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By: Anna Felcia Bajo

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. acknowledged the business sector's role in society on Friday.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By: Jun A. Malig

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THE MANILA TIMES

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By: Mary Ann LL. Reyes

If you still don't believe that climate change is real, then look around you. In the past weeks, the country has been battered by strong winds and waves caused by tropical storms. At a time when the Philippines is supposed to be experiencing the El Niño phenomenon, we are getting too much rain.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

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[CCC, PRC Boost Alliance For Climate Resilience, Disaster Response](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) have signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to further strengthen collaborative efforts in building climate resilience and enhancing disaster response throughout the country.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[Gov't unveils comprehensive disaster resilience and relief initiatives](#)

By: Alice Sicat

In a comprehensive presentation during the POST-SONA briefing on Wednesday (July 26) Cabinet Secretaries from the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and Department of National Defense (DND) highlighted their respective agencies' initiatives and collaborations aimed at enhancing disaster resilience and response in the Philippines, emphasizing right coordination.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[CCC committed to pursue PBBM's vision for climate resilient PH](#)

The Climate Change Commission PH (CCC) lauded President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s second State of the Nation Address (SONA) emphasizing the critical importance of climate action in building a sustainable economic agenda for the Philippines.

RELIEF WEB

[PRC, CCC join forces to intensify country's climate change adaptation and mitigation programs](#)

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) and the Climate Change Commission today signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to advance public awareness, advocacy campaigns, and programs on climate change adaptation and mitigation at the local level.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Climate change body vows stronger policies](#)

By: Jenica Faye Garcia

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) has committed to further strengthening the country's climate-change action policies in keeping with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s second State of the Nation Address (SONA) that emphasized the critical importance of such policies in building a sustainable economic agenda.

INTERAKSYON

[As jobs law stalls, Philippines struggles to green economy](#)

By: Mariejo Ramos via Thomson Reuters Foundation

Eight years ago, the Philippine government built an ultra-modern Green Technology Center in the city of Taguig to spearhead a national drive for jobs to help combat climate change and protect the environment.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

Falcon intensifies into typhoon as it remains over Philippine Sea

Weather disturbance Falcon (international name: Khanun) intensified further and is now in the typhoon category, the state weather bureau said late Sunday.

In its 11 p.m. weather bulletin, PAGASA said Falcon was last located 1,090 kilometers east of extreme northern Luzon, packing maximum sustained winds of up to 140 kilometers per hour near the center, with gusts of up to 170 kph.

It is currently moving north northwestward at 15 kph, and is expected to leave the Philippine area of responsibility between Monday night to Tuesday morning.

No tropical cyclone wind signals have been raised, but PAGASA said Falcon continues to enhance the southwest monsoon or habagat, which will bring occasional to monsoon rains over the western portions of Luzon and Visayas in the next three days.

PAGASA also warned of flooding and rain-induced landslides in flood and landslide prone areas.

"Forecast rainfall are generally higher in elevated or mountainous areas. Under these conditions, flooding and rain-induced landslides are expected especially in areas that are highly or very highly susceptible to these hazard as identified in hazard maps and in localities that experienced considerable amounts of rainfall for the past several days," it said

The Falcon-enhanced habagat is also expected to bring gusty conditions over Zambales, Bataan, Cavite, Lubang Island, Kalayaan Islands, Cuyo Islands, Romblon, the northwestern portion of Antique, Camarines Sur, and Albay.

A gale warning remained hoisted over several coastal waters in the western seaboard of Luzon, due to the enhanced habagat.

"Sea travel is risky for small seacrafts. For larger vessels, operating in gale conditions requires experience and properly equipped vessels," PAGASA warned.

Falcon is expected to continue moving north northwestward, before turning north westward on Monday. It is also expected to steadily intensify within the next three days, and may reach peak intensity on Wednesday while over the East China Sea.

PAGASA earlier said Luzon, including Metro Manila, will still be rainy for most of the week, with conditions improving towards the weekend.

Visayas and Mindanao, on the other hand, will be mostly sunny and warm with chances of localized thunderstorm in the afternoon or evening.

The western Ilocos region, Tarlac, Zambales, Bataan, Pampanga, Bulacan, Cavite, western Batangas, Occidental Mindoro, and northern Palawan may also experience monsoon rains until Thursday.

[Marcos: Gov't, businesses must work together to address climate change, energy woes](#)

By: Job Manahan

President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. on Friday urged businesses and the private sector to work with the government to address energy insecurity and climate change.

During his speech at the Third APEC Business Advisory Council Meeting (ABAC 3) in Cebu City, Marcos recognized the business sector as the "most aggressive agent of change in our society."

Government and the private sector can work towards sustainable growth and climate action, the President said.

"The government and business sector must come together to identify practical, pragmatic, and promising solutions to sustainably address pressing issues like energy insecurity, the triple threat of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss," Marcos said.

"Striking a balance between being prescriptive and affording especially developing economies with policy space, we can pursue innovative technologies and approaches; for example, in the exploration of nuclear energy and small modular reactors as viable options for low or zero carbon energy sources," he added.

"Like how much of economic growth comes from the business sector, should economies wish to drive economic reforms and structural policy shifts, much of the momentum will also come from the same sector."

Marcos said shared investment could "alleviate the financing burden of governments" while tapping businesses' expertise in the field of planning, operations and execution.

For example, he said government would need the support of businesses to ensure that the shift to renewables would be successful.

"In designing the green transition of our transportation sector through the use of sustainable and clean fuels, building of green corridors, and modernizing our public transportation, we need to analyze fleet capacity and travel time, fuel consumption, and other data to enable us to make informed decisions on projects," he said.

