



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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- Philippines orders evacuations ahead of super typhoon Egay
- China, Philippines and Taiwan brace for Super Typhoon Doksuri
- Scientists say climate change role in July heatwaves 'overwhelming'
- GMA Integrated News receives 'Pambansang Balita Award' for climate change special series
- Mangroves and seagrasses: Mitigating climate change through blue carbon
- PBBM wants 'more adaptable, agile' disaster response teams
- Marcos says gov't 'aggressively' promoting renewable energy
- Groups hit Marcos' 'lack of ambition' in clean energy transition

### ABS CBN

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### AL JAZEERA

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## **BUSINESS WORLD**

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## **MANILA BULLETIN**

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By: Henrylito D. Tacio

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## **PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY**

### **[PBBM wants 'more adaptable, agile' disaster response teams](#)**

By: Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Monday said his administration is reorganizing a “more adaptable, agile and effective” response teams to ensure the disaster preparedness of the Philippines, the most typhoon-prone country in the world.

## **RAPPLER**

### **[Marcos says gov't 'aggressively' promoting renewable energy](#)**

By: Iya Gozum

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said on Monday, July 24, that the government is taking a more aggressive stance to increase renewable energy in the country, awarding more than a hundred renewable energy contracts in the past year.

## **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

### **[Groups hit Marcos' 'lack of ambition' in clean energy transition](#)**

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Clean energy campaigners criticized the lack of ambitious targets for renewable energy and the absence of just energy transition in the second State of the Nation Address of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **ABS CBN**

### **Egay' weakens slightly as it hovers over waters off Cagayan**

Typhoon Egay (international name: Doksuri) weakened slightly as it hovers over the waters off Cagayan province, the state weather bureau said late Tuesday.

In its 11 p.m. weather bulletin, PAGASA said Egay was last located over the coastal waters of Calayan, Cagayan, packing maximum sustained winds of 175 kilometers per hour near the center, with gusts of up to 240 kph.

It is currently moving west northwestward at 10 kph. According to PAGASA, it is expected to continue moving west or west northwestward over the Luzon Strait in the next 12 hours, and may make landfall in the vicinity of Babuyan Islands within the same period.

“Slight northward or southward shift in this segment of the track (but within the forecast confidence cone) may result in a landfall or close approach over northern mainland Cagayan or Batanes,” PAGASA added.

Tropical Cyclone Wind Signal No. 4, where winds from 118 to 184 kph may cause significant to severe threat to life and property, is still hoisted over the northern portion of Cagayan (Santa Ana, Gonzaga, Claveria, Sanchez-Mira, Pamplona, Abulug, Ballesteros, Aparri, Buguey, Santa Teresita, Camalaniugan, Santa Praxedes) including Babuyan Islands, and the northern portion of Ilocos Norte (Burgos, Bangui, Dumalneg, Pagudpud, Adams).

Signal No. 3, on the other hand, is raised over Batanes, the rest of Cagayan, Apayao, the northern portion of Kalinga (Rizal, Pinukpuk, Balbalan), the northern portion of Abra (Tineg, Lagayan, Lacub, Danglas), and the rest of Ilocos Norte.

#### **SIGNAL NO. 2**

Isabela

Rest of Kalinga

Mountain Province

Ifugao

Northern portion of Benguet (Bakun, Mankayan, Buguias, Kabayan, Kibungan, Atok)

Rest of Abra

Ilocos Sur

Northern portion of La Union (Bangar, Sudipen, Luna, Balaoan, Santol)

## SIGNAL NO. 1

Aurora

Quirino

Nueva Vizcaya

Rest of Benguet

Rest of La Union

Pangasinan

Nueva Ecija

Pangasinan

Tarlac

Zambales

Pampanga

Bulacan

Zambales

Bataan

Metro Manila

Rizal

Cavite

Laguna

Northern portion of Batangas (Talisay, City of Tanauan, Santo Tomas, Balete, Malvar, Lipa City)

