



NEWS ROUNDUP

19 JUNE 2023 [08:00 am]

- World Bank urges using 'wasted' subsidies to fight climate change
- Tracking progress in PHL's and SEA's sustainability pursuits
- Four alarming charts that show just how extreme the climate is right now
- UN chief slams 'pitiful' world response to climate change
- DENR: Include waste pickers in plastic management
- DENR asked to scrap MOU with oil firm
- Bonn climate talks to prepare for COP28 summit end with little to show
- UN chief to fossil fuel firms: Stop trying to 'knee-cap' climate progress
- DENR leads tree planting activity in Mount Arayat
- Integrate science in climate change policies – diplomat

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- CCC, MTRCB ink MOA for climate change info drive

ABS CBN

[World Bank urges using 'wasted' subsidies to fight climate change](#)

Trillions of dollars which could be used to tackle climate change are being wasted on harmful and unnecessary subsidies, the World Bank said in a report Thursday.

BUSINESS WORLD

[Tracking progress in PHL's and SEA's sustainability pursuits](#)

By: Angela Kiara S. Brillantes

Sustainability has become one of the key components driving and transforming every business today, allowing them to perform their significant share in responding to the critical environmental, social, and governance challenges the world currently faces.

CNN

[Four alarming charts that show just how extreme the climate is right now](#)

By: Rachel Ramirez

Soaring temperatures. Unusually hot oceans. Record high levels of carbon pollution in the atmosphere and record low levels of Antarctic ice.

FRANCE 24

[UN chief slams 'pitiful' world response to climate change](#)

Climate policies currently adopted will lead to average temperatures 2.8 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times by the end of the century, nearly twice the UN goal of a 1.5 degree rise, Guterres said.

MANILA STANDARD

[DENR: Include waste pickers in plastic management](#)

By: Rio N. Araja

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources seeks to employ waste pickers from the informal sector and integrate them into an expanded producer responsibility (EPR) system for plastic packaging waste.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[DENR asked to scrap MOU with oil firm](#)

Greenpeace Philippines has called out the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for entering into a “reprehensible partnership” with Shell Pilipinas Corp., saying that the DENR should instead demand that the fuel company pay reparations for contributing to the climate crisis.

RAPPLER

[Bonn climate talks to prepare for COP28 summit end with little to show](#)

Global climate negotiators had little specific progress to report at talks intended to prepare for this year’s COP28 UN climate conference in Dubai, which it is hoped will get governments to embrace more ambitious steps to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit).

UN chief to fossil fuel firms: Stop trying to ‘knee-cap’ climate progress

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Thursday, June 15, that countries must start phasing out oil, coal and gas – not just emissions – and demanded fossil fuel companies “cease and desist” measures that aim to “knee-cap” climate progress.

SUNSTAR

DENR leads tree planting activity in Mount Arayat

By: Ian Ocampo Flora

Over a hundred state workers from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) here and partner agencies participated in a tree-growing event in Mount Arayat Protected Landscape (MAPL) in Arayat town the other day.

THE MANILA TIMES

Integrate science in climate change policies – diplomat

By: Bernadette E. Tamayo

GLENN Banaguas, chairman of the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Science Diplomats, called on local government leaders to integrate science in crafting policies addressing climate change and disaster risk management.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

CCC, MTRCB ink MOA for climate change info drive

By: Ruth Abbey Gita Carlos

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) have joined hands to raise public awareness about the devastating effects of climate change. The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) have joined hands to raise public awareness about the devastating effects of climate change.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

[World Bank urges using 'wasted' subsidies to fight climate change](#)

Trillions of dollars which could be used to tackle climate change are being wasted on harmful and unnecessary subsidies, the World Bank said in a report Thursday.

"People say that there isn't money for climate but there is -- it's just in the wrong places," World Bank Senior Managing Director Axel van Trotsenburg said in a statement.

"If we could repurpose the trillions of dollars being spent on wasteful subsidies and put these to better, greener uses, we could together address many of the planet's most pressing challenges," he added.

The World Bank report said \$1.25 trillion in direct subsidies are currently given to the agricultural, fishing and fossil fuels sectors each year.

Fossil fuel subsidies alone make up around 6 times what countries pledged to mobilize annually under the Paris Agreement for renewable energies and low-carbon development, the bank said.

