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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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[Moving forward with purpose: Reflections on SB60](#)

By: Secretary Robert EA Borje

In a world grappling with the urgent realities of climate change, the recent deliberations at the 60th Sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB60) in Bonn, Germany stood as a crucial moment for global cooperation. The Philippines, aligned with the G77, articulated the shared goals and ambitions of developing nations — a meaningful step toward realizing the promises laid out in previous climate agreements.

MANILA STANDARD

[Managing water key to food security—CCC head](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) asked Filipinos to engage in effective land restoration and water management to enhance resilience against environmental challenges.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

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[CCC, DENR, development partners lead efforts to enhance national climate mitigation and adaptation](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in collaboration with the Department of Finance (DOF) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), spearheaded a high-level roundtable discussion aimed at strengthening cooperation to support the Philippines' climate mitigation and adaptation efforts.

UN WOMEN

[Take Five: “The work must continue until we can see more equitable climate programmes and social services that recognize women’s different needs”](#)

Rachel Anne Herrera is a Commissioner at the Climate Change Commission of the Philippines. During UN Women's Regional Training on Accelerating Climate Action and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation in Asia and the Pacific supported by the UN Women Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality in the Republic of Korea and the EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies Programme, we talked to Ms. Herrera about climate change in the Philippines, its disproportionate impacts on women, and the steps that the Philippine Government is taking to mitigate these.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

Paris Olympics promise climate action, experts remain skeptical

By: Julien Mivielle

Organizers of the 2024 Paris Olympics promised to take "unprecedented" action for the climate by halving the carbon footprint of previous Games and financing projects to reduce planet-heating greenhouse gasses.

But experts remain skeptical, especially after organizers dropped a pledge to set a hard limit on its overall carbon cost.

About one-third of the heat-trapping emissions from the three-week spectacle is expected to come from transport, with millions of athletes, spectators, staff and journalists flying into Paris.

Organizers opted mostly for pre-existing or temporary infrastructure to host the event, avoiding the significant environmental cost from carbon-intensive building materials like concrete and steel.

But the Games' sustainability credentials took a hit when an initial commitment to set a definite ceiling on emissions at 1.58 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent was dumped.

"The quantified target, which was the big step forward compared to previous Games and was announced with great fanfare, has been abandoned," said Martin Muller from the Institute of Geography and Sustainability at Lausanne University.

"Without a quantified goal, there is no verifiable obligation."

Organizers instead promised that the Olympics would emit half the average emissions of the 2012 and 2016 Games in London and Rio de Janeiro -- an amount Muller said would be 3.9 million tonnes of CO2.

Paris 2024 could "emit 1.95 million tonnes and still say they have achieved their objective" despite "an increase of more than 20 percent compared to the initial target," he said.

- Climate contribution -

Organizers said the Games would make a "positive contribution to the climate" through the purchase of carbon credits, which offset pollution by funding projects that reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions.

This language was also criticized and amended, and organizers now say the Games will "support climate contribution projects that cut and capture CO2 at levels which match the Games' emissions that can't be avoided".

This could include projects which protect forests, plant trees or roll out renewable energy, organizers said, without providing further details.

"Framing their investments in credits as 'climate contribution' not offsets is a great way to stay honest about an organization's own footprint while supporting and financing progress to global net zero goals," said Kaya Axelsson from the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford.

Benja Faecks from Carbon Market Watch, a nonprofit industry watchdog, also said that amended phrasing "doesn't mislead the public into believing that the Games have no impact on the climate".

"Carbon credits should be used to support projects that are worth financing, but never to 'compensate for emissions'," he said.

Carbon Market Watch previously found that the Games' climate strategy was "incomplete and falls short of achieving transparency", citing the lack of detailed methodologies and monitoring.

- 'Unjustified plastic pollution' -

Activists have voiced concern about the level of plastic waste during the Games, and the involvement of major corporate sponsor Coca-Cola.

Under pressure, organizers said an estimated 9.6 million drinks would be distributed from fountains or glass bottles, 6.2 million poured into reusable cups, and 2.2 million recycled plastic bottles given to athletes.

France Nature Environnement (FNE), a network of advocacy groups, accused Coca-Cola of "unjustified plastic pollution" and attacked plans to pour drinks from recycled plastic bottles into reusable plastic cups as "subterfuge".

"Recycling is not the solution: Coca-Cola should have reduced its plastic," Axele Gibert, of FNE, told AFP.

In 2023, Coca-Cola topped a ranking of brands responsible for the worst plastic pollution carried out by NGO Break Free From Plastic, based on an audit of waste collected by volunteers in 41 countries.

- Greener Games -

Researchers like Muller have proposed solutions to make the Olympics more sustainable.

"First, greatly reducing the size of the event; second, rotating the Olympics among the same cities; third, enforcing independent sustainability standards," he co-wrote in a study published in Nature Sustainability in 2021.

To limit air travel, NGO The Shifters proposed to "maximize in future the sale of tickets to local spectators and those coming from neighboring countries, whose journeys are less emission intensive".