Northern and central portion of Quezon (Pitogo, Calauag, Infanta, Lopez, Guinayangan, Unisan, Plaridel, Quezon, Alabat, Padre Burgos, Mauban, General Nakar, Perez, Agdangan, Gumaca, Atimonan, Real, Tagkawayan, Lucena City, Pagbilao, Lucban, Sampaloc, City of Tayabas, Dolores, Sariaya, Candelaria, Tiaong, San Antonio) including Polillo Islands

Camarines Norte

Northern portion of Camarines Sur (Siruma, Tinambac, Goa, Lagonoy, Caramoan, Cabusao, Sipocot, Garchitorena, Ragay, Del Gallego, Calabanga, Presentacion, Lupi)

Northern portion of Catanduanes (Pandan, Bagamanoc, Panganiban, Viga, Caramoran)  
Egay is also enhancing the southwest monsoon or habagat, which will continue to bring occasional to monsoon rains over the western portions of central Luzon, southern Luzon and Visayas in the next three days.

PAGASA warned of a high risk of storm surge which may cause flooding in low-lying and coastal areas in Batanes, Cagayan including Babuyan Islands, Isabela, Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur.

"Maximum surge heights may exceed 3.0 m in some of the warning areas," it added.

PAGASA said Egay, after passing the Babuyan Islands, will turn northwestward or north northwestward and pass over the waters south and southwest of Taiwan.

It is expected to exit the Philippine Area of Responsibility by Thursday morning.

## [Philippines orders evacuations ahead of super typhoon Egay](#)

A super typhoon swept towards the northern Philippines on Tuesday, the country's weather agency said, triggering evacuation orders for coastal communities expected to bear the brunt of the powerful storm.

Super typhoon Egay (international name: Doksuri) was packing maximum sustained winds of 185 kilometers per hour as it headed towards the northern tip of the main island of Luzon.

The storm was expected to make landfall or pass very close to the lightly populated Babuyan islands or northeastern Cagayan province by Wednesday, the agency said in its 11 a.m. bulletin.

It would then move towards Taiwan and southeastern China.

Coastal communities in northwestern and northeastern Cagayan province had been ordered to evacuate their homes in anticipation of storm surges reaching, or even exceeding, three meters.

Three of the five Babuyan islands are inhabited, with a population of around 20,000 people.

Local disaster official Charles Castillejos said people living near the shores of those islands had been ordered to go inland, while fishermen had been told to get their boats out of the water.

"We sent the police to convince the hard-headed ones who refuse to evacuate," Castillejos told AFP.

Science and technology secretary Renato Solidum said people needed to be prepared for the typhoon because "things happen fast".

"We need to remind our people the importance of readiness against storm surges, strong winds and also possible floods," Solidum told reporters.

Some farmers in the northern province of Isabela, bordering Cagayan, were seen leading their livestock to safety ahead of the storm.

"Those living on coastal areas have been moved to higher ground," Isabela provincial disaster officer Constante Foronda told local radio station DZBB.

"Our water search and rescue teams are now deployed in those areas most likely to be affected," Foronda said.

## FLOODING, LANDSLIDES 'HIGHLY LIKELY'

The Philippines is hit by an average of 20 major storms each year that kill hundreds of people and keep vast regions in perpetual poverty.

Scientists have warned that such storms, which also kill livestock and destroy key infrastructure, are becoming more powerful as the world gets warmer because of climate change.

Boats, including wooden outriggers and passenger ferries that provide transport between islands, have been ordered to shore in Luzon and central islands due to gale warnings, stranding more than 11,000 people, the Philippine Coast Guard said.

By midday Wednesday, the storm was expected to have dumped more than 200 millimeters (7.9 inches) of rain on the islands and the northern portion of Cagayan, including Babuyan islands, as well as Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur provinces.

Heavy rain was also expected across the mountainous northern provinces in the coming days, with flooding and landslides "highly likely", the weather agency said.

Cagayan provincial disaster officer Ruelie Rapsing told DZBB that emergency food packs had been stored in warehouses.

"The province has been on red alert status since Saturday and all evacuation centers, emergency operation centers of each town, and incident management teams are activated," he said.