As well as the \$1.25 trillion in direct subsidies, the World Bank report also identified around \$6 trillion in what it called "implicit subsidies" being wasted each year.

The World Bank said implicit subsidies represent the "costs on people and the planet from pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, road congestion, and the destruction of nature ultimately resulting from the subsidies."

Subsidy reform can "remove distorted incentives that obstruct sustainability goals but it also can unlock significant domestic financing to facilitate and accelerate sustainable development efforts," the Bank said.

BUSINESS WORLD

Tracking progress in PHL's and SEA's sustainability pursuits

By: Angela Kiara S. Brillantes

Sustainability has become one of the key components driving and transforming every business today, allowing them to perform their significant share in responding to the critical environmental, social, and governance challenges the world currently faces.

The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) function as a bridge in achieving a better, greener, and more sustainable future for all lives. These SDGs tackle issues like poverty, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice, and other global challenges. These SDGs serve as targets that must be met by 2030.

Today, many have been joining and strengthening the sustainability agenda globally. The public and private sector are joining hands together to pursue the agenda for a more sustainable future for everyone.

In the Philippines, the country's dedication to prioritizing achieving SDGs remained amidst the coronavirus crisis. Sustainability efforts and initiatives were slowly taking effect and saw slow but steady progress in the Philippines.

UN's The Sustainable Development Report 2022 revealed that as a result of the Philippines' sustainability efforts and initiatives, the country is slowly progressing in achieving SDGs. It ranks 95th out of 163 member states, with an SDG Index Score of 66.6, quite exceeding the regional average of 65.9.

Among the SDGs found to be successfully achieved by the country, albeit remaining challenges, are SDGs 6, 12, and 13, which focus on clean water and sanitation, responsible consumption and production patterns, and climate actions, respectively.

The report also noted that the Philippines has been moderately improving in attaining SDGs 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 3 (good health and well-being), 4 (quality education), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 10 (reduced inequality), 14 (life below water), and 16 (peace and justice strong institutions); while it is stagnating in SDGs 5 (gender equality), 11 (sustainable cities and communities), 15 (life on land), and 17 (partnerships to achieve the goal).

On top of these, the recent Global Sustainable Competitiveness Index reveals that the Philippines is placed 86th out of 180 countries in national sustainability and came in eighth among Southeast Asian countries. With a score of 41.9, the country falls short of the global average sustainable competitiveness score of 44.1.

Given its current progress, the Philippines still has a long way to go, especially as progress in some goals like SDG 4 were observed to be reversed; but the country is already incorporating sustainable efforts and initiatives that will help in achieving these SGDs.

At a recently concluded forum that tackled global sustainability development, Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique A. Manalo emphasized that the Philippines is working on strengthening SDG implementation through national policies and programs that will not only help achieve and incorporate the said goals but also keep track of the progress.

To name a few sustainability efforts, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization have partnered to establish an e-waste treatment, storage, and disposal facility, which intends to make recycling more sustainable and for better environmental protection. Other sustainability efforts cited are the increased use of energy-efficient electric vehicles (EVs), like electric jeeps and tricycles, in partnership with the local government units; and the adoption of low-carbon, zero-carbon, and renewable energy sources to meet the country's energy needs.

Furthermore, companies here are also beginning to embed the sustainability agenda, as they recognize that sustainability is more than a trend to embrace but also a widespread need to address.

Among the country's leading corporations that has been factoring sustainability into their operations is Ayala Corp. (AC).

"At Ayala, our focus has always been on being a responsible corporate citizen, understanding that care for the environment, fair treatment of people, and good corporate governance are part and parcel of doing business," Ma. Victoria A. Tan, head of the Ayala Corp.'s Group Risk and Sustainability Unit, said in an email to BusinessWorld.

"In the words of our Chairman Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, 'Businesses can no longer afford to be driven solely by the need to maximize returns to shareholders,'" Ms. Tan added.

Regarding the environment, Ms. Tan highlighted AC's ambition to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

"We shall take concrete steps towards mitigating climate-related risks, adapting our processes, and innovating the way we do business to ensure sustainability moving forward," she added.

