



NEWS ROUNDUP

30 JUNE 2023 [08:00 am]

- Basic Energy to build new onshore wind facility to boost RE portfolio
- Climate change: China's green power surge offers hope on warming
- France is unprepared for the 'serious impacts' of climate change, report warns
- 28% renewable energy utilization rate noted in Western Visayas
- Flooded N. Cotabato, Maguindanao towns under state of calamity
- Legarda to DENR: Use environmental laws to maximize mandate
- EU calls for global talks on climate geoengineering risks
- 68 more renewable energy projects eyed in Western Visayas

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- CCC backs waste-to-energy initiative to make PH climate-resilient

ABS CBN

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BBC

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By: Matt McGrath & Mark Poynting

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EURO NEWS

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MANILA BULLETIN

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PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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RAPPLER

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By: Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

Basic Energy to build new onshore wind facility to boost RE portfolio

Listed energy firm Basic Energy Corp said on Thursday it secured regulator approval for the development of a new onshore wind project.

The Department of Energy approved its Wind Energy Service Contract (WESC) application for the onshore wind power plant located in San Joaquin and Miag-ao, Iloilo and Hamtic, Antique, Basic Energy told the stock exchange.

The projects' total land area of interest is about 13,932 hectares covering 172 RE blocks, the company said.

Basic Energy said the plant is expected to generate a capacity of at least 155MW based on the preliminary study done by an independent party.

"With the approval and signing of the WESC, Basic Energy Corp will commence to deploy its resources for the wind resource assessment campaign to determine the precise wind regime in the said area," it said.

BBC

[Climate change: China's green power surge offers hope on warming](#)

By: Matt McGrath & Mark Poynting

Wind and solar power are booming in China and may help limit global carbon emissions far faster than expected, according to a new study.

Solar panel installations alone are growing at a pace that would increase global capacity by 85% by 2025.

The report says the country's green energy targets for 2030 look set to be exceeded five years ahead of schedule.

But coal plants are also increasing, partly as backup for all the new wind and solar farms, the authors say.

China is often seen as the key to the world's efforts to rein in the carbon emissions that are the root cause of climate change.

The country is the world's biggest user of coal, mainly for making electricity. The use of coal is responsible for around 69% of China's emissions of carbon dioxide.

But this new study shows that China is fast building up capacity to generate power from wind and solar, which could have a significant impact on limiting the impacts of rising temperatures.

The research has been carried out by Global Energy Monitor (GEM), an independent research group whose work is often used by the World Bank, the International Energy Agency and governments.

The report looks at China's current installed green energy capacity, but also makes projections on what's been announced and in construction over the next two years.

It finds that right now China has more solar panels installed in large-scale projects than the rest of the world combined. On wind energy, the country has doubled its capacity since 2017.

But this appears to be only the start. According to GEM, China is expanding this sector rapidly and will more than double its capacity for wind and solar by the end of 2025.

This would see China increase the global wind turbine fleet by 50%, and increase the world's large-scale solar installations by 85% compared to current levels.

This current surge is the end-product of plans dating back over two decades.

In that time China has become the world's leading supplier of solar panels, driving down costs all across the supply chain. That has helped make solar and wind installations in China economically competitive.

Subsidies have played their part, as have regulations requiring each province to hit green energy targets.

While over half a trillion dollars was spent worldwide on wind and solar last year, China accounted for 55% of that.

Back in 2020, President Xi Jinping said that China would install over 1,200 gigawatts of solar and wind power by 2030. This new report says this target will be surpassed five years ahead of schedule.

"We believe that the surge in building renewables certainly provides a basis for peaking [China's] carbon emissions earlier than 2030," said Martin Weil, one of the report's authors.

But while this could be significant news for limiting global warming, China's coal use remains a major challenge.

In 2022, China built approximately two new coal fired power stations every week - many of these were located on new solar and wind parks, often to provide back up power and to ensure continuity of energy supply.

"The big issue going forward is how will these coal plants actually be deployed," Mr Weil said.

"One hopes that they're deployed in a way that that puts the ratio of renewables to coal as high as possible."

Other key indicators will be the development of battery storage and the growth of hydrogen - both will be important in helping China transition successfully away from coal.

EURO NEWS

[France is unprepared for the 'serious impacts' of climate change, report warns](#)

By: Rosie Frost

While greenhouse gas emissions have declined, experts say efforts are still 'insufficient' to reach 2030 targets.