"Cagayanons are used to this."



## AL JAZEERA

### [China, Philippines and Taiwan brace for Super Typhoon Doksuri](#)

China has urged fishing boats to seek shelter and farmers to speed up their harvest while Taiwan suspended annual military drills as powerful Typhoon Doksuri spiralled closer to East Asia, potentially reaching deep into China.

Doksuri, which has also been called a super typhoon, will likely be the most powerful to land in China so far in the storm season this year.

Currently packing top wind speeds of 223kmph (138mph), Doksuri will make landfall on the Chinese mainland somewhere between Fujian and Guangdong provinces on Friday, China's National Meteorological Information Centre said on Tuesday.

While Doksuri is expected to lose some power and land as either a typhoon or severe typhoon, it will still hammer densely populated Chinese cities with torrential rain and strong winds.

Fujian has ordered all offshore fishing boats to find refuge at the nearest port by Wednesday noon and told farmers to harvest their rice and other crops that have matured.

Concerned about autumn grain crops, China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs warned on Monday that Doksuri could go deep inland after landing, affecting high-stalk crops such as corn and even rice in rural areas.

'Things happen fast'

Nearly 1,000km (620 miles) in diameter, Doksuri is expected to sweep past lightly populated islands off the northern tip of the Philippines by midweek while fierce winds and heavy rain lash Taiwan to the north.

Philippine authorities have already raised storm warning levels in the capital region and dozens of northern provinces, and have begun evacuating some coastal communities in the path of the storm.

Dozens of domestic flights were cancelled, while sea travel has been suspended in affected regions, leaving more than 11,000 people stranded in ports, according to the coastguard.

Taiwan halts drills

On Tuesday, Taiwan cancelled some of its annual military drills for safety reasons as authorities stepped up preparations for what they say could be the most damaging typhoon to hit the island in nearly four years.

Taiwan's weather bureau issued sea and land warnings for southern Pingtung county and urged communities to brace for heavy rains and strong winds.

In the southern port city of Kaohsiung, authorities were rushing to collect hundreds of containers drifting in the sea after container ship Angel sank off Taiwan's southwestern coast last week.

"Taiwan has not seen any typhoon making landfall in more than 1,400 days, and that's why I urge all government ministries that they must gear up and make preparations," Premier Chen Chien-jen said in a post on Facebook.

"I'd like to remind citizens not to underestimate typhoon threats."

## BUSINESS WORLD

### [Scientists say climate change role in July heatwaves 'overwhelming'](#)

Human-induced climate change has played an “absolutely overwhelming” role in the extreme heatwaves that have swept across North America, Europe and China this month, according to an assessment by scientists published on Tuesday.

Throughout July, extreme weather has caused havoc across the planet, with temperatures breaking records in China, the United States and southern Europe, sparking forest fires, water shortages and a rise in heat-related hospital admissions.

Over the weekend, thousands of tourists were evacuated from the Greek island of Rhodes to escape wildfires caused by a record-breaking heatwave.

Without human-induced climate change, the events this month would have been “extremely rare”, according to a study by World Weather Attribution, a global team of scientists that examines the role played by climate change in extreme weather.

“European and North American temperatures would have been virtually impossible without the effects of climate change,” said Izidine Pinto of the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute, one of the study’s authors, during a briefing with journalists. “In China it was around 50 times more likely to happen compared to the past.”

The World Weather Attribution team estimated that rising greenhouse gas concentrations made the European heatwave 2.5 Celsius (4.5 Fahrenheit) hotter than it would otherwise have been. They also drove up the North American heatwave by 2°C and the one in China by 1°C.

As well as directly impacting human health, the heat has caused large-scale crop damage and livestock losses, the scientists said, with US corn and soybean crops, Mexican cattle, southern European olives as well as Chinese cotton all severely affected.

El Niño probably contributed to the additional heat in some regions, but rising greenhouse gases were the major factor, the scientists said, and heatwaves will become increasingly likely if emissions are not slashed.