An active participant in this area is Ayala Corp.'s real estate arm Ayala Land, Inc. (ALI). In a video explaining how it is investing in our planet, "step by sustainable step," ALI President and Chief Executive Officer Bernard Vincent Dy stressed that it has been taking steps to reduce its carbon footprint since 2017.

"We've achieved carbon neutrality in all our commercial properties in 2022, from more efficient use of resources to procuring renewable energy and converting land to carbon forest," Mr. Dy said.

Moreover, Mr. Dy shared that by 2022 it has already enabled energy efficiency for 111 buildings; 91% of its commercial properties are already using renewable energy; 586 hectares were converted to a carbon forest; and more than 200,000 of trees were planted.

By creating sustainable communities, ALI also believes that sustainable communities, for their hallmark features, can readily enhance the overall quality of life and bring occupants closer to opportunities of growth.

For instance, in ALI subsidiary Alveo Land's developments, maximized natural lighting, low-energy consumption lighting fixtures in common areas, and a rainwater harvesting system, among others, make the condominium units sustainable. Their lots, meanwhile, feature natural ventilation, natural lighting, LED lights, landscaping with native plants, an efficient waste-management system, and a materials recovery facility.

Moreover, ALI added, its parks and gardens in the Makati central business district serve as the green lung of the city. These green spaces are said to enable residents and workers to benefit from fresh air, improved mood, and better productivity as being surrounded by greenery evokes feelings of rest, refreshment and peace.

With its commitment to conserving and protecting the environment, Ayala Corp. aims to set an example for the rest of the Philippine business community to emulate.

“Other than supporting the Philippine SEC’s disclosure mandate, we hope that we can encourage more Philippine businesses to be more deliberate about their own commitments on climate and the environment,” AC’s Ms. Tan said.

For its social agenda, AC is “focused on meaningful work and community vitality with targeted strategies across customers and communities, our supply chain, and the workplace.”

“While this is a work in progress, we are happy to share that we were able to generate more than 130,000 jobs in 2022 alone,” Ms. Tan said.

For governance, meanwhile, AC updated its board diversity policy in 2020 with a target of having at least 30% female directors or at least two female directors, whichever is lower by 2025.

“The first female director was elected in 2021. In 2022, we surpassed our target (three years ahead of schedule) of having at least two female directors in our board with the election of two more female directors. Women currently represent 42.86% of Ayala Corporation’s seven-seat Board,” Ms. Tan shared.

Progress in SEA, Asia-Pacific

Looking at a wider landscape, the Southeast Asia (SEA) region, known to have the third-largest economy in the world, is getting more attention because of its growing population, its expanding digitalization, and the way it is transitioning as a business center hub for many multinational companies.

RIMM Sustainability, a sustainability management solutions provider, and YCP Solidance, a strategy consulting firm, revealed in a recent study that the Southeast Asia region is a top destination for multinational companies. In addition, the study showed that the market in Southeast Asia has so much potential and offers many opportunities for sustainable growth and development.

As the sustainability agenda spreads like wildfire, the Southeast Asian market is putting more effort into embracing and integrating sustainability into corporate strategies to not only fuel their growth but also to achieve the United Nation’s SDGs.

According to the YCP Solidance study, SEA is one of the leading regions in acquiring renewable energy resources; wind power in Vietnam, supplies of biofuel in the

Philippines and Indonesia, and hydropower in Laos and Myanmar are among the sustainable practices that the region is taking advantage of.

At a much larger scale, however, the Asia-Pacific still faces many challenges, preventing them from fully accomplishing these goals. The progress has been slow and many saw that there has been less improvement.

According to a report by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the region's average global progress attaining the SDGs only increased from 4.4% to 14.4% in a span of 15 years.

Out of the SDGs, the region has made the most progress in the areas of quality education (SDG 4), clean energy (SDG 7), and industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9). Since 2015, there has been some fast progress in some SEA countries. For instance, SDG 4 (quality education) improved greatly for countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Cambodia, while China and Myanmar are the leading countries for SDG 2 (zero and hunger), and the only country that outperformed the regional average for SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), is the Philippines.

However, progress is falling behind on climate-related SDGs. According to the UNESCAP report, due to the increasing climate crisis, from water scarcity to the back-to-back climate disasters, the efforts to achieve the climate-related SDGs have been severely affected, causing a step backward in reversing climate change.