"We need not only the cooperation but the leadership of the business sector in setting up standards on responsible business conduct that will encourage sustainable practices while balancing rapid growth, not a simple job to do," he added.

The Philippine leader also touted government's efforts to digitalize and to usher in more investment.

These include the creation of green lanes for strategic investments, enforcement of e-Commerce, e-Governance, and certifying as urgent the Public-Private Partnership Act, he said.

He also noted the Philippines is finally a member of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which aims to cut up to 90 percent of tariffs on imported goods for member countries.

"Our multilateral efforts also serve to enable the inclusive development of our sectors with untapped economic potential," he said.

"Micro, small, and medium enterprises, MSMEs, make up the majority of our businesses and sources of employment. Thus, it behooves us to equip them with digital tools and skills to enable their participation in the digital economy."

Marcos established his Private Sector Advisory Council (PSAC) last year "to provide feedback on what is happening on the ground and will make recommendations on modern policy development."

The 5 areas that PSAC pledged "to help the government deliver" include:

- robust infrastructure program
- job creation
- digitalization
- improving agricultural productivity through the recalibration of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)
- ensuring an equitable, sustainable, and inclusive business landscape for Filipinos

Marcos last year said the Philippines ranked 89th out of 103 countries in the United Nations' E-Government Survey. He said it was important for government to digitalize transactions nationwide to improve public services.

ARAB NEWS

[UN chief warns Earth in 'era of global boiling'](#)

UNITED NATIONS, United States: UN chief Antonio Guterres on Thursday pleaded for immediate radical action on climate change, saying that record-shattering July temperatures show Earth has passed from a warming phase into an “era of global boiling.”

Speaking in New York, the secretary-general described the intense heat across the Northern Hemisphere as a “cruel summer.”

“For the entire planet, it is a disaster,” he said, noting that “short of a mini-Ice Age over the next days, July 2023 will shatter records across the board.”

“Climate change is here. It is terrifying. And it is just the beginning. The era of global warming has ended; the era of global boiling has arrived.”

The extreme impacts of climate change have been in line with scientists’ “predictions and repeated warnings,” Guterres said, adding that the “only surprise is the speed of the change.”

In the face of “tragic” consequences, he repeated his call for swift and far-reaching action, taking aim once again at the fossil fuel sector.

“The air is unbreathable. The heat is unbearable. And the level of fossil fuel profits and climate inaction is unacceptable,” said the former Portuguese prime minister.

“Leaders must lead,” he said. “No more hesitancy. No more excuses. No more waiting for others to move first.”

Ahead of the Climate Ambition Summit he is set to host in September, Guterres called on developed countries to commit to achieving carbon neutrality as close to 2040 as possible, and for emerging economies as close as possible to 2050.

The “destruction” unleashed by humanity “must not inspire despair, but action,” he said, warning that to prevent the worst outcomes humanity “must turn a year of burning heat into a year of burning ambition.”

BUSINESS MIRROR

[PHL must address pricing issues in climate insurance–Unescap](#)

By: Cai Ordinario

AS the Philippines continue to address climate change through climate insurance, government-mandated minimum insurance premiums remain low while prices remain high, according to a United Nations agency.

These are some of the issues that the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Unescap) noted in a report that also noted the growing risk insurance market in the Philippines, which is supported by the government as well.

The Unescap said this market provides an opportunity for stakeholders to try different risk-pooling instruments. It is estimated that 95 percent of all industrial property policies in the Philippines include coverage for natural catastrophes.

“The challenge, however, is that government-mandated minimum insurance premiums can be priced as low as 0.05 percent of asset value for flood and typhoon coverage. This makes the market very competitive as the premium prices are set at the bare minimum,” the Unescap said.

“For ecosystem approaches to risk management, as for mangrove conservation, the estimates of benefits are not precisely known. They are, therefore, not incorporated into market prices of premiums. The premium prices, therefore, tend to be high,” it added.

The Unescap said climate change-induced disasters pose serious threats to the Asia-Pacific region, including the Philippines. The country that wrestled with the tempest from Egay (international name: Doksuri) is considered as one of the nations most vulnerable to these disasters.

The UN agency said these threats must be met with transformative adaptation measures that enable vulnerable households to protect their assets and livelihoods in hazard risk hotspots. A regional strategy to achieve early warning for all is expected by 2027.

The proposed regional strategy builds on the global “Executive Action Plan on Early Warnings for All (2023–2027). Launched by the UN Secretary General last year, this plan aims to foster transboundary synergies between countries in Asia and the Pacific, the world’s most disaster-prone region.

Meanwhile, the Unescap said disasters like earthquakes also caused significant damage, with losses estimated at \$12 billion, occurring primarily in Japan, China, Philippines, and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Philippines is one of the countries expected to suffer significantly due to climate change. A 1.5-degree increase in global temperatures could lead to a reduction of over 5 percent of gross domestic product in the archipelago.

“As temperatures continue to rise, new disaster hotspots are emerging, and existing ones are intensifying,” UN Undersecretary-General and Unescap Executive Secretary Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana said. “A disaster emergency is underway, and we must fundamentally transform our approach to building resilience.”

Increased investments in multi-hazard early warning systems as well as expanding coverage, particularly in least developed countries, is essential in reducing fatalities. Early warning systems can also decrease disaster losses by up to 60 percent, offering a remarkable tenfold return on investment.

Climate change-induced disasters pose an increasingly serious threat to the Asia-Pacific region and climate disaster-related losses are already enormous. In 2022 alone, over 140 disasters struck the region, leading to over 7,500 deaths, affecting over 64 million people and causing economic damage estimated at \$57 billion.

However, the consequences of inaction are greater. The Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2023 projects disaster-related deaths and economic impacts to amount to annual losses nearing \$1 trillion or three percent of regional GDP under a scenario of 2-degrees-Celsius warming.