They estimated that prolonged periods of extreme heat were likely to hit every two to five years if average global temperatures rise 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Average temperatures are currently estimated to have risen more than 1.1°C.

“The events we have looked at are not rare in today’s climate,” said Friederike Otto, a scientist with the Grantham Institute for Climate Change in London, speaking at the briefing. “It’s not surprising from a climatological point of view, that these events are happening at the same time.”

“As long as we keep burning fossil fuels we will see more and more of these extremes,” she said. “I don’t think there’s any stronger evidence that any science has ever presented for a scientific question.”

## **GMA NEWS**

### **[GMA Integrated News receives 'Pambansang Balita Award' for climate change special series](#)**

By: Carby Basina

GMA Integrated News won the Pambansang Balita Award at the Hiraya Awards 2023 for its remarkable climate change special series.

According to a report on "24 Oras," Tuesday, GMA Senior Vice President for Integrated News, Regional TV and Synergy Oliver B. Amoroso accepted the recognition.

"Climate change is more than just a headline, it's a calling close to our hearts. Let us be inspired by the urgency of this global crisis and be the catalyst for sustainable change," he said in his speech.

The special series on the threat of climate change aims to shed light on the impact of extreme weather conditions, deforestation, and the displacement of communities.

It will have a second part following the good feedback received by the special series.

The Hiraya Awards is presented by One Planet One Earth Foundation, Inc., a foundation that helps poor communities create a self-sufficient and helpful environment through life-changing programs.

## **MANILA BULLETIN**

### **[Mangroves and seagrasses: Mitigating climate change through blue carbon](#)**

By: Henrylito D. Tacio

Carbon dioxide is one of the Earth's most important greenhouse gases: a gas that absorbs and radiates heat. "Without carbon dioxide, Earth's natural greenhouse effect would be too weak to keep the average global surface temperature above freezing," wrote Rebecca Lindsey for the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website, [climate.gov](https://www.climate.gov).

But too much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is bad for Earth. "By adding more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, people are supercharging the natural greenhouse effect, causing global temperature to rise," Lindsey explained.

Carbon cycle experts estimate that natural "sinks" – processes that remove carbon from the atmosphere – on land and in the ocean absorbed the equivalent of about half of the

world's annual carbon dioxide the world emitted each year in the 2011-2020 decade, studies showed.

“Because we put more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than the natural sinks can remove, the total amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increases every year,” pointed out Lindsey.

## Blue carbon

In time, blue carbon came into existence. The Nobel-prize winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines blue carbon as “All biologically-driven carbon fluxes and storage in marine systems that are amenable to management.”

In other words, “Blue carbon is the carbon captured/sequestered, stored and stabilized by plants that grow near the coasts,” explained Russell Christine B. Corcino, a Research Assistant of the Institute of Biology, College of Science at the University of the Philippines-Diliman.

Imagine this: human beings exhale carbon dioxide and this exhaled carbon is being “inhaled” by plants. “Once inhaled, they use the carbon to make food and plant parts (leaves, stems, etc.), thus storing the carbon in their plant parts,” Corcino said. “They can also store it in the soil once they die or when plant parts fall off and get buried in the soil. The soil stores higher carbon than the plant parts.”

## Carbon sequestration

Seagrass meadows and mangrove forests have natural capacity to sequester and store enormous amounts of carbon in their ecosystems.

“As carbon sinks, they are a cheap and readily available natural resource useful in mitigating the negative impacts of climate change,” said the late Dr. Miguel D. Fortes, a marine scientist and author of several books and technical articles in refereed journals. Mangroves and seagrasses can store or capture more than twice – or even four to five times than those forests growing in the uplands. They largely contribute to “our goal of decreasing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.” In simpler terms, they can be used to adapt or mitigate against the impacts of climate change.

“Mangroves and seagrasses are also natural nurseries for juvenile fishes and other commercially-important marine species (examples: milkfish, crabs, shrimps),” said Corcino. “Their ability to decrease wave impacts are also recognized. Studies showed that in Visayas, coastal villages with sufficient mangrove areas suffered lesser casualties and damages from typhoon Yolanda than those with low mangrove cover.”