“Progress towards climate action is slipping away. The region is both a victim of the impact of climate change and a preparator of climate change, with a responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emission,” as stated in the ESCAP report.

Challenges to sustainable recovery

Bringing our frame back to SEA, the region has to hurdle several challenges to even accelerate the progress achieved so far.

“Despite the conscious efforts made by the relevant public sector stakeholders in SEA, the path to long-term sustainable recovery will require consistent efforts as the countries in SEA face the need to balance their commitment to sustainability and high expected economic growth,” RIMM Sustainability & YCP Solidance said in their report.

One of the challenges noted in the report is concerning energy transition, given that the pressure to incorporate sustainable practices in the sector has increased greatly.

Besides switching digitally, companies are getting ready for an energy transition to fight against climate change.

The report also stated that the demand for energy has accelerated in SEA. Thus, economies in the region started shifting to utilizing renewable energy sources to help reduce energy waste.

However, not all can freely switch to using renewable energy sources since it depends on the country's circumstances. For instance, major external events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climatic disasters, among others, can hinder ensuring energy transition and security for some countries.

Emerging and developing countries are still yet to start transitioning to consuming cleaner energy as they still rely heavily on fossil energy sources, such as Cambodia and Myanmar.

There are also green investments and financial gaps seen in the region. While investing in green projects is important for sustainable development, many SEA countries experience financial gaps due to the pandemic's outcomes. The lack of sustainable financing can be caused by "not fully leveraging opportunities associated with the transition to sustainable food energy, infrastructure, and transportation systems, and not proactively identifying clients requiring support to transition towards more sustainable business models."

In terms of reporting, RIMM Sustainability & YCP Solidance spot insufficient quality data as a concern. SEA countries are observed to be struggling with the lack of high-quality data because businesses lack knowledge of the right procedures for collecting quality data and not having enough internal resources to put those methodologies to use.

High-quality data provides better data management, establishes data transparency, and helps local governments in implementing smarter policies and regulations for a successful sustainable recovery.

'Interconnected challenges'

On top of these challenges, there is much in the country's own sustainability agenda that remains to be addressed by corporations, as Ms. Tan of Ayala Corp. shared.

She said AC anticipates climate risks and the need for climate action to remain high on the agenda while momentum for nature positive action will continue to gain momentum

after the successful United Nations Biodiversity Conference, more known as COP15, held in Montreal, Canada last December.

“We feel both are very much in line with the environmental priorities of the current administration and [that] will be key in advancing sustainability in the Philippines,” she shared.

Aside from these concerns, nonetheless, inequality is expected to be another topic of high urgency as current attempts to add

ress it remain fragmented.

“This truly is an era of interconnected challenges. We believe solutions to connect and address climate, nature, and inequality must be done in a systemic and transformative way,” Ms. Tan added.

CNN

[Four alarming charts that show just how extreme the climate is right now](#)

By: Rachel Ramirez

Soaring temperatures. Unusually hot oceans. Record high levels of carbon pollution in the atmosphere and record low levels of Antarctic ice.

We're only halfway through 2023 and so many climate records are being broken, some scientists are sounding the alarm, fearing it could be a sign of a planet warming much more rapidly than expected.

In a widely shared tweet, Brian McNoldy, senior research associate at the University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric and Earth Science, called rising ocean and air temperatures "totally bonkers."

He added, "people who look at this stuff routinely can't believe their eyes. Something very weird is happening."

Other scientists have said while the records are alarming, they are not unexpected due to both the continued rise of planet-heating pollution and the arrival of the natural climate phenomenon El Niño, which has a global heating effect.

Whether the broken records are a sign of climate change progressing beyond what climate the models predict, or are the outcome of the climate crisis unfolding as expected, they remain a very concerning signal of what's to come, scientists said.

"These changes are deeply disturbing because of what they mean for people this coming summer, and every summer after, until we cut our carbon emissions at a much faster pace than we're currently doing," Jennifer Marlon, research scientist at Yale School of the Environment, told CNN.

The world is already 1.2 degrees Celsius warmer than it was in preindustrial times, and the next five years are predicted to be the hottest on record.