This could be coupled with "decentralized fan zones managed by the organizing country and located in different continents to welcome spectators traveling shorter distances".

AL JAZEERA

[US reels under scorching temperatures, heavy flooding](#)

Soaring temperatures have placed more than 50 million people in the United States under extreme heat advisories, while flooding has spurred rescue operations and evacuations throughout the Midwest.

The National Integrated Heat Health Information System said on Monday that about 57.4 million people across the country were under active extreme heat advisories, watches, and warnings, down from 123.8 million on Sunday.

“The arrival of this more intense heat early in the Summer season leads to a higher level of heat-related stress, especially for those outdoors and without reliable air conditioning available,” the National Weather Service said in a report.

The soaring temperatures and deadly flooding underscore the risks of extreme weather fuelled by climate change, which has increased the frequency and intensity of such events.

The governor of the midwestern state of South Dakota said that at least one person was killed in flooding over the weekend. In neighbouring Iowa, Governor Kim Reynolds told reporters on Sunday that more than 1,000 displaced people had spent the night in shelters.

“Businesses are shuttered. Main streets have been impacted,” said Reynolds. “Hospitals, nursing homes and other care facilities were evacuated. Cities are without power, and some are without drinkable water.”

Over the weekend, officials in cities including Philadelphia warned that heat indices could reach over 105 degrees Fahrenheit (41 Celsius), putting residents at risk of heat-related illness.

“It’s more important for people who are going to be outside to stay hydrated, because heat, humidity and low winds, even if you’re in good shape and not really acclimated to it, it could be a danger, ” said Bruce Thoren, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Oklahoma. “It happens quickly.”

Research has shown that heat waves will be one of the most dangerous effects of climate change over the coming decades, and hundreds of people have died from extreme heat across Asia and Europe over the last several weeks.

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Mission 2025 group urges governments to set more ambitious climate goals](#)

Some of the world's biggest companies, finance houses, cities and regions have joined forces to urge governments to increase their climate ambition ahead of a February 2025 deadline to deliver their emission-cutting plans to the United Nations.

The group has signed up to a coalition named Mission 2025. It is convened by Groundswell – a collaboration between non-profits Global Optimism, Systems Change Lab, and the Bezos Earth Fund.

Corporate backers include consumer goods company Unilever, the world's biggest furniture retailer IKEA and British sustainable energy company Octopus EV. Others are represented through groups such as the We Mean Business Coalition.

While some fossil fuel companies have drawn criticism from environmental campaigners, others in business are frustrated by what they see as short-sighted governments reluctant to regulate to bring about necessary change when the evidence climate change is becoming more extreme is mounting.

Mission 2025 aims to reassure political leaders they have powerful support for bold action.

It is spearheaded by Global Optimism's Christiana Figueres, who oversaw the Paris Agreement in 2015 that produced the first truly global agreement that countries would cut climate-damaging emissions.

Ten years on from the Paris deal, the nearly 200 countries who agreed to it have a deadline to put forward updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that lay out a country's policies towards meeting the global goal of reducing emissions.

More than two-thirds of annual revenues across the world's biggest companies, totaling \$31 trillion, was now aligned with the quest to reach net-zero emissions, the coalition said in a statement, citing data from the Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit, an independent climate think tank.

A UN-backed survey this month of the public's views on climate change across 77 countries, meanwhile, showed 80% of respondents want their governments to take

stronger action even though some governments, concerned about re-election and economics, have retreated from previous pledges.

Figueres told Reuters a “lack of leadership” and political noise were to blame for insufficient policy to drive the cleaner technologies that have shown themselves to be cheaper, better-performing, faster to construct and a safer investment than their incumbent rivals.

“The political economy is very clear that the future is one of decarbonization,” she said.

More clarity from governments over the direction of public policy was needed to give confidence to companies and others in the real economy to invest more in the transition to a low-carbon economy over the period to 2035.

“We think that governments are still very timid about what they’re going to be including in their NDCs,” she said, citing opposition from companies and others tied to the fossil fuel economy, which she said smacked of desperation.

UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell told delegates at a climate conference in Bonn this month that the NDCs needed to cover “every sector and all greenhouse gases”.

To help empower governments to go further, the Mission 2025 coalition would provide the data needed to justify the policy changes, with a focus on the 20 largest economies, responsible for the bulk of emissions, Ms. Figueres said.

“Those will be the ones that we will be focusing more on. Not only because they have the capacity to shift more, but also because they have the means to do it.”

DAILY GUARDIAN

[PHL government to rely on coal despite renewable energy goals](#)

The Philippines will continue to utilize its currently operating coal-fired power plants to ensure stable energy supply through 2030, despite plans to increase the share of renewable energy (RE) in the power generation mix remaining stagnant.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla announced this strategy at an energy forum in Makati City last week, saying that the government aims to maintain adequate baseload capacity, crucial for meeting the country's energy demand.

Lotilla highlighted the current sluggish contribution of renewable energy, such as solar and wind, which stands at 22 percent of the power mix, a significant shortfall from the goal of 35 percent by 2030. In contrast, coal remains the dominant source, supplying 62 percent of the country's energy needs.