The report further shows that the most vulnerable subregions, such as the Pacific small island developing States, will experience heightened inequality and devastation in the agriculture and energy sectors, compromising food and energy security.

GMA

Marcos cites business sector's role as 'agent of change' in society

By: Anna Felcia Bajo

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. acknowledged the business sector's role in society on Friday.

"The business sector, as not only a major contributor to the economy but also the most aggressive agent of change in our society today, has a role to play," the President said in his speech at the 3rd APEC Business Advisory Council meeting in Cebu City.

Marcos said the government and the business sector should come together to identify practical, pragmatic, and promising solutions in order "to sustainably address pressing issues like energy insecurity, the triple threat of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss."

He said the government needs both the cooperation and leadership of the business sector in order to set standards when it comes to responsible business conduct that would later encourage sustainable practices while balancing rapid growth.

Marcos also mentioned the partnership between public and private entities to strengthen and help small businesses in the country, which will also contribute to the country's growth.

"Our multilateral efforts also served to enable the inclusive development of our sectors with untapped economic potential. Micro, small, and medium enterprises make up the majority of our businesses and sources of employment," the President said.

"Thus, it behooves us to equip them with digital tools and skills to enable their participation in the digital economy," he added.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

3 Pampanga towns declare state of calamity due to flood

By: Jun A. Malig

Three towns in Pampanga have declared a state of calamity due to floods caused by Typhoon Egay (international name: Doksuri) and persistent southwest monsoon rains.

On Sunday, July 30, the Sangguinang Pambayan (municipal council) of Sto. Tomas passed a resolution placing the town under a state of calamity. It was approved by Acting Mayor Matias Pineda.

In the resolution, the municipal officials said 2,587 families or 9,339 residents in seven villages of Sto. Tomas have been affected by floods, and some P7.25 million worth of agriculture and fishery products were damaged in the town.

On Saturday, July 29, the municipal councils of Macabebe and San Simon towns passed resolutions declaring their respective towns under a state of calamity.

Macabebe officials cited the P119.3 million worth of damages to the town's agri-fisheries sector and the 24,561 families or 79,200 individuals affected by floods. They said 612 persons were brought to evacuation facilities.

The resolution was passed and approved by San Simon officials, citing the floodings in the town's 14 villages that affected "almost all of the families" who are clamoring for government assistance.

In his social media post late afternoon on Sunday, Pampanga Governor Dennis Pineda said the local governments of Macabebe, San Simon, and Sto. Tomas can now use their respective 30 percent quick reaction funds to aid the families and individuals affected by floods.

Egay poured rains over Luzon since last Monday before it made landfall over Aparri, Cagayan on Wednesday. It left the country on Thursday but enhanced the effects of the southwest monsoon which brought more rains on Friday and Saturday in north Luzon areas.

Fossil fuel phaseout can no longer be delayed

By: Lidy Nacpil -

Climate change is wreaking havoc on the planet. Millions of people across Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe, and North America are now suffering from a spate of heat waves caused by record-high temperatures.

This extreme heat wave is predicted to continue, leading to more wildfires and other catastrophic consequences. Meanwhile, record monsoon rainfall has also been inundating parts of India, Japan, China, and South Korea causing flash floods, landslides, and power cuts that leave hundreds dead and thousands homeless.

As the climate crisis takes hold, it is clear that there is no place on earth that is safe from the impacts of climate change. Despite this, there is tragically a lack of resolve and urgent action to stop the burning of fossil fuels and swiftly make a just transition toward clean, renewable energy.

The amount of carbon emissions in the atmosphere due to the excessive and widespread use of coal, oil, and gas has risen by over 50 percent since the Industrial Revolution, and is still rapidly growing.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says we have a very small window of time to stop the worst consequences of climate change. Doing so requires the following: 1) ending the expansion of fossil fuel extraction and production; 2) slashing carbon pollution and fossil fuel use by at least two-thirds by 2035; 3) completely stopping the use of coal, oil, and gas before 2040 in rich countries and by mid-century for the rest of the world; 4) rapidly developing 100 percent renewable energy systems to supplant fossil fuel use and address energy poverty; and 5) fully delivering on the promise of rich countries to fulfill their climate finance obligations for a swift and successful energy transition in developing countries.

These demands are echoed in the recent impassioned plea of United Nations Secretary General António Guterres, who called for the phaseout of fossil fuels to avoid a climate catastrophe, and massively boost investment in renewable energy. Yet the fossil fuel industry and its enablers are laying the groundwork for expanding fossil fuel production.

Last month, Norway's government gave oil companies the green light to develop 19 oil and gas fields, saying its oil and gas resources are essential to Europe's energy security and will be needed for decades to come. Governments in Asia and fossil fuel companies sing the same tune in pushing for the expansion of gas in the region as a transition fuel from coal.

Meanwhile, the biggest oil companies have most recently walked back on their pledges, saying that gas and oil projects must continue to ensure “security of supply and an orderly energy transition.” These are deceptive and false claims. Oil and gas influence at crucial climate negotiations has been undermining efforts to forge bold commitments to lower emissions and phase out fossil fuels.

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Last July 13, the president of COP28 climate summit, due to take place in November in Dubai, said that his plan of action for the summit would include the "phasedown of fossil fuels." A phasedown implies the use of carbon capture and storage (CCS) to reduce emissions to zero by 2050. This means fossil fuels would still be part of the energy mix, but the application of CCS on a massive scale will capture carbon emissions before they enter the atmosphere and are pumped underground.

Sounds awesome except that CCS, as a technology for emissions reduction, remains unproven. Existing CCS plants have captured about 0.1 percent of the annual global emissions from fossil fuels; 81 percent of the carbon captured have been pumped into the ground to force more oil out. It is apparent that the push for CCS is a scam to legitimize continued fossil fuel production.

