example East Asia and the Middle East), where the two airlines (Singapore and Qatar) experienced turbulence, which is attributable to climate change.

“Future climate projections show that over several Northern Hemisphere regions, CAT is projected to increase in frequency and intensity. This is mainly due to a large increase in vertical wind shear related to the subtropical jet strengthening, which is due in turn to the increase of the meridional temperature gradient between the tropics and the high latitudes in upper atmosphere.”

Aviation expert Drury also believes that climate change is “making CAT worse.”

“As the surface temperatures increase, this means more heated air rising into the atmosphere, which comes into contact with much cooler air, thereby creating the atmospheric conflict that creates the CAT,” he explained.

“Additionally, the climate is changing, and we are having stronger and more frequent storms that create their own turbulence.”

Delvin, a PhD researcher at the University of West London, said that while it seems “intuitive and reasonable to perceive a relationship between climate change and turbulence, establishing the exact nature of this connection is challenging due to limited availability and quality of data.”

“However, the authors of the study conducted at the University of Reading are confident that the doubling of carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere has already increased and will continue to increase jet stream wind shear, and consequently, jet stream turbulence,” he said.

Should we expect more such incidents?

Experts believe cases of aircraft experiencing extreme CAT will continue to spike.

“We can expect more turbulence events in the future as our global weather patterns are changing and increasing the threat of storms and CAT in certain areas around the globe,” said Drury.

Devlin, meanwhile, cited the University of Reading study’s finding that an increase in the severity of CAT will make such incidents more common, if not more extreme.

When considering the projected doubling of air passengers by 2040, the likelihood of more passenger flights encountering CAT also increases, he added.

Climate researcher Leon Simons said the rising amount of heat in the atmosphere will continue to bring about more extreme weather, including heat waves and heavy rains, as well as increased turbulence.

“The atmosphere is now heating up four times as fast as it did between 1960 and 2000. As more heat accumulates in the atmosphere, we need to prepare for more turbulence,” he warned.

Detection and safety

Work is already underway in the aviation industry on measures to detect CAT and counter its effects.

According to Drury, the technology is in the research phase and will be used in the future.

“Based on current conditions and known weather patterns, meteorology teams around the globe can predict where potential areas of high probability should be avoided,” he said.

However, he pointed out that it would “add time and costs potentially to our ticket prices if we have to fly hundreds of kilometers out of our way to avoid them.”

Academic Devlin said increasing awareness and understanding of the issue will inevitably push the aviation sector to seek out solutions and enhance safety, such as adjusting their in-flight service routines.

However, he also emphasized that 2023 was the safest year ever for commercial aviation, despite the increasing incidents of severe turbulence.

“On average, a passenger would have to fly daily for over 125,000 years to encounter a fatal incident,” he said, adding that the industry knows just how much is at stake so it has to work on safety and ways to “mitigate the risks.”

For now, the most useful tip that most experts have is for passengers to stay buckled in.

“The most effective measure a passenger can take to avoid injury during turbulence, as it is with every aspect of their flight, is to follow the crew’s instructions and wear their seatbelts when seated,” said Devlin.

The importance of Philippine mangroves

By: Brian James Lu

This situation is truly alarming. A report by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) stated that half of the world's mangrove ecosystems are at risk of collapse due to climate change. The IUCN, known for its Red List of threatened species, has now highlighted the threat to mangroves following studies in 36 different regions.

Southeast Asia accounts for a third of the world's mangroves and hosts the greatest diversity of mangrove species. According to a study, the Philippines experienced the region's second-worst mangrove decline, losing 10.5 percent of its mangrove forests between 1990 and 2010. The rapid expansion of aquaculture ponds for fish farming is primarily responsible for this loss.

The Philippines, a country of more than 7,000 islands, relies heavily on mangroves. Major islands, teeming with mangroves, provide essential protection and habitat for marine life. A study in 1996 recognized the Philippines as having one of the richest diversities of coastal areas in the world. Unfortunately, the country's mangrove forests have drastically decreased from 500,000 hectares in 1918 to just 100,000 hectares by 1994–1995.

