



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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- Bacolod City celebrates National Arbor Day
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## GREENPEACE

### [Climate Justice for all](#)

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## PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

### [AREX, gov't agencies plant 2K acacia for reforestation, climate change mitigation](#)

By: Jenrie C. Del Rosario

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By: Ma. Cristina Arayata

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### **RAPPLER**

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By: Jake Spring

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### **SUNSTAR**

## **[Bacolod City celebrates National Arbor Day](#)**

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## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[DENR calls for marine turtle protection](#)**

By: Janine Alexis San Miguel

Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga once again sought support from the public to protect the nesting site of endangered marine turtles, particularly the leatherback turtles.

## **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

### **[\[Opinion\] Cucumbers, clams and coral – protecting our marine biodiversity together](#)**

By: HK Yu, PSM

Dear Friends,

The ocean covers more than 70 percent of our planet. Australia and the Philippines – as island nations – know the importance of a healthy and diverse marine environment. Our coastal livelihoods and the Blue Economy – whether for jobs, tourism, energy or science – depend on it. For Filipinos and Australians alike, our prosperity and security are tied to the seas that surround us.

### **[\[Opinion\] Earth for all](#)**

By: Eunille Santos

When rainbows color the sky, a promise of hope and unity paints the planet. But for many marginalized communities such as farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, LGBTQIA2S+ individuals and others around the world who face prejudice and societal biases on a daily basis, that promise feels as distant as a pot of gold.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **GREENPEACE**

### **Climate Justice for all**

Communities who are least responsible for climate change are in the frontlines of the crisis, losing their lives, homes, and livelihoods from floods, storm surges, landslides, destructive winds, and intense rains brought regularly by super typhoons. Meanwhile, many coastal communities are also experiencing the threat of rising sea levels and ocean warming and acidification also brought about by climate change.

Aside from coping with death and destruction, countries like the Philippines are losing hundreds of billions of dollars from addressing multiple and compounding climate impacts that ravage communities yearly, further straining the country's limited capacity to respond to other pressing development challenges.

Meanwhile, the world's biggest and richest oil and gas companies, who are largely responsible for climate emissions, continue to expand operations, bringing in record-breaking profits as they drill for more oil, gas, and coal accelerating climate change—even while communities continue to experience ever-worsening climate impacts.

But communities are not taking this injustice sitting down. Many of them are standing up for climate justice to reclaim their future, holding fossil fuel companies to account, and calling on governments to make polluters pay.

Let's stand with Filipino communities calling for an end to fossil fuels and payment for climate damages

The climate crisis we are experiencing right now was brought about by the world's biggest and richest fossil fuel companies. For too long, these companies have profited from climate destruction and immense human suffering.

While they count their billions, people across the globe count the damage from the record-breaking typhoons, floods, droughts, and heatwaves that these companies are fueling. This is the stark reality of climate injustice, and we must end it!

## PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

### [AREX, gov't agencies plant 2K acacia for reforestation, climate change mitigation](#)

By: Jenrie C. Del Rosario

The Association of Regional Executives (AREX) and various government agencies in the Ilocos region joined hands to plant at least 2,000 Acacia mangium seedlings on a two-hectare portion of the association's 10-hectare planting site at Daang Kalikasan in Mangatarem, Pangasinan.

The activity, part of the Philippine Arbor Day celebration observed annually on June 25, contributes to a nationwide tree-planting initiative of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) aimed at reforestation and mitigating the effects of climate change.

"Arbor," which means tree in Latin, inspires the annual observance that seeks to celebrate planting and preserving trees.

Lawyer Crizaldy Barcelo, regional executive director of the DENR Ilocos and president of AREX, said in an interview that all government agencies in the region participated in the tree-planting initiative.

He affirmed that for the past few months, Pangasinan has been experiencing dangerously high heat indexes, particularly in Dagupan City.

Hence, Barcelo stressed the urgent need for action to protect the environment and promote a greener and more sustainable future in response to the high temperatures.