The goal of COP28 should be an agreement to phaseout fossil fuels, which means the progressive reduction in the use and production of fossil fuels to real zero by 2050.

According to the International Energy Agency, energy security concerns and the price spikes on imported fossil fuels have motivated countries to increasingly turn to renewables such as solar and wind, so much so that renewables are set to account for over 90 percent of global electricity expansion over the next five years.

Direct transition from coal to renewable energy can and should be done. The expansion of renewable energy systems can and should be pursued at a pace and scale that will address energy security and access, and ensure a swift, equitable, and just phaseout of fossil fuels. The phaseout can no longer be delayed. Humanity is racing against time to survive global warming.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Multisectoral consortium seeks carbon neutrality by 2050

By: Mary Judaline Partlow

Some 20 private sector members of the Net Zero Carbon Alliance (NZCA) on Friday vowed to work together to attain carbon neutrality by 2050 by using a portal that will track the performance of each partner based on their carbon emissions and to fight the growing climate change threat.

“Today, we took our partners a step closer to their carbon neutrality by discussing how we can all avoid greenwashing by learning the difference and requirements on being carbon neutral and going net zero,” Frances Ariola, concurrent lead convenor of NZCA told the Philippine News Agency (PNA).

“In the meeting today, we worked on the collective accomplishments by the partners. To be able to do that, we have a tracker or portal to track the performance of each partner based on their carbon emission and we are learning how to compute our carbon footprint through the carbon calculator that we have exclusive for NZCA partners only,” Ariola said.

The portal is a platform to compute the group members' carbon footprint or the total amount of greenhouse gases generated by their actions and to track their progress to reduce their emissions based on the NZCA framework.

It is difficult to quantify each partner's accomplishments to reduce carbon emissions because of the different strategies being adopted, such as mangrove planting and the use of or shift to renewable energy, she added.

The NCZA is a pioneering multisectoral consortium seeking to achieve collective carbon neutrality beginning in the Philippine private sector, Ariola, concurrent Corporate Communications head of renewable energy leader, Energy Development Corporation (EDC), earlier said in a statement.

NZCA was conceived and established in 2021 by geothermal energy producer EDC to encourage and support as many Philippine enterprises as possible to commit to attaining net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or carbon neutrality by 2050, she added.

NZCA assemblies are held every quarter for its partners to discuss best practices related to each component of the NZCA framework for carbon neutrality that centers on

reducing carbon emissions and offsetting residual carbon emissions that can no longer be removed.

Silliman University, one of its pioneer partners, boasts of its best practices in sustainability and decarbonization, such as being the leading sustainable university that is 100 percent powered by renewable energy, Ariola said.

THE MANILA TIMES

Climate-vulnerable LGUs get support from PDRF

By: Arlie O. Calalo

THE Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) has expressed gratitude to the Australian government following its P55-million grant to the PDRF for the implementation of the Resilient Emergency Communications for Enhanced Disaster Response (Reached) project.

In particular, the PDRF said the beneficiaries of the project are the climate-vulnerable local government units of Butuan in Agusan del Norte, Virac in Catanduanes and Borongan in Samar.

At the same time, the PDRF led on Saturday an operational briefing for the private sector on the effects of Typhoon "Egay" (international name: Doksuri).

In its briefing, the PDRF reported widespread flooding in the regions of Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan), Central Luzon and Ilocos.

Landslides have also been reported in the Cordillera Administrative Region, it said.

PDRF member companies Manila Water Co. and Maynilad Water Services have been monitoring dams and rivers, while McDonald's Kindness Kitchen and Jollibee Foods Corp. are monitoring stores in affected areas and are on standby to distribute hot meals at the evacuation centers.

The Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) and Smart are also sending packs of rice and hygiene kits, while Alagang Kapatid Foundation Inc. dispatched a team to Northern Luzon to distribute relief goods from Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc., One Meralco Foundation, Maynilad, Metro Pacific Investments Foundation and Makati Medical Center Foundation.

It added that lifeline utilities have been mobilized to restore services in Egay-affected areas in Northern Luzon.

Launched at the PDRF emergency operations center in Pampanga, Reached is a two-year program that offers a solution to the recurring problem of establishing communications after a major disaster, the PDRF said in a statement.

It aims to provide select LGUs with the necessary equipment and training to ensure access to communications during and after calamities, and help coordinate response and recovery operations in affected areas.

The LGUs of Butuan, Virac and Borongan were selected based on their vulnerability to typhoons, economic revenue, population, resources and competitive index resilience score.

This project will harness public-private partnerships and be implemented in collaboration with the Department of Information and Communications Technology, the Office of Civil Defense, the World Food Program, Globe Telecom and PLDT-Smart.

Thanh Le PSM, counsellor development at the Australian Embassy in the Philippines, noted that "building long-term disaster and climate resilience has been a key priority for Australia in the Philippines."

"We recognize that natural disasters and climate change are 'threat multipliers' that disproportionately affect the weakest and most vulnerable sectors of society," the Australian Embassy official said.

"By investing in resilient emergency communications, we can save countless lives and prevent vulnerable communities from experiencing even more difficulties and hardships."

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Climate change seminar for Western Visayas LGU execs set](#)

By: Rainier Allan Ronda

A seminar-workshop for local government officials in Western Visayas will be conducted by the TOWNS Foundation in partnership with the National Scientists and Academicians of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST).

The event, dubbed “Klima,” will bring experts from the NAST Task Force on Climate Change led by Rex Victor Cruz, a renowned scientist in watershed management and climate change adaptation.

The event will be held on Aug. 1 at the Summit Hotel in Tacloban City.

