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THE MANILA TIMES

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[DENR, DOE to update offshore wind, floating solar guidelines](#)

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MANILA -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is working closely with the Department of Energy (DOE) on updating the offshore wind and floating solar guidelines so they would become components of next year's National Expenditure Program (NEP).

BUSINESS MIRROR

Australia, UNDP boost NCR's stance in combating disaster, climate threats

THE Australian government will partner with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) in enhancing Metro Manila's resilience to climate and disaster risks.

Said effort will fall under the "Strengthening Institutions and Empowering Localities against Disasters and Climate Change (SHIELD)" program. It will support DILG-National Capital Region's (NCR) new "Upscaling Plans for Resilient Urban Governance (UPSURGE)" project, which will work with city planning officials in ensuring that their respective comprehensive development plans or CDPs are climate- and disaster-risk informed, as well as aligned with relevant national laws and policies.

"This is our seventh memorandum of understanding [MOU under 'SHIELD']...and our shared zeal for building [resilient] constituencies...with the Australian government is stronger than ever," said Dr. Selva Ramachandran, who is the UNDP resident envoy for the Philippines, during the signing. "Even as all regions display significant [recovery and growth rates], Metro Manila remains the center of economic activity in the country. With natural and historical risks that surround the country's capital, we stand to lose a great deal of progress if a disaster [renders NCR at] a standstill."

Assistant Regional Director Lyn Baltazar-Cortez from the DILG-NCR and Portfolio Manager Mei Santos of the Australian Embassy in the Philippines witnessed the signing, along with officials from the DILG Bureau of Local Government Development, as well as SHIELD consortium partners, UN Habitat, National Resilience Council, Philippine Business for Social Progress, and the Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society.

Through SHIELD, Australia has provided AU\$18 million to help the Philippine government build institutional and community resilience to climate change and natural hazards by helping local governments pursue and invest in resilient development. The program is being implemented in coordination with DILG, Office of Civil Defense, and Department of Science and Technology.

Aside from Metro Manila, SHIELD is being rolled-out in 11 of the country's most climate- and disaster-vulnerable provinces, as well as in Bangsamoro Region.

BUSINESS WORLD

[China denies reports it obstructed G20 climate discussions](#)

By: Reuters

Reports that China obstructed discussions on tackling climate change at Group of 20 (G20) meetings last week in India are “completely inconsistent with the facts”, China’s foreign ministry said on Wednesday.

After three days of discussions on issues like cutting emissions and fossil fuel use, as well as climate finance to support poorer nations, the group of major nations failed to issue a joint communique or deliver any new pledges.

The group acknowledged in a statement after their talks that measures to address climate change were “insufficient”.

Members of a European delegation said that China and oil-rich Saudi Arabia had backed away from making commitments at the meetings, but China rejected that.

The foreign ministry said in a statement it “regrets” the failure to reach an agreement at the meetings, which was caused by “geopolitical issues” brought up by other countries “for no reason”.

China, which accounts for more than half of global coal production, has bristled at calls to do more to cut greenhouse gases, saying its historical and per capita CO2 emissions are still lower than those of the United States.

The foreign ministry said the G20 should build political consensus among members and “fully respect the different development stages and national conditions of countries”.

Parts of China, including its capital, have been battered this week by the heaviest rain in 140 years, the Beijing Meteorological Service said, the latest bout of extreme weather from around the world to raise fears about the pace of global warming.

China has pledged to bring its emissions to a peak before the end of the decade and become carbon-neutral by 2060.

But despite building record levels of new clean energy capacity, its fossil fuel consumption has continued to rise, with no plans to start cutting coal use until 2026.

US climate envoy John Kerry visited Beijing last month in a bid to restore trust between the two sides and build momentum for the COP28 climate talks in Dubai at the end of the year.

MANILA BULLETIN

[GEP project can help PH deal with climate change --- DOST](#)

By: Rhowen Del Rosario

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) on Thursday, Aug. 3 welcomed the Green Economy Program (GEP) which can help the Philippines to deal with climate change problems.

"They have a Green Environment [Economic Program] funded by the EU (European Union). I think that's a great project, especially in the Philippines; we are the biggest polluter of plastic in the whole world when it comes from plastics coming to our river," DOST Balik Scientist Hernando Bacosa said in a public briefing via PTV.

"Connected din 'yan sa climate change and ang Pilipinas bilang isang archipelagic country, tayo talaga ang one most vulnerable and high risk sa climate change. (This is also connected to climate change and the Philippines as an archipelagic country; we are really the one most vulnerable and at high risk to climate change)." Bacosa continued.