"We've been saying this for a long time – as polar scientists and as climate scientists – we've been saying you can count on the next few decades to consistently get warmer," Ted Scambos, a glaciologist at the University of Colorado-Boulder, told CNN. "We're not going to turn back until we actually do something about this."

Here are four charts showing just how record-breaking this year has already been, with the hottest months still to come.

Global temperatures spike

This year is shaping up to be one of the hottest yet, with global data showing temperatures spiking to unusually high levels.

The first eleven days of June saw the highest temperatures on record for this time of year by a substantial margin, according to an analysis released Thursday by the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service. It is also the first time global air temperatures during June exceeded preindustrial levels by more than 1.5 degrees Celsius, the scientists found.

Heat records are being broken across the world.

In Canada, where an unusually stifling heat wave is blanketing much of the country, temperatures have broken multiple records. The heat has helped set the stage for "unprecedented," early wildfires already burning an area about 15 times bigger than average for this time of the year and sending hazardous smoke into the United States.

Several all-time heat records were also broken earlier this month in Siberia, as temperatures shot up above 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Parts of Central America, as well as Texas and Louisiana are also facing blistering temperatures. And Puerto Rico experienced extreme heat this June, with temperatures feeling like more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the National Weather Service.

Swaths of Southeast Asia have experienced their "harshest heat wave on record," while record temperatures in China have killed animals and crops and sparked concerns about food security.

"The current situation is bizarre," Phil Reid with the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, told CNN. "The strangest El Niño ever. How are you supposed to define or declare an El Niño when everywhere is hot?"

Ocean heat heads off the charts

Oceans are heating up to record levels and show no sign of stopping. Rising ocean surface temperatures began alarming scientists in March when they started to climb and then skyrocketed to reach record levels in April, leaving scientists scrambling to figure out why.

Last month was the hottest May on record for the world's oceans, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. It's a pattern of warming that has been going on for years. In 2022, the world's oceans broke heat records for the fourth year in a row.

Climatologist Maximiliano Herrera, who closely tracks extreme temperatures around the globe, said he didn't think the rapid warming would come so soon. "Even before El Niño was officially declared, the tropics and the oceans were already experiencing a very fast warming," Herrera told CNN. "It was expected, yes," he added. "But not as fast as it has been."

Ocean warming poses dire consequences, including coral bleaching, the die-off of marine life and rising sea levels. And while El Niño usually ushers in a less active Atlantic hurricane season, high ocean temperatures help fuel them, potentially negating or outweighing El Niño's dampening effect.

Antarctic sea ice at record lows

Antarctica's sea ice is currently at record lows for this time of year, with some scientists concerned it is a further sign the climate crisis has arrived in this isolated region.

In late February, Antarctic sea ice reached its lowest extent since records began in the 1970s, at 691,000 square miles. It's "not just 'barely a record low,'" Scambos told CNN at the time. "It's on a very steep downward trend."

As the Antarctic has moved into its winter, and the sea ice has started to grow again, levels are still tracking at record low levels for this time of year.

The decline is "truly exceptional and alarming," Scambos said, underscoring Antarctica's sea ice extent is roughly 386,000 square miles – about twice the area of California – below where it should be for this time of the year.

"2023 is just heading off into crazy territory," he said. Both Reid and Scambos said there is a link between this decline and the warm waters off the Indian, Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Even a tenth of a degree of warming, they said, is enough to inhibit sea ice growth.

The decline in sea ice also poses severe harm to the continent's species, including penguins who rely on sea ice for feeding and hatching eggs.

"Bottom line, the conditions the Antarctic system depends on to keep heat and ice and certain water types in their place are breaking down a little bit," Scambos said. "It started with an unusual series of storms in 2016, but there's been a persistent effect that is now leading to more heat being stirred up into the polar water layer, and that is stifling sea ice growth."

Record carbon dioxide levels

The levels of carbon dioxide in the air, which is released from the burning of fossil fuels, hit a record in May, scientists from NOAA and Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California in San Diego reported early this month.

The record of 424 parts per million continues “a steady climb further into territory not seen for millions of years,” the scientists noted in a statement. Carbon pollution levels, which fuel the climate crisis, are now more than 50% higher than they were before the Industrial Revolution began, NOAA has said.