"Maximizing the use of existing energy infrastructure avoids placing an added cost burden on both the economy and consumers," Lotilla added.

The Department of Energy projects that by 2028, power generators will produce about 2,255 MW of additional coal supply, contributing to the target of adding 11,000 MW in total capacity to meet a projected peak demand growth of 5.3 percent from 2023 to 2028.

Gerry Arances, convenor of the Power for People Coalition, criticized the DOE's approach, describing the continued use of "young" coal plants as an "irrational decision" in light of their environmental impact and high consumer costs.

"Continuing to use coal is an irrational decision considering the magnitude of its impact [on] the climate emergency and the exorbitant charges inflicted on consumers," Arances said.

The Philippines has been striving to diversify its energy sources and increase the share of renewables in its power generation mix.

Despite these efforts, the country's reliance on coal persists, primarily due to the cost and stability of coal-fired power generation compared to the current state of renewable energy infrastructure.

PANAY NEWS

[PH woos Canadian firms to invest in renewable energy space](#)

The Philippines is joining the global effort for clean and renewable energy. The country aims to increase its renewable energy mix to 35% by 2030 and 50% by 2040.

The role of clean energy in decarbonizing Asia was the focus of the recent global energy show in Calgary.

The said session at North America's leading energy and exhibition conference also discussed the emerging renewable business opportunities between the Philippines and North America.

The Philippine Consulate General in Calgary was invited to give ideas on building strategic alliances and to gain insight from industry leaders.

"Recently, we put out new rules in our Energy Transition Plan," said Acting Head of Post Victorio Dimagiba Jr. "This was complemented in 2022 when we allowed full foreign ownership of renewable energy projects."

Dimagiba said they are confident foreign investors will show "greater interest and enthusiasm in creating more renewable projects in the country."

Canadian business leaders believe energy companies have a role to play in Manila's development and energy transition.

Wayne Farmer of the Canada-ASEAN Business Council noted persisting challenges in the Philippine energy sector, as the country continues to rely heavily on coal as a source of power.

"The Philippines needs to develop more of its geothermal power which is about 15% of the power mix," he said. "I know the Philippines is looking at LNG as well at least as an interim fuel and that's something that Canada can certainly help the Philippines soon as the LNG plants get off the ground in British Columbia."

Farmer also believes that wind, solar, and even nuclear energy, have great potential in the Philippines.

There has been much discussion on the shift to alternative sources of energy at home in recent months as extreme heat from the El Niño weather phenomenon jacked up power consumption among households and businesses which led to thinner supply.

But while wind and solar power sources have gained ground in the country, the Philippines has yet to allow the use of nuclear energy amid safety concerns.

For Dimagiba, the talk was an opportunity not only to learn from Canada's energy programs but also to invite North American companies to expand operations in the Philippines.

The conference also highlighted the skills of Filipino engineers and other workers who can heavily contribute to the industry.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Global community urged to take urgent action on climate change](#)

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Saturday urged the international community to take urgent action on climate change.

"If there was ever a time to come together and deliver on climate – it is now," Guterres said in a message on X.

He emphasized the importance of the coming period, saying, "The next 18 months are critical in the fight to limit the rise in global temperature to 1.5C (2.7F) and avoid the worst of climate chaos."

"Together, let's create a healthy planet and a safer future for us all," he added.

The UN has prioritized efforts to combat climate change, urging nations to commit to more ambitious targets under the Paris Agreement.

The global goal is to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels to prevent catastrophic environmental consequences.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[The cost of climate disruptions: Philippines loses 32 teaching days to extreme weather](#)

By: Cristina Chi

Anyone could see that special education teacher Ronnel Jolejole-Aurel adored all ten of his students equally, but like any educator will tell you, there are stand-outs in every class.

For the teacher from Northern Samar, that unforgettable student was a nine-year-old child with mild Autism who could not speak, write, or communicate except through ear-splitting cries, but who handed him a rare win inside the classroom.

Throughout the school year, with Jolejole-Aurel's help, the student's tantrums had softened into quiet, non-verbal requests to be held by his teacher instead. After days of practicing holding objects, the student finally learned to hold a pen, leading Jolejole-Aurel to believe it was time to teach the alphabet.

But the teacher's hopes were quickly dashed. Several heat-related class suspensions in the last months of the school year, combined with difficulties with remote learning, erased the progress made by the nine-year-old student, Jolejole-Aurel said. The suspensions had, in his words, forced a "back to zero" for his class.

"Class suspensions really affect the learning of my [learners with special needs] class, because they have a short span of memory. That is why we need to repeat our lessons everyday [before] proceeding to the next lesson," Jolejole-Aurel told Philstar.com.

"The lesson that we had discussed for a day will no longer be remembered if they come back to school after suspension of classes... Ngayon, lahat kinalimutan na (Now, they forgot everything)," said the teacher from Las Navas I Central School, a school from the division of Northern Samar.

Jolejole-Aurel's students are among the millions of students across the Philippines who, on average, lost a quarter's worth of in-person classes last school year mainly due to climate-induced school closures. The time lost is believed to set back the Department of Education's efforts to recover learning losses from the pandemic and improve the Philippines' standing in international assessments.