"We are planting these trees not only for our future generations but also as a way of mitigating the effects of climate change. Similarly, we aim to reforest Daang Kalikasan. We want to restore the former forest cover in this area," he said.

"Acacia mangium grows fast and helps forests grow back quickly. We will continue this activity until we have planted all 10 hectares," he added.

Barcelo said they plan to monitor the planted seedlings, and if any were to die, they would replant them, emphasizing that their mission is not just about tree planting but also about tree growing.

Lawyer Czareanah Isidro, assistant regional director of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) Region 1 and AREX member, shared her pride in contributing to the environment by joining the association's initiative.

“This is our way of contributing to the environment, and such activities are crucial, especially now that we are experiencing climate change,” she said.

Also, Joward Medina, president of the Supreme Student Council (SSC) at Pangasinan State University-Bayambang campus (PSU-BC), actively participated in the activity and planted more than 10 seedlings.

“Tree-planting is one of the advocacy platforms I champion in school. When we learned about the partnership between AREX and PSU, the SSC PSU-BC gladly partnered with them,” he shared.

For Medina, tree-planting is crucial as he believes that it helps prevent various natural disasters like soil erosion and contributes to reforestation efforts.

“Aside from benefiting from the products of natural resources, it is our way of giving back to our environment,” he added.

Barcelo announced that in September 2024, coinciding with Civil Service Month, they will be organizing another tree-planting event.

He is urging everyone to be part of the solution to the growing climate change problem by helping in any way possible, no matter how small, to protect the environment and future generations.

## **BARMM lawmakers propose establishment of Climate Change Commission**

Bangsamoro lawmakers have proposed establishing and institutionalizing policies, initiatives, plans, and programs dedicated to addressing climate change concerns.

Member of Parliament (MP) Marjanie Macasalong introduced BTA Bill No. 242, which seeks to create the Bangsamoro Climate Change Commission (BCCC).

The Commission, once established, will serve as the primary policymaking and coordinating body of the Bangsamoro government, responsible for overseeing, monitoring, and evaluating programs and action plans related to climate change.

Research shows that the Philippines ranks as the third most affected country by climate change, facing numerous challenges such as altered rainfall patterns, droughts, threats to biodiversity and food security, rising sea levels, public health risks, changing landscapes, fires, floods, storms, and climate-related diseases.

The Commission will develop a strategic framework and action plan on climate change that will be the basis for climate change planning, research and development, extension, and monitoring activities aimed at safeguarding vulnerable communities from the impacts of climate change.

The plan will involve, among other things, an evaluation of the impact of climate change, the identification of vulnerable communities, and an investigation of the differential consequences of climate change on men, women, and children.

MPs Basit Abbas, Abdulwahab Pak, Ali Montaha Babao, Tawakal Midtimbang, Susana Anayatin, Froilyn Mendoza, Bai Maleiha Candao, Abdulkarim Misuari, Nurredha Misuari, Atty. Sha Elijah Dumama-Alba, Nabila Margarita Pangandaman, and Albakil Jikiri are co-authors of said bill.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### LPA to bring rains across Mindanao; unlikely to develop into cyclone

By: Ma. Cristina Arayata

A low pressure area (LPA) developed inside the Philippine Area of Responsibility on Wednesday and is embedded in the intertropical convergence zone (ITCZ), the weather bureau said on Wednesday.

Benison Estareja of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said the LPA developed at around 8 a.m. It was last tracked 365 km. east southeast of General Santos City.

"It is almost stationary, and is slowly moving westward," he said, adding that the LPA could possibly dissipate in the next 24 to 36 hours.

Estareja said the easterlies and the ITCZ were the two prevailing weather systems that cause rains over most parts of the country.

However, since the LPA is embedded in the ITCZ affecting Mindanao, it would cause rains over the island, especially the Caraga, Davao, and Soccsksargen regions.

Several areas in Mindanao have been experiencing heavy to intense rainfall, Estareja added.