These ecosystem services are touted as “nature-based solutions” since they can perform these sustainable services free of charge for human beings. In fact, blue carbon ecosystems have become integral for climate change adaptation and mitigation programs.

### Extremely effective

Recent studies conducted by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) found that, when mangrove forests, saltwater marshes and seagrass meadows are preserved, they are “extremely effective” at storing carbon.

In 2009, the concept of blue carbon was introduced to draw attention to the degradation of marine and coastal ecosystems and the need to conserve and restore them to mitigate the impacts of climate change and to recover for the other ecosystem services they provide.

Just recently, five Filipino scientists have come up with a study, entitled, “Status, limitations, and challenges of blue carbon studies in the Philippines: A bibliographic analysis.”

Corcino is the lead author of the study. The other four were Maria Elisa B. Gerona-Daga, Shaina C. Samoza, John Kenneth R. Fraga, and Severino G. Salmo III. The study was funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) through the Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development (PCIEERD) and partly-funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) program.

### Philippine experience

“Mangrove and seagrass ecosystems (in the Philippines) have been studied since the 1970s but only recently on its carbon storage capacity,” they wrote.

“From our study, we computed that the amount of carbon stored in the country’s existing mangroves and seagrasses alone is around 80,000 times more than our carbon reduction commitments to the United Nations,” Corcino explained in an exclusive interview.

They found out that the carbon storage rate of Philippine mangroves is at 400 Megagram per hectare (Mg/ha), while that of seagrasses is at 80 Mg/ha. “This rate is

around half of the average global carbon storage rate,” she said, but added that the estimates were based on very few data points.

In their study, the estimates came from three collected data for seagrass and less than 30 for mangroves. “(This is) not quite representative for an archipelagic country like the Philippines,” Corcino said. “If we can increase our data on blue carbon storage, then probably the carbon stock values can increase and might even exceed that of other Southeast Asian countries.”

### Mangroves versus seagrasses

On why more estimates were from mangroves and less for seagrasses, she explained, “This is actually surprising and sad at the same time since around the 1990s, seagrass studies exceeded those in mangroves. It was only around the late 2000s, from 2009 onwards, when mangrove studies increased gradually.”

Since there were no studies at hand, the researchers could only surmise the factors contributing to this difference. “These include the lack of experts, the difficulties in the logistics of studying seagrass as compared to mangroves, and the difference in appreciation and prioritization.”

According to Corcino, mangroves are explicitly mentioned in the list of protected areas declared by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) or even in policies. There is even a national law in the Philippines explicitly restricting the cutting or harvesting of mangroves.

“This gives mangrove-related projects higher chances of approval since they are a priority by law,” Corcino argued. “On the other hand, seagrasses do not have this edge. Protection for seagrasses are usually just ‘by-products’ or ‘side-targets’ of protecting other ecosystems like coral reefs or mangrove forests.”

Another possible reason why seagrasses were left in most recent studies is the difficulty in studying them. “Conducting surveys in seagrasses is also challenging given its underwater nature,” she said. “There is the need to learn to dive and retrieve waterproof or underwater equipment. These are usually more expensive than just walking in the forest. Even remote sensing techniques for seagrasses are still being developed to account for their underwater nature.

Most of all, perceptions and awareness also mattered. Most Filipinos look at mangroves as forests, which are easily connected to other forest types, as areas that give shade and protection. Since they are decreasing like most of our forests, they must be protected.



But such is not the case of seagrasses. “They are seen as ‘grasses’ and what is the usual mindset when people encounter grasses?” Corcino said. “They are seen as weeds that must be cut or trimmed. I believe, if we can change these views, we could improve appreciation and thus initiatives for seagrasses.”

### Vanishing mangroves and seagrasses

Nevertheless, both mangroves and seagrasses are suffering the same fate. “They are at great risk of being lost and if the trend continues at current rates, a further 30-40% of seagrasses and nearly all unprotected mangroves could be lost in the next 100 years,” deplored Dr. Fortes, the first Filipino to receive the prestigious International Biwako Prize for Ecology.