Primarily, mangroves act as natural barriers against storm surges, tsunamis, and coastal erosion. Their complex root systems absorb and dissipate wave energy, protecting shorelines and reducing the impact of natural disasters on coastal communities.

I remember that during Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), one of the factors that exacerbated the huge storm surge was the lack or absence of mangroves in the coastal areas. I read a news article describing how, prior to Typhoon Yolanda, residents in a coastal town were cutting their mangroves indiscriminately. After Yolanda, they planted many mangroves, which they are now very protective of.

Mangrove forests are rich ecosystems that support a wide variety of wildlife, including fish, crustaceans, and birds. They provide breeding grounds and nurseries for many marine species, contributing significantly to the biodiversity of coastal and marine environments. These ecosystems are critical for the livelihoods of many local communities, providing habitat and food for fish and other marine species that are essential for commercial and subsistence fisheries. Mangroves support various sustainable livelihood activities beyond fisheries, such as honey production, sustainable timber and fuelwood harvesting, and medicinal plant collection.

Mangroves also improve water quality by filtering pollutants and trapping sediments from rivers and streams before they reach the ocean. This helps maintain the health of adjacent coral reefs and seagrass beds.

During the construction of the "dolomite beach" in Manila Bay, there was a suggestion to substitute crushed dolomite with mangroves, as they offer a more cost-effective and affordable form of rehabilitation. The University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman Institute of Biology stated that using mangroves for the rehabilitation of coastal areas is one of the most effective nature-based solutions. It can contribute to biodiversity and conservation, as well as serve as a climate change adaptation strategy. They also pointed out that more viable, scientifically sound projects could have received the hundreds of millions of pesos allocated.

Indeed, mangroves are an indispensable part of environmental health and economic stability. Mangroves are also part of cultural heritage, as many indigenous and local communities associate them with traditional practices and local folklore.

Our government has initiated several programs and policies to support mangrove conservation and development in coastal areas. The aim is to protect and restore mangrove ecosystems, recognizing their critical role in environmental sustainability and coastal community resilience. Foremost among these programs is the Mangrove and Beach Forest Development Project (MBFDP) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The administration of the late former president Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III allocated PHP1 billion for this program.

Another key initiative is the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) program. Implemented by the DENR and local government units (LGUs), ICM programs integrate the sustainable management of coastal resources, including mangroves. These programs promote the holistic management of coastal zones, balancing environmental conservation with sustainable development.

The National Mangrove Conservation and Rehabilitation Program specifically focuses on the conservation and rehabilitation of mangrove areas. It includes activities, such as nursery establishment and mangrove forest planting and maintenance.

The Philippine Plan of Action for Sustainable Fisheries (PPASF) is a comprehensive initiative for the protection and rehabilitation of mangrove ecosystems, which are crucial habitats for many fish species. It aims to ensure the sustainability of fisheries resources, vital for food security and the economy.

These programs reflect our government's commitment to protecting and restoring mangrove ecosystems, recognizing their importance in mitigating climate change, protecting coastal areas, and supporting biodiversity and local livelihoods.

It is important to involve communities, not only from coastal areas but also students in urban areas, so they can appreciate firsthand the importance of mangrove conservation. The National Greening Program (NGP), another government initiative, aims to plant 1.5 billion trees, including mangroves, from 2011 to 2028. This program adopts a participatory approach to forest conservation. Enhancing government initiatives to arrest the decline of Philippine mangroves and forests is crucial. By involving students, who are the next generation of leaders, they can better understand biodiversity and its relation to climate change. This is extremely important, as our country and the rest of the world are experiencing unprecedented extreme weather conditions.

[World Bank Group, IMF deepen joint effort to bolster climate action](#)

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group said Friday they deepened joint efforts to bolster climate action.

The institutions said it is happening through an enhanced framework to help countries scale up action to confront the threat of climate change.

"The collaboration will provide critical support for countries' climate strategies—through an integrated, country-led approach to policy reforms and climate investments," they said in a statement.