Meanwhile, for the next five days, PAGASA forecast Mindanao, especially the eastern section, to experience scattered rain showers and thunderstorms caused by the ITCZ and the LPA.

The easterlies will bring scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Aurora, Quezon, Bicol Region, Eastern Visayas, and nearby areas.

PAGASA also forecast the easterlies to cause isolated rain showers and thunderstorms over the rest of the country.

As of 12:10 p.m. Wednesday, there were only two canceled flights due to the bad weather -- Cebu Pacific's 5J 196/197 Manila-Cauayan-Manila.



## RAPPLER

### [Traveling 'Biodiversity Crisis Escape Room' moves to Palawan](#)

When it comes to explaining science, it's often better to show than tell. The Mind Museum, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), along with other partners, recently launched an interactive "Biodiversity Crisis Escape Room" that teaches children and adults about the importance of the Philippines' biodiversity as well as the need to protect it.

In this escape room, participants get a hands-on experience solving biodiversity-related puzzles and challenges in order to exit the room.

Visitors can also watch a Mind S-Cool video, an e-learning tool wherein puppet characters navigate through a biodiversity crisis.

"Biodiversity loss not only threatens the survival of countless species but also undermines the stability of ecosystems and the services they provide, impacting human well-being and livelihoods. We must all become active participants in this plan to safeguard the country's rich biodiversity for future generations," USAID Philippines deputy mission director Rebekah Eubanks said during the launch at the Mind Museum in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, in May.

The project was funded through the USAID's P1.35-billion Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans and Landscapes or SIBOL initiative, and developed in partnership with the Bonifacio Art Foundation Incorporated, a nonprofit that promotes the sciences and the arts.

The USAID said the Biodiversity Crisis Escape Room is "an immersive experience that teaches the importance of collaboration in solving the biodiversity crisis." It said the Philippines is one of 18 megadiverse countries in the world, hosting 70% of the Earth's flora and fauna, which is why the agency is supporting the Philippines' environmental initiatives, particularly on inclusive green growth.

Maria Isabel Garcia, managing director of The Mind Museum, said the Biodiversity Crisis Escape Room "mimics the actual conversations happening in communities," with participants learning about "how to work together to solve the [biodiversity] crisis."

She also thanked the various partners that supported staging the Biodiversity Crisis Escape Room in their establishments outside Metro Manila.

The Biodiversity Crisis Escape Room first ran from May 11 to May 31 at the Mind Museum. It then went to Ayala Malls' Harbor Point in Subic Freeport in Zambales province from June 15 to 16.

This coming weekend or from June 29 to 30, it will be at the Robinsons Mall in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan province, after which it will travel to Abreeza Mall in Davao City in Mindanao from July 27 to 28.

The Biodiversity Crisis Escape Room will eventually become a regular attraction at the Mind Museum in Taguig City in August.

"The Biodiversity Crisis Escape Room is a unique opportunity for us and our valued partners to present the different biodiversity challenges while highlighting the significance of sustainable practices and conservation. Mallgoers will have the chance to participate and work with family, friends, and new acquaintances in solving the crisis, providing an enriching and collaborative experience," said Joel Lumanlan, vice president for marketing and operations of Robinsons Malls.

In Robinsons Palawan, each session in the escape room will run for one hour and 30 minutes. A maximum of 15 people can be accommodated for each of the five slots per day: 10:30 am, 12:50 pm, 2:40 pm, 4:30 pm, and 6:20 pm.

It is open to individuals ages 6 and up. Children 6 to 12 have to be accompanied by a guardian. Those interested are encouraged to preregister to get a slot.

"To avail of this unique experience, mallgoers must preregister and present a receipt from any store in Robinsons Palawan worth at least P500 for adults and P250 worth of receipts for children up to 12 years old to obtain tickets for the escape room," Robinsons Malls said.