At least 53 out of 180 days, or three months' worth of teaching time, was lost from class suspensions caused by extreme weather events and teachers' non-teaching tasks, based on new analysis by state think Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) in a June 19 news release by the Second Congressional Commission on Education.

Schools across the country lost 32 teaching days due to the high heat index from April to May, among other calamities, the PIDS study's preliminary findings found. At least 12 days of teaching time was lost from non-teaching tasks, while other factors, such as local holidays, conflict and off-campus activities, took out nine days.

Record-breaking heat driven by climate change had led to "practically no face-to-face classes in April-May," but these should be interpreted as estimates as these still need to be weighed with the actual day-to-day data, said Mike Abrigo, PIDS senior fellow.

Meanwhile, EDCOM 2 Executive Director Karol Yee noted that even if the department decongests the curriculum, the shorter school year from the loss of actual teaching days means that there is "limited time to absorb the lessons."

Abrupt pivot to distance learning

Some regions had it worse than others. Based on Philstar.com's analysis of data provided by the DepEd to reporters, at the peak of heat-induced class suspensions on April 24, half or at least 50% of all schools in the National Capital Region (NCR) canceled in-person classes, while nearly half or 46% of schools in Region 3 did the same.

For Region 6, no less than a quarter of all schools suspended in-person classes throughout the period covered by the data. At its peak, at least 43% of all schools in Region 6 suspended face-to-face classes.

With face-to-face classes suspended, teachers found themselves back to depending on learning modules to assess if their students were still learning at home.

Gemma Soneja, an Araling Panlipunan teacher at a public high school in Marikina City in NCR, said that she had to cancel a long-awaited immersion activity for her students after the scorching heat forced her school to switch to distance learning for the entire last quarter of the school year.

"Project based sana ang balak ko na performance task ng hawak kong science section kasi civic education ang fourth quarter. As in, i-immers ko sana sa barangay. Buo sila [sa] proposal, kaso pangarap ko na lang pala yun," she said.

(I was planning to have a project-based performance task for the science section I handle since the fourth quarter is about civic education. I wanted to immerse them in a community. They were supposed to create a proposal, but it seems that is just a dream now.)

Because of the abrupt shift to distance learning, Soneja said that the school was not able to map out students who preferred online or modular learning in time, similar to the survey done during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I had to fail one student who never submitted anything,” she said.

Worse off than others

The heat took an even greater toll on students with special needs that made in-person instruction impossible.

Jolejole-Aurel noted that the heat is typically more unbearable for students with special needs, as some have disabilities that make them more sensitive to high temperatures in the classroom.

This was also the finding by Jonas Bull, disability rights researcher for Human Rights Watch, who said in a 2023 article that some people with disabilities fail to cope with the heat because of difficulties regulating their body temperature, highlighting the need for governments to make its responses to heat waves more inclusive.

“Just one wall fan and one stand fan is not conducive for learning inside a hot classroom,” said Jolejole-Aurel.

“[Nandiyan] yung madali silang [ma-bore] sa kinauupuan nila, maya-maya tatayo lalakad. Kumbaga yung kanilang katawan hindi agad makapag-adjust sa atmosphere na mayroon sa classroom. Lalo na dito sa place namin na panay brown out,” he added.

(They are the type who can't sit still for long; after a while, they will stand up and walk around. In other words, their bodies can't easily adjust to the atmosphere in the classroom. Especially here in our place, where we frequently experience power outages.)

The special education teacher said that students in his class needed to be in his presence so he could supervise each student's lesson as they all had unique needs. “With modules, you're not sure if they are even the ones still answering it, or if they understand the lessons,” he added.

The teacher acknowledged, however, that there is “nothing we can do” if the heat index spikes to a level that requires students to be sent home.

What Jolejole-Aurel and his co-teachers did instead was hand out answer sheets for students to take home – which was no substitute for the daily pen-holding practices he was able to give his nine-year-old student with autism.

Looking back, the special education teacher said that the heat-induced class suspensions “really took a lot of time.” However, he said that he now needed to prepare for the upcoming typhoon season, as Northern Samar typically experiences flooding.

This school year opens on July 29 — marking an earlier date as part of DepEd's phased return to the traditional academic calendar that runs from June to March.

However, climate advocates like Zyoen Garcia of the Stewards and Volunteers for the Earth Philippines (SAVE Philippines) have earlier warned DepEd that despite moving the start of classes to June, extreme weather events pose a year-round threat and students and teachers will still be exposed to strong super typhoons.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[CCC, DENR, partners enhance national climate mitigation, adaptation](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in collaboration with the Department of Finance and the National Economic and Development Authority, spearheaded a high-level roundtable discussion aimed at strengthening cooperation to support the Philippines' climate mitigation and adaptation efforts.

This forum is a vital step in mobilizing support for the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan (NDCIP) and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP).

Held in partnership with the Asian Development Bank and the Government of the United Kingdom, the roundtable highlighted the importance of collaboration among government agencies, financial institutions, and development organizations to enhance the country's climate action plans. It provided a platform for participating organizations to articulate their strategies, identify gaps and explore potential opportunities for collaboration.