Now, if these mangroves and seagrasses disappear, “their carbon sink capacity is lost or adversely affected, and the carbon stored is released, resulting in emissions of carbon dioxide that contribute to climate change,” the IUCN warned.

That warning must be heeded. “Mangroves and seagrasses still continue to experience damages or clearing from natural disturbances and human activities,” Corcino said.

On the brighter side, however, there are local sites that are effectively managed, according to Corcino. “There are also more programs and projects nowadays that push for mangrove and seagrass conservation and restoration,” she said. “We still hope that, someday, conservation and development would find a middle ground and achieve true sustainability.”

Now, going back to blue carbon. Corcino stressed that their study emphasized the huge potential of mangroves and seagrasses “Our study emphasizes the huge potential of mangroves and seagrasses in reducing the carbon released to our atmosphere,” she stressed.

“Because of this, they are also large carbon reservoirs. The carbon remains stored as long as these ecosystems are intact. But if they are destroyed, their carbon gets released to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide. This further strengthens the need to conserve them.”

### Recommendations

In their study, the researchers provided several recommendations on how to better conserve blue carbon in the country. “In addition, our study identified the gaps that must be addressed for more optimized research, conservation, and restoration of blue carbon ecosystems.

Corcino enumerated some of these: “These include the urgent need to assess and monitor our blue carbon ecosystems especially seagrass meadows; translation of existing information into policy and ‘laymanized’ knowledge; and utilizing networks to further expand assessment and conservation works to other sites.”

In their study, the researchers also provided some recommendations. “Our project has proposed and advocated three major steps for this: Connect, Protect, and Mitigate. Connecting would be the most important, since without the cooperation of stakeholders and involved agencies, it would be impossible to sustain the ‘Protect’ (that is, blue carbon research and conservation) and ‘Mitigate’ (that is, climate change mitigation) part.”

Blue carbon is recognized by most experts as a major solution for climate change mitigation. Although it is already widely accepted in most countries, it is still an emerging concept in the Philippines.

The good news is: Studies on blue carbon in the country are increasing steadily, although more work still needs to be done especially on seagrasses.

“Currently, almost 80% of blue carbon studies in the Philippines are foreign-funded, ergo, it lacks local funding support,” Corcino said. “We encourage everyone, whether members of the academe, government, institutions, up to the laymen, to do their part in our fight against climate change.

“This could be by studying mangroves and seagrasses, participating in activities for their monitoring, conservation and protection, spreading awareness on blue carbon, or supporting these actions with the necessary resources like funding, equipment, or manpower,” Corcino said.

## Statistics

“Mangroves in the Philippines have long been ‘ecologically disturbed’ by rampant cutting for timber products and massive conversion of forests into aquaculture ponds,” read the introduction and overview of the “State of the Mangrove Summit” some years back.

Almost half of the country’s remaining mangroves were lost over the past years: from 500,000 in 1918 to 240,824 in 2010, according to Dr. Severino Salmo III, an associate professor at the University of the Philippines Diliman Institute of Biology.

Meanwhile, the Philippines has the second highest number of seagrass species in the world. It is home to 16 of the world's 50 seagrasses; only Western Australia has more – with 17 species.

Dr. Fortes, who had spent most of his life in the study of various blue carbon ecosystems, said all 16 seagrass species are widely distributed from Bolinao Bay in the north, Palawan and the Cebu-Bohol-Siquijor area at the center, and Zamboanga and Davao in the south. Seagrass beds cover an estimated area of about five million hectares.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### PBBM wants 'more adaptable, agile' disaster response teams

By: Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Monday said his administration is reorganizing a "more adaptable, agile and effective" response teams to ensure the disaster preparedness of the Philippines, the most typhoon-prone country in the world.

During his second State of the Nation Address (SONA) delivered at the Batasang Pambansa Complex in Quezon City, Marcos said the government continues to be "alert and prepared" to mitigate the potential impact of disasters.

He stressed that the country has learned "many painful" lessons from the catastrophic weather disturbances induced by climate change.