France's action on greenhouse gas emissions is "insufficient" and the country isn't "ready to face up" to the consequences of climate change, the country's High Council for Climate (HCC) has warned.

The 200-page report released on Wednesday (28 June) reveals that the country was overwhelmed by extreme climate-related events in 2022. These events required emergency measures on an "exceptional scale" - but extreme years of this kind are becoming increasingly common, it says.

The report's authors say that while a framework for action on climate change is being developed, it hasn't so far included economic policy capable of triggering the acceleration needed to reach climate targets.

"The decline in greenhouse gas emissions in France continues in 2022, but at a rate that remains insufficient to achieve the 2030 objectives," the HCC says.

The consequences of climate change are overwhelming France

Europe is the fastest-warming continent in the world, a recent report by the World Meteorological Organization and the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service warned.

Temperatures in France last year were 2.9 degrees Celsius above the 1991-2020 average.

As well as seeing the hottest year on record, rainfall was also 25 per cent lower compared to the 1991-2020 average.

This led to reduced hydroelectric power production, a drop in crop yields, effects on biodiversity and excess heat-related mortality.

The exceptionally hot and dry conditions resulted in 2,816 excess deaths being recorded by the health system in 2022. Extreme weather also created tensions over

drinking water supplies in 2,000 municipalities with 8,000 others requesting recognition of “natural disasters” due to the drought.

Major wildfires burned 72,000 hectares of land, forcing France’s firefighting services to call in reinforcements from abroad. Carbon sinks risk being burnt, reducing their ability to counteract emissions.

Last year’s extreme conditions had “serious impacts” on people, the economy, infrastructure and ecosystems, “exceeding the current capacity for prevention and crisis management”, the institute’s experts conclude.

Greenhouse gas emissions fell by 2.7 per cent in 2022 but the HCC says this rate is “insufficient to achieve the (2030) targets”.

It also pointed out that mild winter conditions had contributed to the reduction.

French government must ‘recognise the urgency’ of the situation

The HCC called on the French government to “recognise the urgency” of the situation, accelerate its “insufficient” action to reduce greenhouse gasses, and update its “reactive” climate adaptation plans.

Despite positive steps forward with the EU’s ‘Fit for 55’ package, experts say the current pace of change is not compatible with achieving 2030 targets in seven years’ time.

“Rapid and in-depth corrective action is needed to achieve the expected pace of change, the necessary structural changes,” the HCC said.

It is calling for “far-reaching economic policy” that would see public and private funding of €30 billion a year between now and 2030 to decarbonise the economy.

France must “double the pace” at which it is reducing greenhouse gas emissions, Minister for Ecological Transition Christophe Béchu told France Info radio on Thursday.

He said that the goal was to reduce emissions by 140 million tonnes by 2030. A detailed plan on how this will work will be presented to lawmakers on 5 July.

MANILA BULLETIN

[28% renewable energy utilization rate noted in Western Visayas](#)

By: Tara Yap

The Department of Energy (DOE) has noted that Western Visayas only has a 28 percent of renewable energy utilization rate since 2021.

Based on the National Renewable Energy Program (NREP) target, DOE Undersecretary Rowena Cristina Guevara said that Western Visayas should have at least a 35 percent renewable energy utilization rate by the year 2030.

“If possible, 50 percent renewable energy by 2040,” Guevara told members of the Regional Development Council (RDC)-6 during the Investment Forum on Renewable Energy here on Wednesday, June 28.

Guevara admitted that transitioning to renewable energy is a slow process due to certain factors such as the power generated depending on natural conditions and transmission lines that have to be upgraded and installation of cable wires that takes time anywhere from three to five years.

The biggest challenge is the regulatory process in local governments and national government agencies, she said.

There are currently 68 renewable energy projects across Western Visayas.

DOE division chief Gaspar Escobar Jr. said that only 29 are currently operating while the others are still under construction.

At present, 708 megawatts of renewable energy are being generated.

Escobar said that when the 39 other projects are finished, these can generate around 14,245 megawatts.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Flooded N. Cotabato, Maguindanao towns under state of calamity

By: Edwin Fernandez

Two towns in North Cotabato and Maguindanao del Sur provinces have been placed under a state of calamity following floods that damaged crops, infrastructure, and homes.

In North Cotabato, the Pikit town council approved Thursday a resolution placing the area under a state of calamity due to the enormous effects of floods spawned by weather disturbances early this week.