DENR Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga emphasized the significance of collective efforts to achieve the Philippines' climate goals, following the guidance of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

"As the Philippines moves forward from planning to action, it is essential to take stock and leverage support from international development partners that will complement domestic public financing and design the way forward," she stated, underscoring the need for strong partnerships.

Key challenges identified during the discussions included data and information gaps, financial constraints, capacity and training deficits, low public awareness and technological barriers. Participants stressed the urgency of localizing national climate plans to meet the specialized needs of local communities effectively.

Development partners such as the Asian Development Bank, British Embassy, German Development Cooperation, Global Green Growth Institute, Japan International Cooperation Agency and Korean International Agency proposed solutions to address these gaps. These included creating collaborative platforms, intentional programming, private sector engagement, and enhancing capacity and data management through robust partnerships.

Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, CCC vice chairperson and executive director, underlined the relevance of holding the forum, citing the need for innovative financing instruments, among others, to support the country's climate goals.

"Our discussions underscored the need for innovative financing instruments beyond conventional grants and loans. We must explore options from a range of entities, including financial institutions, private investors, and philanthropists. These innovative tools can unlock more funding and attract investors with diverse risk profiles and investment horizons," he said.

Borje highlighted the crucial role of development partners in achieving a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

"Our partners from governments, bilateral development agencies and international development organizations, are our vital link in accessing and leveraging the climate funds, technical expertise and cutting-edge innovation our country needs to deliver the adaptation and mitigation actions outlined in our NAP and NDCIP," he stressed.

He also pointed out the importance of defining priority areas for development partners to support and align their strategic and programmatic results more effectively.

Borje said that identifying strategic directions towards addressing climate and green financing gaps, and exploring sustainable coordination and reporting mechanisms between the Philippine government and its development partners, are crucial steps.

The forum provided an opportunity to define priority areas for development partners to support and align their strategic and programmatic results more effectively, identify strategic directions towards addressing climate and green financing gaps, and explore sustainable coordination and reporting mechanisms between the Philippine government and its development partners. The success of these plans relies on robust collaboration and sustained coordination.

Chemical engineers, academe, private sector vital in decarbonizing Phi

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the integral roles of Filipino chemical engineers, the academe, and the private sector in helping achieve the Philippines' Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) targets during the launching ceremony of the Philippine National Consortium on Net Zero Initiative.

“Your expertise in process optimization, materials science, environmental engineering positions, climate education, and scientific research can greatly contribute to our Net Zero initiatives. By innovating and implementing cleaner production technologies that develop sustainable materials and enhance waste treatment processes, we can significantly impact the reduction of emissions and support the country's NDC goals,” said CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje.

The NDC Implementation Plan (NDCIP) outlines a roadmap for achieving the country's target of 75 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. It assures substantial progress in the Philippines' efforts through energy transition, sustainable agriculture and forestry, strengthened waste management, and resilience building across sectors — areas where chemical engineers, scientists and businesses can make significant contributions.

Aligned with United Nation's Race-to-Zero (R2Z) campaign objectives, the NDCIP and the consortium mobilize leadership and support from the academe, businesses, local governments, investors and industries to achieve a decarbonized Philippines. They adhere to the R2Z framework by engaging stakeholders across sectors to commit to net-zero carbon emissions.

“Our NDCIP is the country's guiding light in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, paving the way for the decarbonization of our economy. Beyond a mere plan, it embodies the government's commitment to a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach in addressing climate change and its impacts,” Borje said.

“Likewise, the Philippine National Consortium on Net Zero Initiative is crucial for climate change mitigation and sustainability promotion, protecting our environment and future generations of Filipinos. It provides much-needed technical support to groups and organizations across sectors to integrate sustainability effectively into their operations,” he added.

Co-convened by the Philippine National Institute of Chemical Engineers and the University of the Philippines Interdisciplinary Life Cycle Assessment Laboratory (UPLB ILCAL), the consortium aims to encourage organizations to align their sustainability

initiatives with the UN's R2Z campaign. The consortium marked the official signing of the collaboration declaration between PIChE, UPLB ILCAL and Charter members.

The CCC is dedicated to creating an environment that enables stakeholders from various sectors to connect and collaborate effectively. By leveraging the expertise of professionals across different industries, the CCC strives to achieve a climate-smart, climate-resilient, and net-zero Philippines.

Moving forward with purpose: Reflections on SB60

By: Secretary Robert EA Borje

In a world grappling with the urgent realities of climate change, the recent deliberations at the 60th Sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB60) in Bonn, Germany stood as a crucial moment for global cooperation. The Philippines, aligned with the G77, articulated the shared goals and ambitions of developing nations — a meaningful step toward realizing the promises laid out in previous climate agreements.

The Philippines' statement encapsulated both hope and frustration. It underscored incremental progress made in certain areas, such as agriculture and food security, and highlighted the critical need for concrete actions moving forward. However, it also laid bare persistent challenges that have plagued these international forums: procedural deadlock, delayed mandates, and insufficient commitment from developed nations to fulfill their obligations.

