



NEWS ROUNDUP

20 JUNE 2023 [08:00 am]

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- Heat, drought and fire: Europe's year of extremes in 2022 will not be a 'one-off,' new report finds
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ABS CBN

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

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An Intertropical Convergence Zone affecting Mindanao will bring cloudy skies with isolated rains over the country, the state weather bureau said.

In its 24-hour weather forecast, PAGASA said Metro Manila and the rest of the country will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms caused by the ITCZ and localized thunderstorms.

Flash flood or landslides are possible during severe thunderstorms, it added.

[Paris summit to push for global debt and climate reform](#)

By: Kelly Macnamara and Ali Bekhtaoui, Agence France-Presse

World leaders will gather in Paris this week with ambitions to reimagine global financing for a new era shaped by climate change, as a cascade of crises swamps debt-burdened countries.

French President Emmanuel Macron has said the Summit for a New Global Financial Pact is aimed at building a "new consensus" to meet the interlinked global targets of tackling poverty, curbing planet-heating emissions and protecting nature.

Ideas on the table range from taxation on shipping, fossil fuels or financial transactions, to innovations in lending and a structural rethink of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

France says the two-day summit, which begins on Thursday and will bring together some 50 heads of state and government, was more of a platform for ideas sharing ahead of a cluster of major economic and climate meetings in the coming months.

In particular, the French Presidency said on Friday it wanted to give "political impetus" to the idea of an international tax on carbon emissions from shipping, with hopes of a breakthrough at a meeting of the International Maritime Organization later in June.

With trust in short supply over broken climate financing promises from richer countries, developing nations are looking for tangible progress.

The V20 group of countries on the climate frontlines, which now includes 58 member nations, has said restructuring the global financial system to align with climate targets must be completed by 2030.

"It's great we are talking about the international financial architecture, but we have to see timelines and we have not seen those timelines," Sarah Jane Ahmed, V20 global lead and finance adviser, told AFP.

"If we're starting to do this stuff in the 2030s, it's going to be so much more expensive and the trade-offs are going to be far steeper."

Leaders arriving in Paris to champion that message include Kenyan President William Ruto and Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo, as well as Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley, who has become a powerful advocate for reform and will speak at the summit opening on Thursday.

Other attendees include Chinese Premier Li Qiang, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and European Commission head Ursula von der Leyen.

Ajay Banga is also expected in Paris, in his first international meeting since taking the helm of the World Bank, promising to embrace change.

With fewer leaders from wealthier countries attending, Friederike Roder of Global Citizen said the conference could fall short of hopes for a show of unity.

"We need everyone coming together," she told AFP, stressing that major economies are needed to agree reforms.

'Failed'

Economies have been battered by successive shocks in recent years, including Covid-19, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, spiking inflation and the increasingly expensive impacts of weather disasters intensified by global warming.

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres has said the pandemic and its aftermath amounted to a "stress test" for a financial system that was set up nearly eight decades ago.

"It largely failed," he said earlier this month, adding that 52 developing countries are in, or near, debt distress.

The World Bank plans to increase its lending capacity by \$50 billion over 10 years.

Last week it also called for drastic reform to rechannel trillions of dollars in harmful and unnecessary subsidies for fossil fuels, agriculture and fishing into action on climate and nature.

Currently the world is far off track in its aims to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures, risking enormous costs for nature, human societies and the global economy.

Last year, a UN experts committee said developing countries other than China will need to spend more than \$2 trillion a year by 2030 on development and to respond to the climate and biodiversity crises.

Ambition 'gap'

Roder said one key signal from the Paris summit would be for richer nations to show they can fulfil existing promises, like the still-unmet pledge of \$100 billion annually by 2020 to help developing nations cut emissions and boost climate resilience.

Increasing the money available -- potentially using hundreds of billions of the IMF's liquidity-boosting "special drawing rights" -- is among the calls from emerging economies, as well as a new lending strategy.

One idea championed by Barbados is a disaster clause so loan repayments can be paused for two years in the wake of a climate disaster or pandemic.

Another key point of debate is the scale of existing debts.

That will also focus attention on China, which has become a significant lender to African countries, but has been reluctant to participate in the common framework for debt restructuring.

The Paris summit can bring a lot of issues "out of their niche", said Louis-Nicolas Jandeaux of Oxfam, noting, however, "a gap between the initial stated ambition of the summit and the reality".