Grace Cadungog, municipal social welfare and development officer, said the declaration aims to speed up the delivery of aid to the flood victims.

Rygel Cabilao, municipal disaster risk reduction and management (MDRRM) officer, said the floods affected about 1,100 farmers and damaged almost 2,000 hectares of corn and rice fields in 12 of its 42 villages.

Damaged corn crops were estimated at PHP25.1 million, impacting about 700 corn farmers. The cost of damages to palay in 360 hectares was also estimated to cost PHP25 million, affecting more than 600 farmers.

Cadungog said a total of 14,226 families have been affected, with one fatality due to drowning.

Cadungog and Cabilao said relief operations are ongoing for the internally displaced families in evacuation centers and those who have returned home when the water subsided.

In Maguindanao de Sur, the local government of Pagalungan also placed the area under a state of calamity Wednesday after all of its 12 villages were submerged by floods.

Pagalungan Vice Mayor Abdilah Mamasabulod said with the town's present situation, the MDRRM's Quick Response Fund can be used to provide assistance and other intervention to flood victims.

An estimated 9,000 families or about 45,000 individuals in the 12 villages are affected, he said.

The Maridagao, Malitubog, Pulangi and Kabacan rivers traversing the area have overflowed submerging communities near its course leading to the Liguasan marshland in Maguindanao Sur.

No fatalities so far were reported in the Pagalungan floods.

Legarda to DENR: Use environmental laws to maximize mandate

Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda on Thursday urged the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to utilize existing legislation to maximize the mandates and responsibilities of the agency to the environment.

“Even as I work tirelessly in the legislature, I call on you who have daily decision-making powers to use the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) system, which you always refer to as a planning mechanism, to cycle materials, to not always look for the easy way out by dumping and creating deadlands,” she said.

Legarda has authored various environmental laws in her four terms in the Senate.

She also highlighted the "Luntiang Pilipinas" she founded in 1998 to promote environmental awareness, protection, and preservation, and paved the way for two million trees to be planted on more than 500 hectares of land across the Philippines.

She added that the Philippines submitted its first National Determined Contribution, which conveyed a 75-percent greenhouse gas emissions reduction and avoidance target by 2023 for the agriculture, waste industry, transport, and energy sectors.

Legarda urged the DENR to energize the department’s workforce to keep standing in the way of ecological losses, which she said takes courage and conviction to accomplish.

“We can overcome our weaknesses with a unified front, which looks at meeting goals and making procedures and decisions that address them by counting on our young people here to be creative for their own future,” she said.

Legarda also reaffirmed her strong stance toward protecting the nation’s green environment as she underscored the significance of pursuing a more scientific and knowledge-based approach in striking a balance between the environment and economy.

She called on everyone to do their share in conserving the environment as she joined the nation in celebrating the Philippine Environment Month while the DENR commemorated the 160th Anniversary of the Philippine Forestry Service, noting the importance of Filipino participation in these environmental endeavors.

“Think of the sustainable practices and products that could become economic opportunities in a changed world. Change is inevitable, and we must use the

momentum of how fast things are changing to ride that tide and chart the direction of our nation's future," she said.

RAPPLER

[EU calls for global talks on climate geoengineering risks](#)

The European Commission on Wednesday, June 28, called for international talks on the dangers and governance of geoengineering, saying such interventions to alter the climate posed “unacceptable” risks.

Geoengineering has attracted increasing interest as countries fail to cut greenhouse gas emissions fast enough to curb climate change. But the issue of manipulating planetary systems to fight global warming remains highly controversial.

“Nobody should be conducting experiments alone with our shared planet,” European Union climate policy chief Frans Timmermans told a news conference.

“This should be discussed in the right forum, at the highest international level,” he said, suggesting the United Nations as a potential venue for talks on the risks and possible use of geoengineering.

Geoengineering techniques include directly removing CO₂ emissions from the atmosphere. The first plants to do this are already in operation, capturing CO₂ in tiny quantities compared with countries’ emissions.

More controversial is solar radiation modification (SRM), which would cut the amount of sunlight reaching Earth’s surface by, for example, spraying sulphate aerosols into the stratosphere to reflect more light back into space.

Joanna Haigh, Emeritus Professor at Imperial College London, said as well as having physical dangers, such technologies risked giving polluters an excuse not to address the root cause of climate change – greenhouse gas emissions produced from burning fossil fuels.

“The governance of geoengineering will be hugely complex, but necessary to regulate any future geoengineering technologies that could feasibly lower global average temperatures,” she added.