It is intended for mayors, planning officers and disaster risk reduction specialists from Western Visayas, which has been tagged as an epicenter of the climate crisis in the world.

The event is aimed to be a venue for engaging local stakeholders in the exploration and sharing of experiences on science and technology-based responses to typhoons, coastal erosions, coastal and riverine flooding, landslides as well as other climate change-related hazards.

Leyte Gov. Jericho Petilla will share local initiatives in climate change adaptation.

Sustainable investments needed

By: Mary Ann LL. Reyes

If you still don't believe that climate change is real, then look around you. In the past weeks, the country has been battered by strong winds and waves caused by tropical storms. At a time when the Philippines is supposed to be experiencing the El Niño phenomenon, we are getting too much rain.

Streets get flooded despite flood control and drainage projects being undertaken by government. Coastal communities have to evacuate residents every time there is a storm surge. Landslides cause massive destruction of homes and even claim lives when these housing projects should not have been located in these landslide-prone areas in the first place.

How is the Philippine government doing to make sure that investments go to economic activities that are sustainable and in critical infrastructure and coastal management that will help mitigate climate-related risks?

At the Asian Leaders Sustainable Development Program held in Oxford's Blavatnik School of Government, commissioner Kelvin Lester Lee of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) called on investors and government to work together more closely to meet investment targets for sustainable projects that help fight climate change.

He cited a 2017 report from the Asian Development Bank on the need for Southeast Asia to invest \$3.1 trillion up to 2030 to build infrastructure that can respond to climate change.

Lee also emphasized the need to establish and implement credible frameworks such as taxonomies for sustainable finance, which is a criteria that provides the basis for evaluating whether a financial asset will support the United Nations' sustainable development goals. Lee is a board member of the ASEAN Taxonomy Board.

Lee is involved in crafting a Philippine taxonomy for sustainable finance to define specific activities as green and sustainable. He said the Philippine government, business sector, and other stakeholders are working to deepen capital markets, boost investor confidence, encourage market participation and enhance financial inclusion for sustainable project.

He added that the country also needs to utilize public funds, catalyze private capital and leverage technologies to fast-track the development of green finance and sustainable infrastructure.

In his talk at Oxford, Lee explained that when it comes to sustainable finance as a baseline, two things urgently need to be done: first, establish and implement credible frameworks like the ASEAN Taxonomy that helps ASEAN countries categorize, identify, and track sustainable projects and economic activities; and second, increasing actual funding for investments in low-carbon projects such as renewable energy, coal phase outs, green design and infrastructure, as well as products and technologies that reduce waste and pollution.

Lee also stressed that net zero targets can be achieved with more actual funding, instead of mere pledges, into low-carbon investments. He said that the UN Climate Change Conference has set a target to reduce global carbon emissions by 45 percent in 2030, and for zero carbon emissions by 2050 but these can only be achieved if “we put in enough funding and investments into renewable energy sources, and other projects that reduce carbon emissions starting now until the next 20 to 30 years.”

Bulacan’s lifestyle hub

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) has identified Bulacan province as the next growth area not only due to its adequate labor force and proximity to the National Capital Region, but also because of the big-ticket infrastructure projects being undertaken by the private sector and the government.

One of the flagship infrastructure projects under the Build-Build-Build program for instance is the North-South Commuter Rail project that will link Tutuban in Manila to Malolos, Bulacan to Clark. The 38-kilometer railway will pass through Meycauayan, Marilao, Bocaue, Balagtas, Guiguinto and Malolos in Bulacan.

Bulacan also takes pride to being host to the New Manila International Airport as well as to Metro Rail Transit Line 7, a 23-km elevated railway line that begins at San Jose del Monte, Bulacan up to North Avenue in Quezon City. Both projects are being undertaken by San Miguel Corp. (SMC).

One company that is helping transform Bulacan into becoming the country’s next business and lifestyle hub is the Czark Mak (CZM) Group of Companies which recently launched its P2-billion commercial and industrial township in Guiguinto.

Covering an area of over 20 hectares, CZM’s AcroCity is Bulacan’s newest township, a vibrant lifestyle hub that caters to the growing needs not only of the surrounding communities, but even residents of nearby areas including Metro Manila who would want a different staycation experience.

CZM executive vice president Caesar Angelo Wongchuking Jr. said with AcroCity, they are not only constructing properties but also building dreams and forging connections

that have the power to transform lives. The group's vision, he emphasized, is to create a vibrant community at the heart of Bulacan, where businesses thrive, residents flourish, and dreams are realized.

Last Tuesday also saw the groundbreaking of NDW Plaza, which will serve as AcroCity's community and town center focusing on wellness. It will host, among others, a world-class dialysis center, a diagnostic center, spa, gym, and beauty and other wellness facilities, a bank, and other dedicated retail spaces to complement existing leisure and commercial offerings.

Acrocity's centerpiece property is Acro Residences, one of the largest business hotels in Bulacan, offering more than 100 well-appointed rooms catering to the growing demand for accommodation in the area.

CZM Group general manager Romy Pagulayan revealed that there are plans to build additional amenities for Acro Residences, such as a pool, even as plans are afoot to put up a dedicated events place offering a venue for outdoor events such as weddings, as well as a park for individuals seeking solace with nature.

There are also plans to construct a residential condominium inside AcroCity.

But what really sets AcroCity apart from other destination hubs is the presence of three unique restaurants that have been attracting customers all the way from Metro Manila.

As part of its commitment to provide diverse culinary experiences, AcroCity partnered with Transcendental Relection Restaurant Group, sister company of CZM, to provide three distinct restaurants. Mighty King Restaurant offers exquisite Chinese cuisine, while Mt Fuji specializes in authentic Japanese dishes. For those seeking a cozy cafe atmosphere, Cafe de Margaux located inside Acro Residences meanwhile provides a range of Filipino comfort food and French-inspired dishes.