BUSINESS MIRROR

[PCAP pushes for speedy mainstreaming of all EVs; reiterates health benefits for Filipinos](#)

Arguing for its health benefits to Filipinos in long-term use, the Pollution Control Association of the Philippines has stressed the need to speed up the grant of incentives mostly needed to mainstream electric vehicles EVs.

In an interview, PCAP Vice President for External Affairs Jeremiah Dwight Sebastian said that Filipinos can benefit from EVs by having “less air pollution, less sick people, and less need to go to the hospital.”

This is due to EVs’ zero tailpipe emissions which reduce carbon emissions and carbon footprints as compared to gasoline-powered cars.

“Electric Vehicles are critical technology to push forward the ‘decarbonization’ effort since this will allow us to have a more flexible option in its energy source... this can also minimize what I believe [is] a major issue of pollution in highly urbanized [communities],” Sebastian said.

The Statista Research Department found that the Philippines’ transport sector in 2021 emitted 31.54 million tons of carbon dioxide.

According to the American Lung Association, transitioning to EVs will help save 110,000 lives, prevent 2.7 million childhood asthma attacks, and over \$1.7 trillion in global climate benefits gained in the United States alone.

The shift to EVs is one of the solutions that the government is implementing to decarbonize the Philippines and help weaken the effects of climate change.

Earlier this year, the Philippine government passed Executive Order No. 12 series of 2023 aiming to mainstream the usage of EVs in the country along with the target of slashing the rate of carbon emissions caused by fueled-run vehicles.

Different types of EVs received tax breaks except for the e-motorcycles which are still subject to 30% import duty. This drew the ire of several stakeholders in the EV industry and called for its revision.

“Only more affluent Filipinos — indeed a limited segment of the population — can afford to buy four-wheel vehicles and hence enjoy these incentives... This is why the

government must make these tax incentives more inclusive," said Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship Secretary General Felix Jose Vitangcol.

Motorcycles hold the majority of the motorists in the country, recording more than 7.81 million registered motorcycles in 2022, based on the study by Statista Research Department.

The Department of Energy (DOE) aims to roll out 2,454, 200 EVs, comprising of cars, tricycles, motorcycles, and buses, and 65,000 charging stations nationwide by 2028.

With the revision of the EO12 to include e-motorcycles, it is expected to accelerate the country's full shift to electric vehicles. "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.

CNN

[Biden touts his climate credentials in California](#)

By: Donald Judd

President Joe Biden on Monday touted his administration's record on climate change, which he called "the most aggressive climate action ever," while hitting Republicans in Congress for trying to block it.

"What we're seeing here is an amazing success story of how you can work together to make our communities more climate resilient – that matters, it matters, resiliency matters," he said from the Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center and Preserve in Palo Alto, California, after a tour.

"I've toured many sites across the country that clearly show climate change as a genuine existential – as the existential threat to humanity – the existential threat to humanity."

Biden's defense of his climate record comes less than one week after four major environmental groups endorsed his 2024 reelection for president in the first-ever joint endorsement from the LCV Action Fund, NextGen PAC, the Sierra Club, and the NRDC Action Fund.

Biden heavily courted climate and environmental justice groups during his last campaign and has made the climate crisis central to his governing agenda with new announcements over the last couple months on environmental justice initiatives and aggressive new rules to regulate planet-warming pollution from natural gas power plants.

However, some groups have expressed frustration over his administration's approval of a major Alaska oil project earlier this year.

During his remarks Biden recounted previous trips to California during which he surveyed wildfire damage, noting that last year natural disasters caused \$165 billion in damages across the country.

"But the worsening impacts are not inevitable – building on our incredible efforts locally, my administration is doing all we can to help recover and build, so we can be prepared to adapt," he said, outlining a series of new steps specifically focused on climate resilience.

Among those steps are the \$575 million "Climate Resilience Regional Challenge," which will be launched by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The initiative

will help coastal and Great Lakes communities “become more resilient to extreme weather and other impacts of the climate crisis,” according to a White House fact sheet.

Other moves include \$2 billion in Department of Energy funding – including \$67 million for California alone – to modernize the electrical grid and make it more climate resilient, and the first-ever White House Climate resilience summit.

The funding is provided through the Inflation Reduction Act, the president’s signature health care and climate legislation.

However, that law has been under siege by congressional Republicans who are trying to repeal some of its provisions.

“This is how we’re going to meet the moment – unfortunately, some of our MAGA Republican friends in Congress are continuing to try to undo all the progress we’ve already made in the first two and a half years,” Biden said.