“Every year we see carbon dioxide levels in our atmosphere increase as a direct result of human activity,” NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad said in a statement. “Every year, we see the impacts of climate change in the heat waves, droughts, flooding, wildfires and storms happening all around us.”

FRANCE 24

[UN chief slams 'pitiful' world response to climate change](#)

Climate policies currently adopted will lead to average temperatures 2.8 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times by the end of the century, nearly twice the UN goal of a 1.5 degree rise, Guterres said.

"That spells catastrophe. Yet the collective response remains pitiful," Guterres told a press conference.

"We are hurtling towards disaster, eyes wide open -- with far too many willing to bet it all on wishful thinking, unproven technologies and silver bullet solutions. It's time to wake up and step up," said the UN chief.

He said the fossil fuel industry must undertake not just a transition but full-blown transformation as it moves toward clean energy "and away from a product incompatible with human survival."

Guterres added: "Countries are far off-track in meeting climate promises and commitments. I see a lack of ambition. A lack of trust. A lack of support. A lack of cooperation. And an abundance of problems around clarity and credibility."

Guterres, who is hosting a climate summit in New York in September, said the 1.5 degree goal is "still possible," if the fight against climate change is accelerated.

"All of this action must be global. It must be immediate. And it must start with the polluted heart of the climate crisis: the fossil fuel industry," he warned.

"Let's face facts. The problem is not simply fossil fuel emissions. It's fossil fuels -- period."

Guterres also called out the oil and gas industry's \$4 trillion net income last year.

"Yet for every dollar it spends on oil and gas drilling and exploration, only 4 cents went to clean energy and carbon capture -- combined."

"Trading the future for thirty pieces of silver is immoral," he cautioned.

MANILA STANDARD

DENR: Include waste pickers in plastic management

By: Rio N. Araja

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources seeks to employ waste pickers from the informal sector and integrate them into an expanded producer responsibility (EPR) system for plastic packaging waste.

To ensure that no one is left behind as the country transitions toward a circular economy, DENR Secretary Antonia Loyzaga cited the need for a more holistic integration of the informal sector to the EPR system.

The informal waste sector in the Philippines include waste pickers at dumps and communal waste collection points.

The DENR chief cited the significant role of the sector in waste collection and management, and the potential contribution it could bring being the “backbone of the currently limited collection services and partly of recycling” in the country.

“Collection and sorting facilities from the informal sector may be transformed into formal activities and establishments. These can be duly registered and supported by the EPR system,” she said.

“The informal sector can also be integrated as business partners, such as non-government organization-supported microenterprises, franchises of formal waste management companies, operating local collection centers, and forming cooperatives and collectives. This social inclusion can be improved to develop alternative livelihoods and diversified livelihoods for our informal community,” she added.

The EPR Act of 2022 or Republic Act 11898 serves as the environmental policy approach and practice that requires producers to be environmentally responsible throughout the life cycle of a product, especially its post-consumer or end-of-life stage.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[DENR asked to scrap MOU with oil firm](#)

Greenpeace Philippines has called out the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for entering into a “reprehensible partnership” with Shell Pilipinas Corp., saying that the DENR should instead demand that the fuel company pay reparations for contributing to the climate crisis.

Greenpeace urged the DENR to scrap its partnership with Shell and “stop being complicit to the shameless greenwashing of climate destruction brought on by Shell’s fossil fuel operations.”

On May 11, Shell announced that it signed a memorandum of understanding with the DENR to develop “nature-based solutions (NBS)” opportunities in the country.

Shell said the NBS would comprise activities for the protection and development of natural ecosystems that include forests, grasslands, wetlands, and coastal zone, and projects that advance agricultural sustainability.

Greenpeace cited a report that the Philippines suffered \$12 billion in climate loss and damage in the past decade.

“In reality, around the world, Shell continues to drill for oil and gas even when they know this will worsen climate change,” Greenpeace added.

RAPPLER

[Bonn climate talks to prepare for COP28 summit end with little to show](#)

Global climate negotiators had little specific progress to report at talks intended to prepare for this year's COP28 UN climate conference in Dubai, which it is hoped will get governments to embrace more ambitious steps to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit).