These restaurants as well as Acro Residences have become the favorite haven for locators and customers of T12 Polo Industrial Estates within AcroCity, which has 66 warehouses and storage facilities that are available for sale or lease.

Pagulayan explained that the integration of their properties – hotel, restaurants, industrial park, events place, and the town center – not only enhances the lifestyle and convenience of the surrounding communities but also strengthens the township's position as the new lifestyle hub in Bulacan. These developments, he said, represent AcroCity's dedication to becoming a well-rounded township development.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PAGE ONE

[CCC, PRC Boost Alliance For Climate Resilience, Disaster Response](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) have signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to further strengthen collaborative efforts in building climate resilience and enhancing disaster response throughout the country.

Under the partnership, the CCC will capacitate PRC's partner communities, personnel and volunteers on localized climate risk profiling and climate change adaptation and mitigation planning, and provide technical assistance to access relevant funding for the implementation of local climate change initiatives.

PRC, on the other hand, shall support the CCC in the development of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan (NIP).

The PRC also will actively participate in the CCC's Net Zero Challenge, reinforcing the shared vision for transformative climate action.

"The CCC welcomes this partnership with the Philippine Red Cross towards ensuring that lives and livelihoods of communities are resilient against disasters and other impacts of climate change," CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje said during the MOA signing on Wednesday.

Borje said the collaboration is another window "for us to realize our commitment to transformative and meaningful climate action."

"With CCC, we have made it our ambition to contribute big time to saving our planet. We will be leaders in our own spheres of expertise but carry the load together through our partnership. I can assure our kababayans that the Red Cross and CCC will prioritize climate change adaptation and mitigation of its effects. Join us: Let's carry the load together," PRC Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer Richard J. Gordon, for his part, said.

Aligned with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s vision of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in addressing critical issues such as the climate crisis, the CCC works on further strengthening cooperation with civil society, development partners and private sector, such as the PRC.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

Gov't unveils comprehensive disaster resilience and relief initiatives

By: Alice Sicat

In a comprehensive presentation during the POST-SONA briefing on Wednesday (July 26) Cabinet Secretaries from the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and Department of National Defense (DND) highlighted their respective agencies' initiatives and collaborations aimed at enhancing disaster resilience and response in the Philippines, emphasizing right coordination.

Known for his strategic approach to challenges, Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Secretary Renato Solidum Jr. emphasized the importance of knowing the enemy, knowing oneself, and planning ahead for natural disasters. He quoted the famous passage from Sun Tzu's "The Art of War" to illustrate the significance of understanding hazards and risks.

“What this would mean is that we need to know the hazards that will be experienced in all places in the Philippines, when will this happen, and most importantly, how will this impact the people, the communities, the structures, the buildings, the businesses, the agriculture, the environment, and so on and so forth,” Secretary Solidum said.

Secretary Solidum introduced the Geo-Risk Philippines initiative, which provides a platform to access information on various hazards and risk assessments in real-time. He also showcased innovative applications like Hazard Hunter PH, Geoanalytics PH, and Geo-Mapper, designed to aid planners and government agencies in disaster preparedness and recovery efforts. The secretary also announced the Handa Pilipinas exhibition, a nationwide caravan displaying Filipino experts' technological contributions to urban risk management.

Focused on immediate relief and humanitarian efforts, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Rex Gatchalian explained the Buong Bansa Handa program. The program aims to ensure a prompt response to disasters by establishing two supply chain lines—one government-driven and the other private sector-driven. Through pre-positioning goods and partnering with private companies, the DSWD aims to be omnipresent in disaster-prone areas, thereby providing timely assistance to affected communities.

“The goal there is to be omnipresent so to speak, making our people, most especially the victims, feel that government is there, in fact ahead during and right after a storm or a natural calamity,” Secretary Gatchalian said.

The secretary also gave emphasis to the importance of collaboration between the government and the private sector in efficiently delivering relief packs to the farthest corners of the country.

On the other hand Department of National Defense (OCD) Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. highlighted the Office of Civil Defense's (OCD) crucial role as a bridge between national government assistance and local government units during disasters. The OCD coordinates efforts and provides reliable real-time information to enable concerted national government responses when local government units are overwhelmed. Secretary Teodoro also praised the close coordination between the DSWD and the improved predictive capabilities of PAGASA and PHIVOLCS, enabling more efficient planning and resource allocation during crises.

"And it is a testament to the close coordination between Cabinet members that we are able to function this efficiently. And we hope to institutionalize these practices so that the continuing delivery of services for our countrymen in need, when they need it, comes at a quicker pace because of pre-planning and pre-positioning without wastage of course," Secretary Teodoro said.

In light of these presentations, it is evident that the government is taking a proactive approach to disaster resilience and relief. Through innovative technology, comprehensive planning, and effective coordination between agencies, the Philippines is gearing up to face natural calamities with greater preparedness, responsiveness, and efficiency.

The Post-SONA Briefings of the national government agencies were held on July 25 to 26, 2023 to extend the discussions on the various priority programs of the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., such as Infrastructure Development and Connectivity; Food Security; Poverty Reduction; Environmental Protection and Disaster Management; and Good Governance, Peace and Security.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[CCC committed to pursue PBBM's vision for climate resilient PH](#)

The Climate Change Commission PH (CCC) lauded President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s second State of the Nation Address (SONA) emphasizing the critical importance of climate action in building a sustainable economic agenda for the Philippines.

In his SONA, Marcos reiterated that "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."

For this year, the Philippine government's budget for climate change programs and projects, as tagged by various national government instrumentalities, is PHP464.5 billion, which is 60.32 percent higher compared to 2022 allocation.