"It has, in fact, been commented that sometimes we are over-prepared for such natural disasters. To continue that, we are reorganizing our response teams to make them more adaptable, agile and effective in times of calamities and crises, with a clear unity of command," Marcos said.

"Climate change is now an important criterion in our integral national policies, in planning, decision-making, up to the implementation of programs. The potential advantages of such enlightened policies extend to jobs and livelihood, with the unlocking of the development of the green and blue economies," he added.

On April 30, Marcos signed Executive Order (EO) 24, creating the Disaster Response and Crisis Management Task Force to ensure a "clear unity of command to lead the government's efforts in confronting challenges brought about by natural disasters through evidence-driven and science-based approach in crisis management."

Under EO 24, the task force is tasked to lead the integrated disaster preparedness and response efforts of the national government and ensure the prompt delivery of accessible and coordinated assistance programs to the affected communities

Marcos also ensured that evacuation centers nationwide are being upgraded "to withstand the greater forces of the new normal of extreme weather, as well as other natural and man-made disasters."

He noted that to date, about 55 new evacuation centers have been built.

“The building blocks of progressive, livable and sustainable communities will never be complete without appropriate and responsible action to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. We can never lose sight of our responsibility to the future,” Marcos said.

Marcos said his administration’s economic agenda “cannot and will not ever be incompatible with our climate change agenda.”

He said the government remains committed to global decarbonization goals, and the reduction of carbon footprint.

“We preserve and protect the treasure that is our forests. Their value to the environment, the ecology, and the economy is incalculable,” Marcos said, adding that the country has adopted the “circular economy” concept using nature as its model.

“The aim is to keep raw materials in a closed loop. In our world with scarce resources, the circular economy allows us to fully use these resources, minimize waste and reduce the need for new resources -- as it is in nature,” he added.

Marcos hoped for the participation of “all sectors of society” to make the climate action laid out by his administration a success.

The Philippines has allocated USD8.2 billion, or 9 percent of its total national budget, for climate change adaptation and mitigation programs this year.

## RAPPLER

### [Marcos says gov't 'aggressively' promoting renewable energy](#)

By: Iya Gozum

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said on Monday, July 24, that the government is taking a more aggressive stance to increase renewable energy in the country, awarding more than a hundred renewable energy contracts in the past year.

“Renewable energy is the way forward,” Marcos said during his second State of the Nation Address (SONA).

“Since last year, an additional 126 renewable energy contracts with potential capacity of 31,000 megawatts have been awarded,” he added.

Currently, renewable energy contributes 29% to the country’s energy mix with a capacity to produce 8,150 megawatts of electricity, according to a 2022 report released by the Department of Energy (DOE).

The government is gunning to increase installed capacity to at least 20,000 megawatts of electricity coming from renewables by 2040. The Philippines has less than two decades to catch up.

Marcos echoed the goals stated in the government’s National Renewable Energy Program. “We are aggressively promoting renewables, so that it provides a 35% share in the power mix by 2030, and then on to 50% by 2040.”

Power generation efforts were also amplified as Marcos cited his administration’s goal to reach total electrification. He reported that half a million homes got access to electricity since his assumption to office.

“We will spare no effort to achieve full household-electrification by the end of my term. 100% is within our reach,” Marcos said.

To attain the country’s renewable energy targets, Marcos said they have opened up these projects to foreign investments. Late last year, the Philippine government allowed 100% foreign ownership of renewable energy projects in the country.

On November 15, 2022, the DOE issued Circular No. 2022-11-0034 permitting the State to enter into contracts with foreign citizens, foreign-owned corporations to help lower costs of renewable energy projects and make “cleaner energy more accessible to the public.”

Previously, the law reserved the exploration, development, and utilization of renewable energy sources to companies that are at least 60% Filipino-owned. Prior to the DOE circular, foreign investors were only allowed to own up to 40% equity in these projects.

Here are the numbers of active renewable energy projects:

- Solar: 299
- Wind: 187
- Hydroelectric: 436
- Biomass: 58
- Geothermal: 36
- Ocean-powered: 9

Lacking ambition?