"Within their respective mandates, the World Bank Group and the IMF will leverage their analytics, technical assistance, financing, and policy expertise to enhance country-driven reform programs," they added.

The framework includes three principles -- identifying each country's climate challenges and the priority policy reforms needed to address them, working with other Multilateral Development Banks and development partners to help countries implement the reforms through technical assistance and financing, and helping to establish country-led platforms designed to mobilize additional climate finance, including from the private sector.

The World Bank Group will devote 45 percent of annual financing to climate change adaptation and mitigation by 2025, working to bring renewable energy to 250 million people in Africa by 2030, and expanding its crisis toolkit to support people on the front lines of the climate crisis.

The IMF, meanwhile, will help countries build resilience to climate change with support from its Resilience and Sustainability Trust, which is funded by contributions from 23 countries.

SUNSTAR

[12K students to get green skills training in Cebu, Manila](#)

By: Earl Kim H. Padronia

Around 12,000 students from Metro Cebu and Metro Manila will be trained in the next two years to incorporate green initiatives into their technical-vocational skills training.

Aimed at solving the growing threat of climate change, advancing sustainability and solving unemployment in the Philippines, the Asia Society for Social Improvement and Sustainable Transformation (Assist) with J.P. Morgan, a global finance services firm, launched “Project sustainABILITY” on Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at a hotel in Cebu City.

In an interview with the media, Francis Macatulad, executive director of Assist, said the project aims to train the youth in new skills with an emphasis on green initiatives that will support the growth of the green economy through green jobs.

Macatulad said the project will equip at least 20 technical-vocational institutes (TVIs) across Metro Cebu and Manila.

In turn, these TVIs will train over 750 instructors in green skills instruction which will then train at least 12,000 students in Metro Manila and Metro Cebu for the next two years.

He said Project SustainABILITY aims to enhance sustainability in the workforce across key industries across construction, metals and engineering, automotive, land transportation, agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

He added that it also allows the development of a new curriculum based on these key industries and focuses on green initiatives followed by its implementation through training, and lastly, facilitating job placement of at least half of the trainees.

The “Project sustainABILITY” will be supported by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) in partnership with the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Department of Labor and Employment, and other government agencies.

Undersecretary Vidal Villanueva III, Tesda’s deputy director general for special concerns, who joined the lunch on Wednesday, said the program is one of the ways to protect the environment.

Under the project, Villanueva said Tesda will review the current curriculum and training regulations to incorporate green initiatives into the learning platform.

In the construction industry, Villanueva said the project will educate students to identify construction materials that are harmful to the environment and equip them to shift to green technology and initiatives to protect the environment better.

The project was first launched in Taguig City on April 12, 2024.

San Francisco, Camotes gets \$50,000

By: Claudine Flores

The municipality of San Francisco on Camotes Islands, Cebu will soon gather around 400 youngsters to create a youth-led climate solution funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Mayor Alfredo Arquillano Jr. told SunStar Cebu, Friday, May 31, 2024, that the town received \$50,000 to distribute as microgrants to fund a groundswell of youth-led climate initiatives that meet local contexts and objectives.

San Francisco's Local Climate Action Plan became one of only two recipients of Bloomberg's Youth Climate Action Fund in the Philippines and 100 beneficiaries worldwide.

"I was invited last Dec. 3 to 7, 2023 to the Local Climate Action Summit in Dubai. Fortunately, San Francisco became one of the local government beneficiaries," said Arquillano, referring to the annual United Nations climate change conference.

"You have to look ahead... that is our number one priority because in San Francisco, we want to make sure that in a few years we are still sustainable, people are comfortable, we still have water, we still have food. We want to make sure that our community is climate change adaptive," said Arquillano.

Action plan

Starting Monday, June 3, San Francisco will distribute the assistance as microgrants to the youth allowing them to design, produce, and govern their climate action plan.