## REUTERS

### [Flooded Brazil 'ghost town' a climate warning to world, UN advisor says](#)

By: Jake Spring

Record floods that killed over 170 people and displaced half a million in southern Brazil are a warning sign of more disasters to come throughout the Americas because of climate change, an official at the United Nations' refugee agency said on Tuesday.

Roughly 389,000 people, opens new tab in the state of Rio Grande do Sul remain displaced from their homes because of the intense rain and flooding, which local officials say was the worst disaster in the region's history. Scientists say climate change made the flooding twice as likely to happen.

Andrew Harper, special advisor on climate action to the refugee agency UNHCR, visited a flooded neighborhood in state capital Porto Alegre over the weekend and called it "a ghost town."

"It was underwater for almost 40 days. There wasn't even any rats running around. Everything had died," Harper said in an interview on Tuesday.

Even after the flood waters subsided, residents have not returned to the neighborhood where streets are piled high with water-logged garbage and debris. Many are still living in shelters, including Venezuelan refugees who had resettled in Porto Alegre.

UNHCR is helping the local government to build temporary housing.

Residents of some hard hit areas may never return, having been forced to move by repeated flooding, Harper said. But how many would become so-called climate migrants will only be known years after the disaster.

The floods surpassed all expectations that local authorities had for climate disasters, and governments need to do more to prepare for these events, Harper said.

"We're seeing the emergence in Brazil of what we may be seeing throughout the Americas. So to ignore this, they do it at their own peril," Harper said.

Governments need to understand where the people most vulnerable to climate change live, like the neighborhood he visited in Porto Alegre, and include those people in their climate plans, he said.

"It's a warning signal, but we've been seeing warning signals now for five, ten years," Harper added. "At what point do you basically have to slap somebody in the face and say, 'Wake up, you're not going to ignore this.'"

## **SUNSTAR**

### **Bacolod City celebrates National Arbor Day**

Bacolod City celebrated National Arbor Day last June 25, with the planting of 2,000 native and fruit tree seedlings in the soon-to-be Brgy Felisa Eco Park, next to the Bacolod Sanitary Landfill.

The Bacolod Environmental and Natural Resources Office (BENRO) led the initiative on the newly acquired 25.7-hectare property, with 8.5 hectares dedicated to the tree park.

Environmental advocates, and volunteers participated in the event, highlighting the importance of tree planting for climate change mitigation, urban cooling, and air quality improvement.

## THE MANILA TIMES

### [DENR calls for marine turtle protection](#)

By: Janine Alexis San Miguel

Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga once again sought support from the public to protect the nesting site of endangered marine turtles, particularly the leatherback turtles.

The environment chief made the statement following the recent egg-laying event by the critically endangered leatherback turtle in Sta. Ana, Cagayan province.

According to the department, the marine turtle laid eggs for the third time along the shoreline in Barangay Centro, about 6 kilometers from Palaui Island Protected Landscapes and Seascapes.

"When a female sea turtle is ready to lay eggs, she returns to the nesting beach where she was born, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This gives us more reason to pursue our goal to put up a marine scientific research station in the said town," Yulo-Loyzaga said in a statement on Wednesday.

Earlier this month, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) reported that a female leatherback turtle laid eggs along the shoreline of Barangay Centro in the said province.

Citing a study from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Yulo-Loyzaga said that a sea turtle takes 20 to 30 years to mature and can lay several times during nesting.

The species is also classified as critically endangered under the Red List of Threatened Species by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, hence the need to protect it.

Yulo-Loyzaga also emphasized the importance of leatherbacks and other sea turtles in maintaining healthy seagrass beds and coral reefs, which are critical habitats for marine life. She added that such species also help mitigate climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide.

In line with this, two coastal protection officers were hired by the DENR Regional Office in Cagayan tasked to work on the protection and patrolling of the nesting sites.

Netting protection and signage were also installed to keep away stray dogs and poachers. The Cagayan Economic Zone Authority, meanwhile, has committed to deploy a security guard to monitor the nest near the said resort.