From this year's climate budget, PHP411.21 billion or 88 percent is aimed to finance climate change adaptation initiatives as programmed and to be implemented by different government agencies, and PHP53.29 billion for climate change mitigation.

Under the 2024 National Expenditure Program, PHP543.45 billion is earmarked for climate action, supporting the government's decarbonization and resilience-building efforts.

Consistent with the pronouncements of the President in SONA, the CCC will continue to collaborate with government agencies and stakeholders to further ensure that climate change is integrated and mainstreamed in national policies, planning, decision-making and implementation.

The CCC will further strengthen the implementation of the National Climate Risk Management Framework and update the National Climate Change Action Plan and the Nationally Determined Contribution.

The National Adaptation Plan is currently being developed to enhance the country's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Further, all local government units (LGUs) are targeted to be capacitated in mainstreaming climate action in local governance. As of July 2023, the CCC has received a total of 1,472 Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs) out of 1,715 LGUs.

The CCC shares Marcos' vision of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, including in dealing with the climate crisis, emphasizing "collaboration between government offices, the private sector, industries, academe, international partners, and most importantly, among our populace."

To further harness stronger cooperation with key stakeholders in advancing transformative climate action, the CCC established and will further strengthen the following coordination mechanisms with various entities:

- WE CAN or Working to Empower Climate Action Network for Civil Society Organizations,
- ENACT or Empowering Nurtured Alliance for Climate Action and Transformation for Development Partners,
- CONNECT or Communicating Opportunities to Network, Navigate, and Explore Climate Transformation for the Private Sector, and
- ACT LOCAL or Accelerating Climate Action and Transformation for Local Communities for Local Government Units.

"The CCC remains committed to advance and pursue the realization of President Marcos, Jr.'s vision for a low-carbon, climate-smart and climate-resilient Philippines, and transformative economic growth, with the unlocking of the development of the green and blue economies," CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje said in a news release on Friday.

"And, in line with the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, hinihikayat ng CCC ang lahat na makiisa sa malawakang bayanihan para sa klima, patungo sa isang Bagong Bansa Matatag. (the CCC encourages everybody to join massive climate action towards a new resilient nation)," he added.

As the government's lead policy-making body on climate change, the CCC stands ready to work hand in hand with all stakeholders, to ensure that climate change remains at the forefront of the government's national agenda.

RELIEF WEB

[PRC, CCC join forces to intensify country's climate change adaptation and mitigation programs](#)

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) and the Climate Change Commission today signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to advance public awareness, advocacy campaigns, and programs on climate change adaptation and mitigation at the local level.

PRC Chairman and CEO Dick Gordon and Secretary-General Dr. Gwen Pang signed the six-year agreement with CCC Vice Chair and Executive Director, Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, and Commissioner, Attorney Rachel Anne Herrera.

The two organizations agreed to collaborate on enhancing the knowledge and projects of communities and local government units on climate change concerns. They are also looking to integrate their tools for current and future policies. PRC pledged its support for the forestation activities of CCC's Carbon-Zero Challenge, an initiative aimed at reducing the carbon emissions from a product or service.

Chairman Gordon commended the CCC for its commitment to combat climate change. He said: "Through our millions of RC143 volunteers in thousands of communities, we can help implement climate action projects and policies effectively at the community level. One of our goals on why we keep pushing to have a group of trained volunteers in each community is to bring our mission closer to every Filipino."

Dr. Pang, in her previous discussions on climate change adaptation, has been reiterating the importance of investing in nature-based solutions and sustainable use of natural resources to combat climate change. "We have to work with nature to mitigate the impact of climate change," she said.

The PRC has been actively campaigning and promoting climate action through its Health Services, Safety Services, Welfare Services, WASH, Disaster Risk Reduction, Anticipatory Action activities, and projects such as educating the youth, equipping PRC chapters with climate change knowledge, community planning, and projects on nature-based solutions.

THE MANILA TIMES

Climate change body vows stronger policies

By: Jenica Faye Garcia

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) has committed to further strengthening the country's climate-change action policies in keeping with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s second State of the Nation Address (SONA) that emphasized the critical importance of such policies in building a sustainable economic agenda.

Robert Borje, CCC vice chairman and executive director, on Thursday said the commission will maximize its partnership with government agencies and stakeholders toward beefing up the country's climate-change action policies, particularly their implementation, consistent with the President's pronouncement.

"[We] will continue to collaborate with [them] to further ensure that climate change is integrated and mainstreamed in national policies, planning, decision-making and implementation," he also said.

President Marcos, in his SONA on July 24, said, "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."

Republic Act (RA) 9729, or the "Climate Change Act of 2009," calls for integration and consolidation by the government agencies and stakeholders of the country's plans and programs "to address climate change in the context of sustainable development."

It mandates the CCC to ensure the mainstreaming of climate change in national, sectoral and local development plans and programs.

The mainstreaming includes the "strengthening of the National Climate Risk Management Framework and [updating of] the National Climate Change Action Plan and the Nationally Determined Contribution," Borje said.

Under RA 9729, all local government units (LGUs) are targeted to be capacitated in mainstreaming climate action in local governance.

As of July 2023, the CCC has received a total of 1,472 Local Climate Change Action Plans from the existing 1,715 LGUs.

For fiscal year (FY) 2023, Borje said the government's budget for climate change programs and projects, as tagged by various national government instrumentalities, is P464.5 billion.

From this year's climate budget, P411.21 billion, or 88 percent, is aimed at financing climate-change adaptation initiatives as programmed and to be implemented by different government agencies, and P53.29 billion for climate-change mitigation.

For the FY 2024 National Expenditure Program, meanwhile, a total of P543.45 billion is earmarked for climate action, supporting the government's decarbonization and resilience-building efforts.