In a news release, Bloomberg Philanthropies said project ideas may include youth-led awareness, education, research, and development initiatives; youth-driven climate mitigation and adaptation projects like community gardening, tree planting, reforestation, and urban farming campaigns; and co-governed youth climate action plans like partnerships between city leaders and youth groups to inform climate-related policy ideas, decisions, or actions or the formation of youth climate ambassadors or advisory boards.

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the umbrella organization for all of Michael Bloomberg's charitable giving, including his foundation, corporate, and individual philanthropies.

THE MANILA TIMES

[UN implements \\$122.6M projects in PH](#)

By: Bernadette Tamayo

The United Nations implemented projects amounting to over \$122.6 million (UN) in the Philippines in 2023 to support the country's sustainable development goals (SDGs).

In its 2023 annual report released on Thursday, UN Philippines said it provided vital support to 12 government emergency response operations, helping millions of Filipinos.

In its 2023 annual report released on Thursday, UN Philippines said it provided vital support to 12 government emergency response operations, helping millions of Filipinos.

"We aimed to unlock the full development potential of everyone in the Philippines," said Gustavo González, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in the Philippines.

"Throughout 2023, our efforts have been closely aligned with the country's development priorities, human rights, gender equality commitments, and the overarching 17 SDGs," González said.

The report detailed how the UN works with the Philippine government at all levels to localize global development solutions and tailor them to the needs of the country, with the aim to accelerate the achievement of SDGs.

"Achievements belong to Filipino professionals, practitioners and organizations. The UN just creates an enabling environment for partnerships, knowledge sharing and innovation. Strengthened collaboration among UN entities and with development partners has also increased resources for SDGs acceleration," González said.

"Our successes are inseparable from our strong partnerships with the government of the Philippines, non-government organizations and civil society organizations, communities, youth groups, labor unions, academe, development partners, the business community, and the many individuals championing the rights of the most vulnerable," he added.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[USAID official speaks out on global biodiversity loss](#)

By: Bella Cariaso

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has expressed alarm over global biodiversity loss, and called for massive efforts to stop the crisis and prevent its catastrophic impacts.

“The current state of global biodiversity loss around the world is alarming,” USAID Deputy Mission director Rebekah Eubanks said during the celebration of the International Day for Biological Diversity in Taguig City.

Eubanks said that species are disappearing at an unprecedented rate because of habitat destruction, climate change, pollution, unsustainable agricultural practices, and exploitation of natural resources.

“Biodiversity loss not only threatens the survival of countless species, but also undermines the stability of ecosystems, impacting human wellbeing and livelihoods,” Eubanks added.

Biodiversity refers to all life forms on the planet.

“We must all take action to safeguard these precious resources for future generations,” he added.

Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said that the DENR has adopted a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach where partnerships and linkages are formed with other government agencies, the private sector and all stakeholders for ecosystems protection, conservation and integrity and the resilience of communities that surround these.

UNDP

Enhancing climate finance access is crucial for sustainable development in Bangladesh

A four-day capacity development workshop titled "Climate Finance Access and Mobilization in Bangladesh" jointly inaugurated by the International Climate Finance Cell (ICFC), Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh Climate Development Partnership (BCDP), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) today (June 1) in Dhaka, to enhance understanding of climate finance, mobilize additional funds, engage key stakeholders, and utilize existing climate finance platforms. The workshop brought together over 45 participants from 16 ministries, divisions, agencies, research institutes, and academia across Bangladesh.

Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP, was the chief guest in the inaugural session. In his remarks, Minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury emphasized Bangladesh's vulnerabilities to climate change and the urgent need for adequate climate finance to support national plans like the Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan, National Adaptation Plan, and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). "This programme will strengthen our ability to access and utilize global funds while catalyzing investments from diverse sources," the minister said.

Saber Hossain Chowdhury also highlighted three key challenges: scaling up the global donor base through inclusive partnerships, ensuring policy coherence and coordination across ministries to maximize co-benefits such as health and employment, and conducting a comprehensive financial needs assessment as the current \$230 billion estimate is likely understated. Addressing these challenges through collaboration is essential for securing sustainable climate financing.