"We are expecting about a hundred hatchlings in two to three months, so we appeal for the support of the coastal community, the local government and law enforcement agencies to help the DENR protect the nesting sites," DENR Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan said.

The department earlier announced that it will establish a marine scientific research station in the town where the Palau Island Protected Landscape and Seascape is located. The facility will strengthen the monitoring and protection of coastal and marine resources, including sea turtles.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### [\[Opinion\] Cucumbers, clams and coral – protecting our marine biodiversity together](#)

By: HK Yu, PSM

Dear Friends,

The ocean covers more than 70 percent of our planet. Australia and the Philippines – as island nations – know the importance of a healthy and diverse marine environment. Our coastal livelihoods and the Blue Economy – whether for jobs, tourism, energy or science – depend on it. For Filipinos and Australians alike, our prosperity and security are tied to the seas that surround us.

The maritime partnership between our countries is an integral part of our bilateral relationship, and I am proud to say this cooperation continues to deepen. Some of our Australian embassy staff were fortunate to go snorkeling in support of their work. While visiting Pangasinan last week on a site visit, my team went underwater to learn more about the giant clam breeding program, led by the University of the Philippines-Marine Science Institute (UP-MSI) and Australia's James Cook University. This collaboration by Australian and Filipino marine scientists and researchers has seen more than 70,000 giant clams restored to Philippine reefs. Giant clams are a valuable asset to the tourism sector, and a boost to reef health for fishing communities. Protecting them from illicit trade is also important. In the Philippines, giant clams are classified as threatened, and their commercial harvest and trade are banned under the country's wildlife conservation law.

The Philippines sits in the coral triangle and is home of over 600 types of corals and 2,000 species of fish, according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. Coral reefs remain highly vulnerable to human impact and climate change. The reefs around Pangasinan, like many others in Southeast Asia, have been hit by significant coral bleaching events. But I am proud to say that with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, UP-MSI and Australia's Southern Cross University are pioneering research that demonstrates the mass culture of coral larvae on reefs can provide a scalable approach to reef restoration. Australian-sponsored projects with UP-MSI and coastal civil society organizations ensure appropriate community-based and sustainability measures are in place.

Sea cucumbers are a curious looking marine animal related to starfish and sea urchins. They are valued as a prestigious dried seafood in Asian cuisine and can fetch up to \$1,000 per kilogram in some markets. Recognizing the economic potential of sea



cucumber production for coastal fishing communities, Australia is also supporting the University of Sunshine Coast and UP-MSI to enhance sea cucumber farming practices and improve Filipino livelihoods. Their work is showing significant results – sea cucumbers are now being grown in sea ranching sites in the Philippines, providing communities with a source of income. This program engages coastal communities in marine research and demonstrates that effective marine resource management can lead to more sustainable and secure livelihoods.

Australia's efforts to support the Philippines to protect the marine environment extends beyond the waters of Pangasinan. Through our P328-million Philippine Civil Maritime Security Program, Australia is working with partners like UP-MSI to protect and restore coral reefs not just in Pangasinan, but also around Cebu, Palawan, Zambales and the Verde Island Passage.

Australia is also making targeted investments to promote the sustainable management of Philippine marine resources and build the marine environment's resilience. We are investing in marine conservation through our P3.6-billion Southeast Asia regional maritime program – and the Philippines is a significant partner and beneficiary.

Australia is providing geospatial mapping assistance to the Philippines to help determine the climate resilience of islands in the West Philippines Sea. We are also partnering with the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development on coral reef data collection and monitoring, to better understand the impact of climate change.

Our partnerships are underpinned by strong governance structures and effective international advocacy. This includes efforts by both of our countries to ratify and promote the landmark High Seas Biodiversity Treaty in 2023.

The 2024 Memorandum of Understanding on Enhanced Maritime Cooperation, signed by Australia and the Philippines in February, recognizes our shared intent to do more together in the maritime and marine domains. It signals our joint commitment to upholding the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), preserving regional peace and stability and the protection of maritime resources.