In an explanatory document, the Commission said that in its current state of development, SRM “represents an unacceptable level of risk for humans and the environment”.

The EU is funding two projects to assess geoengineering techniques, but said neither would develop or test SRM.

SRM has split opinion among scientists.

More than 100 scientists signed a February letter in support of research to understand whether SRM could reduce the immediate danger of global warming while countries attempt to cut their outright emissions.

Other scientists have called for a ban on solar geoengineering, arguing that it would be impossible to govern and could unleash unpredictable impacts, including on the weather and agriculture.

SUNSTAR

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Engineer Gaspar Escobar Jr., chief of the Technical Services and Management Division of the Renewable Energy Management Bureau, said that of the 68 projects, 24 are for hydropower, 17 for offshore wind, 14 for solar, 12 for onshore wind, and one for geothermal.

In a press conference ahead of the 2023 Investment Forum on Renewable Energy at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel, Escobar said the DOE continues to study programs and policies for the high integration of renewable energy in the power mix.

Energy Undersecretary Rowena Cristina Guevara said Western Visayas is now 28 percent into transitioning to renewable energy as of 2021.

The National Renewable Energy Program (NREP) 2020-2040 sets a target of at least 35 percent RE share in the power generation mix by 2030 and to increase it to 50 percent by 2040.

Bacolod City Mayor Abelardo Benitez, who also serves as the chairperson of the Western Visayas Regional Development Council, said the transition to renewable energy, aside from helping address the issue of climate change, will have other benefits for the region.

Benitez said renewable energy is currently the cheapest source that will lead the way for industries to come in due to cheaper electricity.

The region can also capitalize on exporting its products to countries that prefer the use of green energy since there are European countries that will only import products from countries with renewable energy initiatives.

“It has a big significance that is why the Regional Development Council 6 is focusing on renewable energy because it could pave the way for an economic boom,” he added.

Meanwhile, the investment forum gathered key players in the energy transition, including development partners, investors, financing institutions, and other stakeholders

to create a strong network of international and local stakeholders, said National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Regional Director Arcio Casing Jr.

They are expected to collaborate to bring to fruition the national government's goal of transitioning to a clean energy future, he added.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[CCC backs waste-to-energy initiative to make PH climate-resilient](#)

By: Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) on Thursday expressed support for the use of waste-to-energy (WTE) technologies to build a more climate-resilient Philippines.

In a statement, CCC Commissioner Albert dela Cruz Sr. considered the WTE projects as “pro-environment activities and investments” that could help strengthen the country’s climate resiliency.

Dela Cruz stressed the importance of taking immediate steps to address environmental issues, considering the worsening weather condition that brings at least 20 typhoons every year in the Philippines and the emergence of climate change due to “human activities,” which include the use of landfills, deforestation and burning of fossil fuels.

“Since our country is located near the equator, we have warm seas and this is where typhoons are created. In the past 10 years or so, because of global warming, we have experienced super typhoons that not only destroy property and infrastructure but cause the deaths of people and livelihood,” he said.

Dela Cruz issued the statement as he is set to join Pagsanjan, Laguna Mayor Cesar Balbuena Areza on Friday in leading the inauguration of the municipality’s bio-methanation and thermolysis machine for the proper disposal of waste.

The launching was in line with the green transition of the landfill using WTE technologies that have been endorsed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Dela Cruz lauded the Pagsanjan local government, as well as the PEDECO led by executive director Maximino Camacho, for supporting the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) of the Marcos administration.

“We need firms like PEDECO and leaders like Mayor Areza who both lead in implementing measures to reduce pollution by using WTE technologies and other alternative energies coming from solar, wind and geothermal sources,” Dela Cruz added.

In February, Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri filed a bill seeking the establishment of a national energy policy and regulatory framework for facilities using WTE technologies that would address solid waste management problems and provide an alternative source of energy.

Based on the assessment of the Environment and Management Bureau, the Philippines is projected to generate 92 million tons of waste from 2022 to 2025.

Dela Cruz also called for the local government units' (LGUs) closer cooperation to formulate and implement policies and measures that would help address the environmental crisis the country is currently facing.

Citing the United Nations' report, Dela Cruz noted that global heat index has increased in the past decades, reaching to about 1.1 degrees Celsius warmer than during the 1800s.

Dela Cruz added that global heat index, based on scientific data, has registered the hottest between 2011 and 2020 as a result of changing climates across the world.

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