Among others Shahriar Kader Siddiky, Secretary, the Economic Relations Division (ERD); Stefan Liller, Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh, Matt Cannell, Deputy High Commissioner and Development Director, British High Commission, Dhaka, Nayoka Martinez-Bäckström, Deputy Head of Development Cooperation, Embassy of Sweden, Edimon Ginting, Country Director, Asian Development Bank also spoke during the inaugural session.

Shahriar Kader Siddiky in his remarks said, "Integrating climate change into public financial management is crucial for aligning national budgets and fiscal policies with climate priorities." " Our goal is to create a Knowledge Circle in both the public and private

sectors that can access and utilize climate finance from national and global sources effectively”, he further added.

"UNDP remains committed to supporting Bangladesh in its pursuit of climate-resilient development pathways. This workshop will lay the ground for enhanced collaboration and coordination among stakeholders to mobilize additional climate finance from diverse sources," said Stefan Liller. "Bangladesh has received substantial financing from vertical funds like the Global Environmental Facility, the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund, but the process of accessing such funds needs to be simplified and the utilization of these need to be made quicker, more efficient, and in an accountable and transparent way to make Bangladesh best in class both in mobilizing and delivering climate finance - in support of its mitigation and adaptation priorities and larger development aspirations," Stefan added.

Matt Cannell, Deputy High Commissioner and Development Director at the British High Commission in Dhaka, reaffirmed his country's commitment, stating, "The UK is committed to supporting climate action in Bangladesh through enhanced finance and capacity building. Leveraging international finance and multilateral balance sheets is critical for increased access to climate funding and prioritizing adaptation. But we must also unlock meaningful private sector participation with true government ownership, as climate change impacts us all profoundly."

Echoing similar sentiments, Nayoka Martinez-Bäckström, Deputy Head of Development Cooperation at the Embassy of Sweden, said, "Enhancing climate finance is crucial for building resilience and achieving sustainable development in Bangladesh. Sweden remains a committed partner in this endeavor."

Edimon Ginting, Country Director, Asian Development Bank emphasized, "Addressing climate change requires collaborative solutions harnessing all available resources and expertise. The Asian Development Bank is pleased to contribute to strengthening Bangladesh's climate finance architecture."

The four-day workshop, organized by UNDP with support from the Governments of Sweden and the UK, aims to strengthen Bangladesh's capacity to access and utilize climate finance. Discussions focused on attracting private sector investments through innovative instruments like green bonds, Islamic finance, carbon markets, and public-private partnerships, as well as exploring blended finance mechanisms and evidence-based tools for effective climate fund access.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Borje: Protect marine ecosystem](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) called for sustainable actions to protect the country's marine ecosystems and coastal communities to bolster growth and development for fisherfolk as the nation commemorated National Fisherfolk's Day on 31 May 2024.

CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje pointed out the importance of recognizing and ramping up work to address the "challenges faced by our fishing communities due to climate change and other human-induced ecosystem issues.

Borje underlined the dependence of fisherfolks on marine and coastal resources and stressed that "human activities contributing to the deterioration of marine ecosystems and climate change must be addressed."

"Our actions significantly impact the health of our environment. Every step we take towards sustainability contributes to the protection and preservation of our marine ecosystems. Let this day demonstrate our common

resolve to transformative climate action that protects and promotes our people, including fisherfolk," he added.

Around 8 million Filipinos are directly and indirectly dependent on marine and coastal resources. However, a plethora of issues, including climate change, marine pollution, oil spills, habitat loss, rising sea levels and surface temperatures, and ocean acidification, poses severe threats to their lives and livelihoods.

CCC, Japan's environment agency seek stronger cooperation

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) met with the Japanese Ministry of the Environment (MOEJ) and discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in climate change action using best available science and data-based modalities.

CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje met MOEJ vice minister for global environmental affairs Yutaka Matsuzawa with both emphasizing the need to evaluate and assess science-based models currently used and their applications in the Asia-Pacific region.