“They were holding the country hostage over the debt limit unless I would gut the climate provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act – I had determined not to let that happen ... and in the end, we didn’t just protect some of the climate money and clean energy provisions, we protected every single solitary one.”

[Heat, drought and fire: Europe's year of extremes in 2022 will not be a 'one-off,' new report finds](#)

By: Laura Paddison

The climate crisis is taking an enormous toll on Europe, which was ravaged by extreme heat, drought, wildfires and glacier melt last year, a new analysis has concluded.

A joint report by the World Meteorological Organization and the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service found that last summer was the hottest on record for Europe and caused more than 16,000 excess deaths, according to the report.

"Unfortunately, this cannot be considered a one-off occurrence or an oddity of the climate," said Carlo Buontempo, the director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service, in a statement. He added that current understanding of the climate system "informs us that these kinds of events are part of a pattern that will make heat stress extremes more frequent and more intense across the region."

Several countries, including the UK, Spain, Switzerland and Italy, saw their hottest years on record in 2022.

Europe is the fastest-warming continent in the world, according to the report, and has been warming twice as fast as the global average for the last four decades.

The continent was not only hot but also extremely dry, with big implications for agriculture and water supply. Many parts of the continent saw very low levels of precipitation last year, with France experiencing its driest January-to-September period on record. In Spain, water reserves plunged to just over 40% of capacity, the report found.

Persistent drought and high temperatures fueled intense wildfires. Europe experienced the second-largest burned area on record in 2022, the report found, with Central Europe and the Mediterranean, in particular, seeing large areas scorched by fire.

Glaciers in the European Alps had a bad year, experiencing a record loss of ice mass due to low snowfall, warm temperatures and Saharan dust, which makes glaciers darker, meaning they absorb more heat and melt faster.

And oceans were unusually warm, with average sea surface temperatures in the North Atlantic the hottest on record. Rates of warming in parts of the Mediterranean Sea, the Baltic and Black Seas, and the southern Arctic were more than three times the global average, the report found.

With the arrival of El Niño, a natural climate phenomenon with a global warming effect, many scientists are concerned 2023 could see even starker climate extremes.

But there are hopeful signs too. The report found that renewable energy generated more electricity than fossil gas for the first time ever last year, with wind and solar accounting for 22.3% of the EU's electricity, while fossil gas accounted for 20% and coal power for 16%.

“Increasing use of renewables and low-carbon energy sources is crucial to reduce dependence on fossil fuels,” WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas said in a statement.

GMA

Solon files bill to reduce tax on coal, electricity and petroleum products

By: Tina Panganiban

A bill that seeks to reduce taxes on electricity and petroleum products and coal is pending in the House of Representatives.

Camarines Sur 2nd District Representative Luis Raymund “Lray” Villafuerte, Jr. filed House Bill 8231 to exempt system loss charges in the sale of electricity from value-added tax (VAT) for three years.

He also proposes to suspend for three years the imposition of applicable duties on the importation of petroleum products and coal, and to reduce by 50% the excise tax imposed on these products, also for three years.

“It seeks to mitigate the effects of the imposition of VAT and the increased excise taxes on petroleum products and coal that are too much of a burden on the consumers and businesses as we recover from the effects of COVID-19 and rising inflation,” Villafuerte said.

The proposed legislation is pending before the House Committee on Energy.

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A monsoon break occurs when the southwest monsoon, locally known as habagat, is not able to reach the country.

“It will still continue to be clear weather in Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao,” Pagasa weather specialist Aldczar Aurelio said in Filipino. “We can also expect it to be sunny tomorrow. So high temperatures will be recorded.”

Isolated rain showers, however, may still occur in the afternoon and evening due to localized thunderstorms.

No low pressure area or storms, meanwhile, are currently being monitored within and outside the Philippine area of responsibility.

Pagasa said the temperature range in key cities/areas across the country for Tuesday will be:

- Metro Manila: 25°C to 33°C
- Baguio City: 17°C to 25°C
- Laoag City: 25°C to 32°C
- Tuguegarao: 25°C to 36°C
- Legazpi City: 25°C to 33°C
- Puerto Princesa City: 25°C to 32°C
- Tagaytay: 22°C to 31°C
- Kalayaan Islands: 26°C to 32°C
- Iloilo City: 26°C to 33°C
- Cebu: 26°C to 32°C
- Tacloban City: 25°C to 32°C
- Cagayan De Oro City: 25°C to 32°C
- Zamboanga City: 25°C to 33°C
- Davao City: 25°C to 32°C

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