Despite our good work to date, there is much more for Australia and the Philippines to do to protect the marine environment. In March this year, Australia's Foreign Minister Penny Wong announced that Australia would invest a further P2.49 billion to enhance Australia's maritime partnerships across Southeast Asia and contribute to the security and prosperity of the region. I am pleased to say the Philippines will once again be a significant partner in this multi-country project.

By working together towards a stable and secure region – where our marine environments are protected, resilient and sustainable – we can ensure the economic prosperity and security for generations to come.

I look forward to this next phase in the Australia-Philippines maritime partnership.

Yours truly,

HK

## [Opinion] Earth for all

By: Eunille Santos

When rainbows color the sky, a promise of hope and unity paints the planet. But for many marginalized communities such as farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, LGBTQIA2S+ individuals and others around the world who face prejudice and societal biases on a daily basis, that promise feels as distant as a pot of gold.

As we grapple with the harsh realities of climate change, it becomes clearer that true justice and sustainability can't exist if we leave behind the most vulnerable among us.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has consistently underscored that marginalized communities disproportionately bear the brunt of climate change. For instance, climate change exacerbates the vulnerabilities of LGBTQIA2S+ individuals who already unjustly face discrimination to begin with. Lack of access to needs like safe housing, secure employment and essential services during disasters reveals deep-rooted systemic inequities that have persisted for generations, leaving queer individuals in the fringes.

During climate disasters, discrimination does not pause. Imagine a typhoon wreaking havoc. While having to endure the chaos, LGBTQIA2S+ individuals may find themselves denied shelter due to prejudice and overlooked in relief efforts. In its aftermath, rebuilding their lives becomes an even more difficult task, compounded by bigotry and social stigma. They are denied livelihood programs and economic opportunities that have traditionally been given to cisgender individuals only. Some transgender individuals had to deadname themselves just to receive relief items – at the cost of losing their identity. The urgency for inclusive climate policies that address these vulnerabilities cannot be overstated.

Despite these challenges, marginalized communities have shown undeniable strength in the fight for social justice that cuts across sectors. LGBTQIA2S+ individuals, alongside farmers, fisherfolk and indigenous peoples among others, have been at the forefront of advocating for equitable and inclusive policies. Their efforts are not merely about resilience; they are about creating a world where everyone, regardless of their identity or background, can thrive. While often the first to feel the impacts of climate change, LGBTQIA2S+ individuals also possess unique insights essential for innovating effective and inclusive solutions.

Building an inclusive future

Creating an Earth for all means realizing that with the worsening climate crisis, the battle for environmental preservation becomes more and more linked with the fight for social justice. It demands the dismantling of outdated systems that perpetuate discrimination and environmental harm. It emphasizes that those who have historically been sidelined – due to their sexual orientation, gender identity or socio-economic status – should be recognized and celebrated.

The government must develop policies and programs that ensure justice for underserved communities. This includes providing equitable access to resources especially during disasters, ensuring representation in decision-making processes and strengthening support networks such as mental health services and legal aid. By addressing these areas, the government can better serve and empower these communities, fostering a more inclusive and just society.

On the other end of the spectrum, corporations that superficially present themselves as allies of the planet and the people, especially during Pride Month, must abandon their oppressive practices that cause massive harm to both the environment and society. Raising the rainbow flag while continuing to engage in activities that destroy our planet and exploit vulnerable communities is not only hypocritical but also deeply harmful. True allyship requires more than performative gestures; it demands a genuine commitment to sustainable practices and social justice year-round, and not only when it's convenient and profitable for them. Only then can these corporations authentically support the causes they claim to champion.

In celebrating Pride Month, let us extend our pride to encompass our shared Earth. Let us advocate for a world where diversity and inclusion are the cornerstones of our collective existence. By ensuring justice for all, we can build a truly sustainable and equitable future for everyone – and every single thing – on this planet. Only then can we hope to create an Earth that is not just for some, but for all.

**=END=**