Borje underscored the importance of bilateral and regional partnership for a comprehensive and integrated assessment of climate change impacts as well as its mitigation and adaptation strategies for nations, individually and collectively.

“With Japan, we can consider and assess the utility of models and identify those that can best support individual and joint efforts to develop strategies that enhance climate resilience, protect vulnerable populations, and ensure sustainable development,” Borje stated.

One of those identified during the discussions, the Asian-Pacific Integrated Model (AIM) developed by the National Institute for Environmental Studies in Kyoto in collaboration with Asian researchers and Mizuho Research & Technologies, streamlines the assessment of climate change measures at the country level. Since its inception in 1990, the AIM has supported national climate policies in Japan, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam.

MOEJ expressed its commitment to support the Philippines' transformative climate change action agenda and to further strengthen bilateral cooperation that aims to produce more effective climate policies tailored to the Philippines' unique vulnerabilities and needs.

Climate commission urges enhanced risk avoidance measures

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the crucial role of the private sector in strengthening the Philippines' national risk management capacities and stressed the importance of enhancing risk avoidance measures during the Pan-Asia Risk and Insurance Management Association (PARIMA) Conference in Manila on 30 May 2024.

The CCC emphasized the need for effective collaboration with the private sector to build a resilient nation and Asia-Pacific region capable of withstanding and addressing the escalating impacts of climate change.

In his keynote address, CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje emphasized the importance of the private sector in risk avoidance, stressing the necessity for a proactive approach to the impacts of climate change and alignment with the government's policies and frameworks.

Borje underscored the need at the outset to work together on and invest in preventive adaptation to minimize risks related to climate change and its impacts.

While recognizing insurance as a risk transferring approach that can be supported, Borje noted the continuing importance of public and private partnership to invest in national and localized efforts for resilience.

"The private sector's role is not just in transferring risk through insurance but also in investing in preventive measures. This includes infrastructure upgrades, adoption of sustainable practices, and promotion of awareness about climate risks," Borje added.

The Philippines has incurred significant losses and damages amounting to P673.3 billion over the past decade due to tropical cyclones alone — more than twice the total premiums collected by the insurance industry — highlighting the urgency for innovative solutions and stronger risk management strategies.

To address this, the Philippine government has established various policies and programs, including the National Climate Risk Management Framework and the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, which integrate risk assessment, capacity building and sustainable finance mobilization from both public and private sources.

Furthermore, the draft National Adaptation Plan and Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan emphasize insurance as a key strategy for enhancing resilience in

agriculture, fisheries and food security sectors. The plans aim to enhance climate insurance in the country, ensuring coverage against extreme weather events.

Borje called for a multi-pronged approach to climate action, urging the private sector to develop innovative insurance products, engage in public-private partnerships and invest in resilience projects.

“While the government has instituted measures to manage these risks, the scale and complexity of the challenges demand a collaborative approach. We need your expertise, resources, and innovative solutions to enhance our risk transfer mechanisms and build a resilient nation,” Borje stressed.

PARIMA is a professional organization dedicated to advance the practice of risk management and insurance in the Asia-Pacific region, supporting risk managers through education, networking and the sharing of best practices. It provides a platform for risk professionals to connect, collaborate and enhance their skills in managing various types of risks, including those related to finance, operations and strategic management.

The CCC remains committed to support Filipinos in adapting to climate change challenges by promoting climate insurance and partnering with the private sector to foster a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines, ensuring continuity for individuals and businesses in the face of climate change-induced disasters.

[PBBM lauded for signing PENCAS law](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) lauded President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.'s signing of Republic Act 11995 (RA 11995), also known as the Philippine Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System (PENCAS) Act, citing that the institutionalization of national resource accounting will protect and promote ecological balance and advance climate resilience of the Philippines.

The CCC stated that the PENCAS Act represented a “significant stride towards aligning the country’s economic policies with sustainable practices to ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptation are at the center of the country’s national development plans, consistent with the vision of President Marcos of a climate smart and resilient Philippines.”