At the heart of the matter lies the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities, a cornerstone of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. This principle recognizes the varying roles and capabilities of nations and parties in addressing climate change, emphasizing that developed nations bear a greater burden and responsibility due to their historical emissions and economic capacities. The call for developed countries to fulfill their commitments of financial assistance, technology transfer, and capacity building resonated loudly in the Philippines' message — an urging echoed by many vulnerable and developing nations.

The closing statement of the Philippines was one of urgency and pragmatism. It acknowledged the incremental gains achieved in Bonn and the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, but demanded more substantial outcomes in future negotiations. This sentiment is not unique to our nation but reflects a global sentiment among those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. For nations like the Philippines, where communities are already experiencing the ravages of extreme weather events and rising sea levels, action must come sooner rather than later.

The Philippines' call for decisive action in key areas serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for tangible progress in addressing climate change.

Implementation and Accountability stood at the forefront of the Philippines' concerns. The transition from discussions to actionable plans in critical sectors like agriculture and adaptation measures was deemed paramount. The Philippines stressed that promises

made within international forums must translate into tangible support on the ground. This approach enhances resilience and promotes sustainable development, which are crucial to safeguard vulnerable communities against the escalating impacts of climate change.

Central to the Philippines' argument and advocacy was the issue of Financial Commitments. The necessity for developed nations to uphold their financial pledges and for the actual disbursement of funds dedicated to adaptation and mitigation efforts, were emphasized. The call for a robust financial mechanism supporting nationally determined contributions (NDCs) underscored the need for equity in global climate action, leveling the playing field and ensuring that developing countries can adequately respond to climate challenges.

Just Transition and its implications on social impacts resonated deeply in the Philippines' statement. The importance of a transition to low-carbon economies that consider the social and economic consequences for vulnerable communities cannot be stressed enough. Ensuring that no one is left behind is pivotal as economies evolve, particularly for those whose livelihoods are intricately tied to industries undergoing transformation due to climate policies.

Looking forward to COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, the Philippines highlighted the critical need for substantive, Operational Frameworks and Programs, where the urgency of translating discussions into concrete actions that deliver real-world impact was underscored. This includes operationalizing mechanisms such as Loss and Damage frameworks and accelerating the implementation of gender-responsive climate actions. These frameworks are essential to ensure accountability and effectiveness in global climate efforts.

The firm statement served as a reminder that the international community must reaffirm its commitment to support the most vulnerable populations, who bear the brunt of climate impacts despite contributing minimally to global emissions. It underscored the moral imperative for and the legal obligations of developed nations to uphold their commitments and lead not just in rhetoric but in substantive actions that foster hope and assurance among those most affected.

The Philippines' closing statement offers both critique and a call to action. It reminds us that while progress has been made, the journey towards effective climate action is far from over. As we move forward from SB60 toward COP29, it is imperative that all nations, particularly developed countries, uphold their commitments with sincerity and urgency. The choices made today will determine the fate of generations to come — our

responsibility to future generations and to the planet must guide every decision we make. There is no other direction but forward, and there is no other way but to work together.

MANILA STANDARD

Managing water key to food security—CCC head

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) asked Filipinos to engage in effective land restoration and water management to enhance resilience against environmental challenges.

The CCC made the call last week in observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought.

Desertification is the degradation of land resulting primarily from climatic variations and human activities. It reduces soil's ability to support crops, which leads to lower yields and increased food scarcity.

Drought, on the other hand, is a natural phenomenon characterized by a prolonged period of abnormally low rainfall that leads to a shortage of water. It affects drinking water supplies, agriculture and industrial activities.

With climate change, desertification and droughts are expected to worsen and intensify. This loss affects ecosystems' ability to function and provide essential services. The degradation of land and water resources leads to malnutrition, poverty and displacement, especially in vulnerable communities in developing regions.

According to the United Nations, up to 40 percent of the world's land is already considered degraded. Degraded lands release stored carbon into the atmosphere, which contributes to climate change.

The CCC urged the public to take concerted action in land restoration and water management to reduce the impacts of these threats, and in effect, climate change.

"Addressing desertification and drought is crucial for our nation's resilience and food security," said Secretary Robert Borje, CCC vice chairperson and executive director. "We must act collectively to restore degraded lands and manage our water resources sustainably." CCC News

Officially declared by the UN General Assembly in 1994, the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is observed every June 17th.

It aims to promote public awareness of the issues linked to desertification, land degradation and drought, and showcase human-led solutions to prevent desertification and reverse intensifying droughts.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[CCC: Chemical engineers, academe, private sector vital in decarbonizing PH](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the integral roles of Filipino chemical engineers, the academe, and the private sector in supporting the Philippines' Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) targets during the launching ceremony of the Philippine National Consortium on Net Zero Initiative.

Recognizing the expertise of chemical engineers in applied sciences and engineering, and the knowledge and resource support that the academe and the private sector offer, the CCC underscored their vital contributions to the successful implementation of the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan (NDCIP).