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Thursday, June 15, that countries must start phasing out oil, coal and gas – not just emissions – and demanded that fossil fuel companies “cease and desist” measures that aim to hobble progress on the issue.

Some Western governments and climate-afflicted island nations agree, but the oil-producing United Arab Emirates, host of COP28, says the talks should focus on phasing out emissions. Nevertheless, the UAE's incoming COP28 president said last week the phasedown of the fuels themselves was inevitable.

The United Nations climate change body said the Bonn talks closed on Thursday with progress on the issues of financing measures to mitigate climate change; the question of liability for the loss and damage it has caused; and funding for measures to adapt to its effects. But it did not specify what had been decided.

The meeting is seen as a mid-way check-in to prepare decisions for adoption at COP28, which begins on November 30.

The landmark 2015 Paris climate agreement set a 1.5°C increase in the global surface temperature as a limit for averting the most catastrophic effects of global warming in the industrial era – a threshold already close to being crossed.

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) said delegates in Bonn had laid the groundwork for more ambitious action.

“From what I have seen and heard, there are bridges that can be built to realize the common ground we know exists,” UNFCCC Executive Secretary Simon Stiell said late on Thursday.

But activists accused the US, Britain and the European Union of trying to divert discussions away from their legal accountability for climate change.

And they said rich industrialized countries were pushing developing countries to commit to measures such as expanding renewable sources of power without taking into account their inability to pay for them.

The UNFCCC said climate finance was among the topics heavily discussed in Bonn.

Environmentalists did, however, welcome new UNFCCC requirements for participants in the UN process to disclose their affiliation, a step aimed at curbing the influence of fossil fuel industry lobbyists.

[UN chief to fossil fuel firms: Stop trying to 'knee-cap' climate progress](#)

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Thursday, June 15, that countries must start phasing out oil, coal and gas – not just emissions – and demanded fossil fuel companies “cease and desist” measures that aim to “knee-cap” climate progress.

“The problem is not simply fossil fuel emissions. It’s fossil fuels – period,” Guterres told reporters. “The solution is clear: The world must phase out fossil fuels in a just and equitable way – moving to leave oil, coal and gas in the ground.”

His remarks come after the United Arab Emirates, which will host UN climate change negotiations (COP28) later this year, said that talks should focus on phasing out emissions, not fossil fuels. Negotiators are struggling to agree to an agenda for COP28, due to start November 30, which could put talks at risk.

Some wealthy Western states and climate-afflicted island nations have been pushing for a phase out of fossil fuels, while resource-rich countries have campaigned to keep drilling.

“Fossil fuel companies must also cease and desist influence peddling and legal threats designed to knee-cap progress. I am thinking particularly of recent attempts to subvert net-zero alliances, invoking anti-trust legislation,” Guterres said.

Republican politicians in some US states pushing back against sustainability efforts have charged that companies in such climate alliances and using environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards could be breaking anti-trust laws by aligning their policies.

At least seven members of the Net-Zero Insurance Alliance, launched in 2021, have left – including five of the eight founding parties – over what they say are legal concerns about antitrust lawsuits.

“Governments are pivotal in setting the record straight. They must help by providing clear reassurance: Collective climate action does not violate anti-trust – it upholds the public trust,” Guterres said after meeting with a group of civil society climate leaders from around the world.

Guterres also called out companies for not yet reaching modest operational emissions reductions targets they have set and for relying too heavily on “dubious offset” credits.

For example, Shell plans to scrap its target to reduce oil output by 1% to 2% per year having already largely reached its goal for production cuts, mainly through selling oil assets such as its US shale business.

“Fossil fuel industry transition plans must be transformation plans, that chart a company’s move to clean energy – and away from a product incompatible with human survival,” Guterres said. “Otherwise, they are just proposals to become more efficient planet-wreckers.”

He called on them to create detailed plans that include emissions reduction targets not just for their operations but that target their end use.

SUNSTAR

DENR leads tree planting activity in Mount Arayat

By: Ian Ocampo Flora

Over a hundred state workers from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) here and partner agencies participated in a tree-growing event in Mount Arayat Protected Landscape (MAPL) in Arayat town the other day.

The event is in celebration of the Philippine Environment Month.