CCC vice chair and executive director Robert Borje pointed out that the PENCAS Act or RA 11995 initiates the adoption and integration of internationally accepted environmental economic accounting frameworks into the country’s resource management. The PENCAS Act, Borje added, mandates the compilation of officially designated statistics on the depletion, degradation and restoration of natural capital, environmental protection expenditures, pollution and quality of lands, air, and water, stating also that these data sets will be the basis for national decision-making processes on economic, environmental and health policy developments.

The law established a mechanism for monitoring and reporting that will contribute to the protection, conservation, and restoration of Philippine ecosystems and environmental resources.

“We thank President Marcos for signing the PENCAS Act. The new law is crucial in realizing the vision of a climate resilient and smart Philippines. PENCAS helps ensure that national policies continue to be driven by best available science and current and more complete data sets,” Borje said.

CCC also thanked the Senate and the House of Representatives, including Senator Loren Legarda, for key roles in passing the law.

“The PENCAS Act mandates the inclusion of the country’s natural resources as a vital component of the national economy, supplementing traditional metrics such as gross domestic product and human capital,” said Legarda, principal author of the law.

“Now that PENCAS is a law, I expect that our natural resources would be better managed and protected according to real data and information contributed as basis of the economy, for an environmentally-friendly development of our country,” she added.

The CCC recognized PENCAS’ alignment with global and national climate frameworks such as the Paris Agreement, National Climate Change Action Plan, National Adaptation Plan, Philippine Development Plan, and Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan.

“PENCAS is the cornerstone for precise and transparent policy formulation and decision-making in ecological and natural resources management in the country. Furthermore, it provides the solid rationale for directing investments towards programs aimed at fostering healthy, sustainable ecosystem services, and resilient Filipino communities,” Borje said.

The law tasks the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) with leading its implementation. Meanwhile, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources will closely collaborate with the PSA for the provision of the National Capital Accounting.

Specific inputs by the CCC during the development of the law include the establishment of natural capital units, valuation of natural capital accounts, involvement of local government units in data collection, implementation of an open data system, and strengthening monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms.

The CCC remains steadfast in its commitment to actively participate in the formulation of pro-climate policies that protect the country’s ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources.

By supporting PENCAS and similar legislation, the CCC hopes to promote efficient use of resources, reduce environmental risks, and support long-term economic growth that aligns with the country’s climate goals and agenda.

RAPPLER

[\[Opinion\] Climate finance: A call to action for the Philippines](#)

By: Tony La Vina and Javvy Gamboa

In international climate negotiations, 2024 is the year of climate finance. Much attention at the upcoming 60th sessions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Subsidiary Bodies or SB60 in Bonn, Germany, this June and at the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November will be dedicated to the progress – if not the success – in negotiating the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG).

This is the backdrop against which the Allied for Climate Transformation by 2025 or ACT2025 released its Call to Action titled, “Climate-Vulnerable Countries’ Expectations Leading to COP29.”

ACT2025 is a consortium of think tanks and experts elevating the needs and priorities of vulnerable developing countries to deliver ambitious, balanced, just, and equitable outcomes at the UN climate negotiations and other multilateral fora to chart a path toward greater global solidarity.

Manila Observatory serves as a core partner of ACT2025.

The state of negotiations and climate action

While there has been significant progress in the past few years like the adoption and operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund, the Call to Action points to unfinished tasks across the consortium’s four pillars of finance, ambition, adaptation, and loss and damage.

Finance lacking across the board. There is a growing gap between the needs of developing countries and the support provided and mobilized for their efforts to implement their national climate plans (UNFCCC 2023).

Widening gaps in mitigation ambition and implementation. The expected global average temperature increase by 2100 has dropped from 4°C to 2.5–2.9°C based on nationally determined contributions (NDCs) – significant progress but still far from the Paris Agreement’s 1.5°C threshold (UNFCCC 2022).

Moreover, current policies are projected to result in higher greenhouse gas emissions than those implied by NDCs, and lackluster mitigation efforts in high-emitting countries

will lead to greater needs for adaptation and addressing loss and damage in climate-vulnerable countries.