“Your expertise in process optimization, materials science, environmental engineering positions, climate education, and scientific research can greatly contribute to our Net Zero initiatives. By innovating and implementing cleaner production technologies that develop sustainable materials and enhance waste treatment processes, we can significantly impact the reduction of emissions and support the country's NDC goals,” stressed CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje.

The NDCIP outlines a roadmap for achieving the country's target of 75 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. It assures substantial progress in the Philippines' efforts through energy transition, sustainable agriculture and forestry, strengthened waste management, and resilience building across sectors— areas where chemical engineers, scientists, and businesses can make significant contributions.

Aligned with United Nations' Race-to-Zero (R2Z) campaign objectives, the NDCIP and the consortium mobilize leadership and support from the academe, businesses, local governments, investors, and industries to achieve a decarbonized Philippines. They adhere to the R2Z framework by engaging stakeholders across sectors to commit to net-zero carbon emissions.

“Our NDCIP is the country's guiding light in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, paving the way for the decarbonization of our economy. Beyond a mere plan, it embodies the government's commitment to a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach in addressing climate change and its impacts,” said Borje.

“Likewise, the Philippine National Consortium on Net Zero Initiative is crucial for climate change mitigation and sustainability promotion, protecting our environment and future generations of Filipinos. It provides much needed technical support to groups and

organizations across sectors to integrate sustainability effectively into their operations,” he added.

Co-convened by the Philippine National Institute of Chemical Engineers (PIChE) and the University of the Philippines Interdisciplinary Life Cycle Assessment Laboratory (UPLB ILCAL), the consortium aimed to encourage organizations to align their sustainability initiatives with the UN’s Race-to-Zero (R2Z) campaign. The consortium marked the official signing of the collaboration declaration between PIChE, UPLB ILCAL, and Charter Members.

The CCC is dedicated to creating an environment that enables stakeholders from various sectors to connect and collaborate effectively. By leveraging the expertise of professionals across different industries, the CCC strives to achieve a climate-smart, climate-resilient, and net-zero Philippines.

[CCC, DENR, development partners lead efforts to enhance national climate mitigation and adaptation](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in collaboration with the Department of Finance (DOF) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), spearheaded a high-level roundtable discussion aimed at strengthening cooperation to support the Philippines' climate mitigation and adaptation efforts.

This forum is a vital step in mobilizing support for the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan (NDCIP) and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP).

Held in partnership with the Asian Development Bank and the Government of the United Kingdom, the roundtable highlighted the importance of collaboration among government agencies, financial institutions, and development organizations to enhance the country's climate action plans. It provided a platform for participating organizations to articulate their strategies, identify gaps, and explore potential opportunities for collaboration.

DENR Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo Loyzaga emphasized the significance of collective efforts to achieve the Philippines' climate goals, following the guidance of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

“As the Philippines moves forward from planning to action, it is essential to take stock and leverage support from international development partners that will complement domestic public financing and design the way forward,” she stated, underscoring the need for strong partnerships.

Key challenges identified during the discussions included data and information gaps, financial constraints, capacity and training deficits, low public awareness, and technological barriers. Participants stressed the urgency of localizing national climate plans to meet the specialized needs of local communities effectively.

Development partners such as the Asian Development Bank, British Embassy, German Development Cooperation, Global Green Growth Institute, Japan International Cooperation Agency, and Korean International Agency proposed solutions to address these gaps. These included creating collaborative platforms, intentional programming, private sector engagement, and enhancing capacity and data management through robust partnerships.

Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director, underlined the relevance of holding the forum, citing the need for innovative financing instruments, among others, to support the country's climate goals.

"Our discussions underscored the need for innovative financing instruments beyond conventional grants and loans. We must explore options from a range of entities, including financial institutions, private investors, and philanthropists. These innovative tools can unlock more funding and attract investors with diverse risk profiles and investment horizons," he said.

Borje highlighted the crucial role of development partners in achieving a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

"Our partners from governments, bilateral development agencies, and international development organizations, are our vital link in accessing and leveraging the climate funds, technical expertise, and cutting-edge innovation our country needs to deliver the adaptation and mitigation actions outlined in our NAP and NDCIP," he stressed.

He also pointed out the importance of defining priority areas for development partners to support and align their strategic and programmatic results more effectively.

Borje said that identifying strategic directions towards addressing climate and green financing gaps, and exploring sustainable coordination and reporting mechanisms between the Philippine government and its development partners, are crucial steps.

The forum provided an opportunity to define priority areas for development partners to support and align their strategic and programmatic results more effectively, identify strategic directions towards addressing climate and green financing gaps, and explore sustainable coordination and reporting mechanisms between the Philippine government and its development partners. The success of these plans relies on robust collaboration and sustained coordination.