By virtue of Proclamation No. 237 signed in 1988 by then President Corazon Aquino, the month of June was declared Philippine Environment Month to raise environmental consciousness among Filipinos.

More than 1,200 fruit-bearing trees and bamboo propagules were planted in Barangay San Juan Baño in Arayat town through the DENR's Enhanced National Greening Program.

The event was participated in by personnel from local government units, Philippine Statistics Authority and the 70th Infantry Battalion Delta Company.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Integrate science in climate change policies – diplomat](#)

By: Bernadette E. Tamayo

GLENN Banaguas, chairman of the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Science Diplomats, called on local government leaders to integrate science in crafting policies addressing climate change and disaster risk management.

Banaguas made the call when he guested in the "Business and Politics" program on SMNI hosted by The Manila Times Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Dante "Klink" Ang 2nd.

Banaguas and members of his group have been traveling around the country to help local government units (LGUs) and Indigenous communities develop a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP).

"We only call that enhanced Comprehensive Land Use Plan if the climate adaptation disaster reduction management strategies are integrated," he said.

He said less than 20 percent of LGUs have integrated disaster reduction management in their comprehensive land use plan.

Banaguas noted that LGUs have technical staff, but they are not "really knowledgeable" about climate change and disaster risk assessment and mitigation.

"It has to be taught in a proper way so that they can really understand. So, that's what we do. That's the reason why we have been traveling to provide that assistance," he said.

Some of the LGUs also do not have a Climate Disaster Risk Assessment plan, which is deplorable, "especially if your municipality is at risk" from weather disturbances.

He said the group helps the local governments for free. "We're not being paid for that. We love to provide that kind of training. So, we teach them how to assess what is really happening [on the ground]."

Banaguas has also reached out to Indigenous communities — such as the Dumagat, Mangyan and Tagbanua — to help them understand the effects of climate change on their livelihood.

In 2011 and 2012, the group reached out to the Dumagats in General Nakar, Infanta and Real in Quezon province. He said the Dumagat people face a "very high" risk from tropical "We also had experiences with the Mangyans in Mindoro. And we also partnered with the Tagbanuas in Palawan," Banaguas said.

"We don't just go there to interview [them]. Part of what we do is also to train them how to use science for their own policies," he said.

The group trained the Tagbanuas to use climate modeling for agriculture and fishery because they are either farmers or fisherfolk, he said.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

[CCC, MTRCB ink MOA for climate change info drive](#)

By: Ruth Abbey Gita Carlos

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) have joined hands to raise public awareness about the devastating effects of climate change. The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) have joined hands to raise public awareness about the devastating effects of climate change.

In a statement released Friday, the CCC said Commissioner Albert dela Cruz Sr. signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with MTRCB chairperson Diorella Maria “Lala” Sotto-Antonio, as part of the efforts to promote the Marcos administration’s climate action plan to mitigate the impacts of climate change on the country.

The two agencies signed the MOA, as they acknowledged the importance of information dissemination to educate the public about climate change.

Under the MOA, the CCC and the MTRCB will undertake several initiatives and projects to make the Filipinos well-informed about the environmental crisis and help them become instrumental in the government’s efforts to achieve climate resilience.

Dela Cruz said the government’s “whole-of-nation and -community” approach in addressing the global phenomenon would only be successful if Filipinos have ample knowledge about climate change and global warming.

“It is imperative for us to inform our citizenry about climate change and how it triggers the extreme weather conditions we are now experiencing as well as the effects of our continuing abuse of our environment and its resources on our daily lives,” he said following the MOA signing.

“So through this agreement, we are hopeful that we can convey to our people what government is doing to respond to the climate risks we face and how they can help by obeying the policies and programs connected with climate change,” he added.

The CCC noted that the partnership with the MTRCB paved the way for the presentation of a video clip about the impacts of climate change and the Marcos administration’s climate action plan during the premier showing of entries for the Metro Manila Film Fest at SM Manila on Thursday.

On June 8, CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert Borje said addressing climate change and its impacts are among the top priorities of the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

To address climate change, the government has allotted a budget of PHP464.5 billion this year, equivalent to 8.8 percent of the total national budget. This is significantly higher by 60.1 percent compared to the 2022 allocation of PHP289.7 billion.

END=