While Marcos described the government's efforts to transition to renewable energy, some groups said it was "unambitious."

Environmental coalition Power for the People said energy transition is "a path that requires speed and scale to meet climate and energy security goals."

"50% by 2040 is also too long to wait for consumers to have reasonably priced electricity, free from dependence on foreign fossil fuel sources," said Gerry Arances, convener of Power for People Coalition, on Monday. "50% by 2040 is too little, too late."

The World Meteorological Organization has warned that the world may breach 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming even before 2030.

When this happens, the world would experience what it's like when it permanently crosses the global temperature threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius set in the 2015 Paris Agreement.

More gas exploration

Marcos said the government is also pushing "for more gas exploration in other parts of the country."

He noted the recent agreement signed with the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, opening up the resource-rich region to natural gas exploration.

But this runs counter to the promise of accelerating renewable energy in the country, environmental group Greenpeace Philippines said in a statement on Monday.

Khevin Yu, Greenpeace's energy transition campaigner, said there's no way forward to clean energy transition "so long as the government pursues the expansion of new fossil gas projects in Mindanao, and remains silent on phasing out coal, while promoting legislation for nuclear energy that will further divert attention and resources from renewable energy."



## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### Groups hit Marcos' 'lack of ambition' in clean energy transition

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Clean energy campaigners criticized the lack of ambitious targets for renewable energy and the absence of just energy transition in the second State of the Nation Address of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.

In a speech delivered before Congress Monday, Marcos said that renewable energy is “the way forward.”

“We are aggressively promoting renewables, so that it provides a 35 percent share in the power mix by 2030, and then on to 50 percent by 2040. To accelerate the realization of this green energy goal, we have opened renewable energy projects to foreign investments,” Marcos said.

Power for People Coalition, however, said these targets are insufficient to drive a meaningful and rapid transition to clean energy.

“Fifty percent by 2040 is too late to prevent catastrophic climate change, as science has already told us. Fifty percent by 2040 is also too long to wait for consumers to have reasonably priced electricity, free from dependence on foreign fossil fuel sources. Fifty percent by 2040 is too little, too late,” said Gerry Arances, convenor of Power for People Coalition.

“We remind the president that it is a path that requires speed and scale to meet climate and energy security goals,” he added.

In 2020, only 21% of the country’s generated power came from renewables such as solar, wind, hydropower, and geothermal.

The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change earlier said that there must be “rapid and far-reaching transitions” across all sectors and systems in order to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all.

Greenpeace campaigner Khevin Yu also said that a just energy transition was not given any significance in this year’s SONA. The concept of just energy transition recognizes that shifts to cleaner and more sustainable energy sources should also address the social, economic and environmental impacts on workers and communities.

“A just energy transition should be the government’s main agenda for the energy industry right now,” Yu said.

#### Gas exploration

In his second SONA, Marcos also mentioned the extension of the Malampaya deep water gas-to-power project in Palawan and the push for gas explorations in other parts of the country.

He said the government has partnered with the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao on energy exploration, development and utilization.

“Fossil gas, like coal, is not clean and sustainable. It is a costly fuel, its prices are volatile, and it is not seen to lower electricity rates in the Philippines,” The Climate Reality Project Philippines said. “Instead of gas exploration, investments should be channeled to renewable energy projects.”

Marcos also did not mention nuclear development in his speech. The Department of Energy, however, said last week that it was considering a target of 2,400 megawatts in nuclear power capacity by 2035.

Groups such as the Center for Energy, Ecology and Development warn that nuclear energy will not only pose dangers to host communities, but also block genuine transition to renewable energy.

“We take his omission of questionable energy sources, like LNG and nuclear, with a grain of salt,” said Avril de Torres, deputy executive director of CEED.

“While they were not mentioned, we are aware that LNG and nuclear are being put forward at the policy level, investments are being welcomed, and diplomatic relationships are being built by the administration based on shared interests of promoting these technologies,” she added.

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