The CCC is committed to establish a supportive and enabling policy environment where all climate stakeholders can efficiently, effectively, and sustainably carry out their intertwining responsibilities to take action against climate change. Through close collaboration with stakeholders from the government and different sectors, as well as with international partners, the CCC aims to unlock financing, knowledge, and technical support that will advance the country's progress in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

UN WOMEN

Take Five: “The work must continue until we can see more equitable climate programmes and social services that recognize women’s different needs”

Rachel Anne Herrera is a Commissioner at the Climate Change Commission of the Philippines. During UN Women’s Regional Training on Accelerating Climate Action and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation in Asia and the Pacific supported by the UN Women Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality in the Republic of Korea and the EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies Programme, we talked to Ms. Herrera about climate change in the Philippines, its disproportionate impacts on women, and the steps that the Philippine Government is taking to mitigate these.

What are the unique challenges or vulnerabilities that women face in the context of climate change in the Philippines?

The Philippines has been ranked as one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world, and though our exposure to hazards is mostly due to our geographic location along the Pacific rim, this has been exacerbated in frequency and severity by climate change and warming temperatures. According to the Germanwatch’s Global Climate Risk Index, the Philippines was hit by an average of 317 extreme weather events between 2000 and 2019, and every year, we deal with an average of 20 tropical cyclones. Often, our communities will have no time to recover before the next extreme weather event hits.

Women and girls also face increased risk of sexual and other gender-based violence in such situations as when they are forced into evacuation centers, where the humanitarian context may create unsafe social environments.

Women worldwide face inequalities and injustices. But the socioeconomic conditions woven against the highly patriarchal culture in the Philippines, and the country’s marked vulnerability to disasters, make Filipino girls and women even more at risk as the climate crisis worsens.

What concrete initiatives has the government of the Philippines undertaken to address the intersection of gender and climate change?

The Philippines has taken several big leaps to improve gender equity. Now, the pay gap has narrowed substantially, and the government has adopted mandates that enable gender mainstreaming in climate lead agencies. Some notable examples are:

The Climate Change Act, which provided the anchor mandate and strategy for gender mainstreaming in climate change policies, programs and projects;

The People's Survival Fund, which provides the opportunity and funding needed to address gender-differentiated vulnerabilities through adaptation projects of local (subnational) governments;

The Magna Carta of Women, which sets a minimum 5 per cent government budget allocation for gender and development as well as for the adoption of gender mainstreaming in every government agency; and

Resolution of the Climate Change Commission that strengthens gender-based formulation and implementation of policies, plans, programmes, and activities and provides a crucial platform for gender collaboration among the climate lead and partner agencies.

These and many more initiatives are being fine-tuned to make the mainstreaming of gender and climate change initiatives a whole-of-government effort.

What are the challenges faced by your country in mainstreaming gender considerations into climate change policies and programmes?

Until recently, most policies related to sustainability have been gender-blind despite a mandate set by the Climate Change Act to incorporate gender-sensitive perspectives in climate and renewable energy plans. There were no policies that expressly required the use of the gender and climate change lens in tandem. But we are working continuously to address these, and our primary focus is to use the frameworks for climate-resilient planning and investment, namely our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and National Adaptation Plan (NAP), as vehicles to ensure these build capacity and strengthen knowledge of women as climate actors.

We also see a need to equip gender focal points in partner agencies and in various projects with technical knowledge of climate change. In the inverse, there is a lack of appreciation for gender analysis among many of the climate lead and partner agencies, to the point that the use of gender analysis is mainly a token activity. Most agencies don't collect sex- and age-disaggregated data.

And of course, there's the persistent gender gap in the fields of science and technology, as well as a lack of women in decision-making positions.

What are your key takeaways from this workshop?

Our interactions over the past days have increased my appreciation for the significant reforms that women are leading in our region, whether at the technical or management level. This requires day-to-day painstaking work.

Certainly, the need for sex-disaggregated data is the starting line for more gender-aligned initiatives, and with complementation of approaches that acknowledge the interlinkages of gender with age, education, socioeconomic status, and so on. From the various presentations of fellow delegates, I see the consistency of positive social outcomes and greater impact and effectiveness when the gender lens is applied.

The work must continue and not stop until we can see more equitable climate programmes and social services that recognize women's different needs. We all need to pitch in, collaborate, and communicate openly.

What strategies do you employ to ensure that women and marginalized groups are actively involved in the planning and implementation of climate adaptation initiatives?

I'm happy to say that the Philippines has many women leaders who have dedicated their careers, if not their lives, to environmental causes in both the private and public sectors. But no doubt more representation is needed. I can think of three broad strategies we're using to push this further.

The first is to increase the number of women employed in climate change agencies, which are still staffed mostly by men. As an example of what's being done, the Climate Change Commission requires that one of the three commissioners must be a woman. A version of this policy must also be reflected through the bureaucracy.

The second is to encourage and honor the environmental work by women who are paving the way for other women to be leaders in their respective fields. We established the Philippine Resilience Awards in 2023, through the vision of Senator Loren Legarda as our trailblazing female legislator, to recognize women leaders who have done exceptional work in climate change governance, policymaking, education, food security and sustainability, among others. Last year, ten outstanding champions for adaptation and resilience were awarded, and we are working to launch the search for this year.

The third is to get more girls into science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), which are crucial fields in creating climate solutions. To bridge the gap, school departments in energy and science have ongoing projects to get girls interested in math and science, and to provide science scholarships for women.

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