"The CCC remains committed to advance and pursue the realization of President Marcos Jr.'s vision for a low-carbon, climate-smart and climate-resilient Philippines, and transformative economic growth, with the unlocking of the development of the green and blue economies," Borje said.

INTERAKSYON

[As jobs law stalls, Philippines struggles to green economy](#)

By: Mariejo Ramos via Thomson Reuters Foundation

Eight years ago, the Philippine government built an ultra-modern Green Technology Center in the city of Taguig to spearhead a national drive for jobs to help combat climate change and protect the environment.

These days, however, the two-storey building of 1,000-square meters (10,800 sq ft) stands almost empty — and with only nine staff — after an innovative green jobs law stalled.

Around the world, countries are increasingly passing legislation to fight climate change, safeguard nature and cut pollution, but the U.N. Environment Programme says new laws often suffer from a lack of enforcement.

The Philippines center in Taguig, near Manila, was built to teach greener, less-polluting techniques to workers in jobs ranging from construction to car mechanics, under the National Institute for Technical Education and Skills Development.

It is intended to play a key role in implementing the Philippine Green Jobs Act of 2016 — the first and only legislation of its kind in Asia — which would promote micro, small and medium enterprises that create green jobs through tax deductions and tax-free imports of capital equipment.

Seven years after the law was passed, however, the vital standards and technologies to train and certify workers for jobs that produce green goods and services have yet to be defined, delaying implementation.

The standards are now close to completion and the government has committed to put the law fully into practice by the end of 2023.

So far, the Taguig center has been mainly limited to developing courses and educating dozens of green job experts who will train the wider workforce once the law gets off the ground.

Whole of government

The Green Technology Center and the Green Jobs Act are part of the Philippines' "whole-of-government" approach to a "just transition", which aims to accelerate a shift to

a sustainable, low-carbon and climate-resilient economy that also raises living standards for workers and their communities.

“The Philippines is not yet fully ready for just transition because it still doesn’t have the technology to improve green practices,” said Danielle Marie Torralba of the Climate Change Commission, one of the main implementing agencies of the Green Jobs Act.

“In addition, climate change awareness is not popular or mainstreamed in our society,” she said, adding that details of the law were “near the finish line” to allow implementation by the end of 2023.

As one of the countries most at risk from climate change, the Philippines suffered more than 500 billion pesos (\$9.2 billion) in damages from weather extremes over the past decade, according to the Department of Finance.

And the World Bank says climate change risks — such as extreme weather events and slow onset trends of temperature increase and sea level rise — are threatening the Philippines’ target to become a high-income economy by 2045.

Current annual losses from typhoons alone are estimated to reach 1.2% of the Philippines’ gross domestic product, according to the bank’s 2022 Country Climate and Development Report.

Green skills

The Technical Education Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the government agency that manages the Green Technology Center, has so far ‘greened’ 30% of around 300 job training courses, including construction, solar photovoltaics, welding, automotive and transport.

For the automotive sector, for instance, the new curriculum covers how to recycle or dispose of old engine oil responsibly. Welders are taught to reduce use of gases like carbon dioxide and argon.

TESDA has also introduced green training for jobs including housekeeping, tour-guiding and computer programming.

Edgardo Caldit, a technical education and skills development specialist at the center, said the initiative reflects the Philippines’ ambition to create green jobs.

But he grapples with limited resources and said green skills training still does not appeal to Filipino workers. TESDA failed to attract a single applicant, for instance, when it introduced training for solid waste management.

“Filipino workers have yet to feel the benefits of green jobs and green skills. Many of them don’t necessarily want to be green workers – and don’t see green skills as something that can boost their employability,” he said.

Caldit said a huge factor is that the Department of Labour and Employment has yet to finalize an official list of green careers, professions and skills available to workers.

“The definition of a green job remains vague for most workers. But if they received the proper training and certification for such jobs, they would gain a different sense of interest and pride in their new job titles,” he said.

A dearth of qualified trainers is another challenge, Caldit said. “We simply don’t have that many experts in this country and low government pay for these experts had also been a deterrent,” he added.

Defining green jobs

The Philippine law defines green jobs as “employment that contributes to preserving or restoring the quality of the environment”.

Such jobs must also be “productive, respect the rights of workers, deliver a fair income, provide security in the workplace and social protection, and promote social dialogue”.

The labor department, Climate Change Commission and 20 other government agencies are tasked with implementing the law.

Only enterprises that meet the standards for the assessment and certification of green goods, services, technologies and practices can apply for incentives under the law.

The Climate Change Commission plans to adopt those key standards by the end of 2023. Both Torralba and Caldit said the pandemic had slowed momentum for the law, forcing agencies to go back to the drawing board last year.

“Defining ‘green’ is something that we really had to work on. How do we say that certain products and services are green, how do we assess that, and how can enterprises

apply for incentives? That's what we and other agencies had really focused on for the past years," said Torralba.

Despite the legal foundation, the Philippines still falls behind its Asian neighbors in the share of green skills among its workforce, especially in agriculture, according to LinkedIn's Global Green Skills Report 2022.

While high-income and upper-middle income countries maintained a steady green hiring rate in 2020, the rate of greening the workforce in lower-income countries decelerated, according to the report.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has recognized the crucial role that all businesses can play in greening the workforce and driving forward a just transition.

However, in 2022, the ILO noted that many small businesses face barriers, including limited access to finance and skills, lack of information and knowledge on innovation, and inconsistent enforcement of regulation.

"We want to incentivize enterprises because decarbonizing and greening our economy should start with the private sector," said Torralba.

The new law aims to inspire enterprises still pursuing 'business as usual' to adopt green practices, she added.

"That's how we really imagined it," she said.

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