Adaptation keeps lagging behind. Gaps still exist in the implementation of, support for, and collective assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation. Current levels of support for adaptation remain inadequate to respond to worsening climate change impacts in developing countries (UN Environment Programme 2023).

Loss and damage responses insufficient. Significant gaps related to addressing loss and damage persist, and there is a need to improve coherence and synergy among efforts pertaining to disaster risk management, humanitarian assistance, recovery and reconstruction, and displacement/migration, as well as address needs to increase speed of finance disbursement, among other issues (UNFCCC 2023).

However, the last-minute election of Azerbaijan to the COP presidency makes the seasoned and the new actors in climate negotiations doubtful of the host's capacity to shepherd a crucial and highly contentious agenda, such as the NCQG. Azerbaijan's pillars for its presidency, which is "to enhance ambition and enable action," seem vague and require a lot of nuancing to carry forward. To say the least, immense leadership, trust-building, and consolidation of gains are demanded from the presidency.

Zooming into climate finance

The negotiations for the NCQG, which started in 2022 and are expected to end in 2024, carry with it the burden of addressing the failures of the US\$100-billion goal agreed upon in 2010, and the much greater burden of finally delivering the finance needed by developing countries for mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage, among others.

In a working paper published by the World Resources Institute, "Untangling the finance goal: An introduction to the new collective quantified goal," the key elements discussed in the negotiations refer to the quantitative amount and quality of finance, thematic scope, time frame of the goal, contributor base, and transparency arrangements.

The Call to Action summarizes the crucial aspects of the NCQG consistent with the needs of climate-vulnerable developing countries as follows:

Ensuring developed countries assume the responsibility and leadership of providing and mobilizing financial resources to support developing countries' transitions to 1.5°C-compatible trajectories and a climate-resilient future.

Aligning with the climate needs and priorities of the developing world, estimated in the trillions of dollars. The NCQG should align with the findings of the Global Stocktake, prompting a financial response equal in magnitude to the scale of action required for securing a low-emissions, climate-resilient future.

Encompassing the three pillars of climate action. Mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage response are central pillars of climate action and should all be covered under the new goal.

Adopting a framework for the quality of climate finance. The new goal must be shaped in a way that avoids exacerbating the already unsustainable levels of indebtedness of developing countries, prioritizing the use of non-debt instruments that prevent perpetuating climate finance as a synonym of climate-induced debt.

Facilitating accountability of the NCQG with a strong transparency framework. The mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the NCQG should use the Enhanced Transparency Framework and the issuance of biennial transparency reports or BTRs.

Not only for developed countries

While the Call to Action seems directed only at developed countries with the G7 at the forefront as well as the broader G20, it should also serve as an action plan for climate-vulnerable developing countries, such as the Philippines.

The Call to Action is a rich resource for negotiation positions that put forward the interests of the Global South. The Philippine delegation led by Climate Change Commission (CCC) Chair-Designate and Environment Secretary Toni Yulo-Loyzaga, CCC Vice Chair and Executive Director Secretary Robert Borje, and Commissioners Rachel Anne Herrera and Albert dela Cruz should consider adopting these positions in Bonn up to Baku. If climate-vulnerable developing countries carry these common positions on NCQG, then we expect that the outcome in Baku will be robust.

Recently, the Philippine government has expressed its intention to host the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF) Board, to which the Philippines has gained a seat. While the discussions in the LDF will not be revisited in the NCQG negotiations, the latter has substantive implications for the LDF, particularly on the question of whether the new finance goals would also cover financing loss and damage. On a political level, a strong position of the Philippines in the NCQG negotiations complements its position and authority to host the LDF Board.

The NCQG negotiations present an opportunity for the Philippines to show its leadership, especially that it is one of the many countries that urgently need the developed country-driven financing to meet their emissions target and, most importantly, to ensure that communities in the grassroots are protected from climate change impacts to the fullest extent possible.

It is not only about money, it is about responsibility. Fighting for a robust climate finance goal is a moral imperative for the Philippines.

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