He stressed that the rising sea level in the Philippines is double compared to the world average because we are archipelagic and very close to the shore.

The scientist also explained that coral bleaching, as a result of ocean acidification, can cause coral damage. And if these corals are harmed, fish and fishing livelihoods are at risk.

The GEP was a bilateral agreement signed by the Philippines and the EU that aims for a "sustainable future."

The signing of the agreement took place last July 31 which was witnessed by President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. and European Commission (EC) President Ursula von der Leyen on her three-day state visit.

Innovations in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Exposition 2023

Meanwhile, for the DOST, Barcosa underscored that the "HANDA Pilipinas: Innovations in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Exposition 2023" Luzon leg aims to provide a comprehensive strategy that centers on raising public awareness about the adoption of the DOST's technology and innovations.

The exposition was held last July 27 in Pasay City.

Barbosa added that these advancements are intended to support local scientists, as well as for LGUs and stakeholders to adopt and lessen the effects of climate change.

MANILA STANDARD

[French minister optimistic on PH-France future](#)

By: Rey E. Requejo

France is optimistic about the continued momentum of its strengthened bilateral relations with the Philippines in various areas following the three-day visit to Manila of its minister for development.

French Minister of State for Development, Francophonie, and International Partnerships Chrysoula Zacharopoulou said she looks forward to deepening the cooperation in the upcoming years between the two countries after she met with various Philippine officials to work on the priority agenda of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron.

“I leave the Philippines confident about the future of our cooperation and our relationship,” Zacharopoulou said, as she met reporters at the French Residence in Makati City on Tuesday.

The French minister visited Manila to pursue several areas of cooperation, such as food security, defense, health, and climate, as agreed by the two presidents during their past interactions.

Zacharopoulou revealed that France would contribute 200,000 euros or P12 million to provide meals to school children as well as work with the country to attain sustainable agriculture. These are part of the French commitment to the Philippines to achieve food security.

On defense, France would stand by the Philippines in upholding the rules-based order as well as the freedom of navigation and overflight amid threatening activities in the Indo-Pacific.

The Philippines is among the countries included in France’s Indo-Pacific strategy.

Zacharopoulou reiterated Macron’s recent pronouncement that his government’s strategy consists “first and foremost in defending, through partnerships, the independence and sovereignty of all the States in the region that are prepared to work with us.”

“What we want to do together is to help you preserve your space, protect you from climate change, and better predict it. France wants to bring very concrete solutions and cooperations,” the French minister said.

“This goes through multilateralism, the respect of international law, and the protection of public goods, especially environment and biodiversity when global warming threatens more and more lives and systems,” she added.

During her stay from July 30 to August 1, Zacharopoulou met several government officials, including Foreign Affairs Usec. Carlos Sorreta, Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno, Environment Secretary Toni Yulo-Loyzaga and Health Secretary Ted Herbosa.

With Diokno, she discussed France’s move to increase its cooperation in the area of development; while with Loyzaga, she proved France’s commitment to addressing climate concerns.

Zacharopoulou also followed up on its health and biodiversity cooperation with Manila.

“Our will is to be a long-term partner of the country as well as of ASEAN, whose role is central in the region,” she said.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Climate change made July hotter for 4 of 5 humans on Earth, scientists find](#)

By: Associated Press

Human-caused global warming made July hotter for four out of five people on Earth, with more than 2 billion people feeling climate change-boosted warmth daily, according to a flash study.

<https://technology.inquirer.net/126573/climate-change-made-july-hotter-for-4-of-5-humans-on-earth-scientists-find>

More than 6.5 billion people, or 81% of the world's population, sweated through at least one day where climate change had a significant effect on the average daily temperature, according to a new report issued Wednesday by Climate Central, a science nonprofit that has figured a way to calculate how much climate change has affected daily weather.

"We really are experiencing climate change just about everywhere," said Climate Central Vice President for Science Andrew Pershing.

Researchers looked at 4,711 cities and found climate change fingerprints in 4,019 of them for July, which other scientists said is the hottest month on record. The new study calculated that the burning of coal, oil, and natural gas had made it three times more likely to be hotter on at least one day in those cities. In the US, where the climate effect was largest in Florida, more than 244 million people felt greater heat due to climate change during July.

For 2 billion people, in a mostly tropical belt across the globe, climate change made it three times more likely to be hotter every single day of July. Those include the million-person cities of Mecca, Saudi Arabia and San Pedro Sula, Honduras.

The day with the most widespread climate-change effect was July 10, when 3.5 billion people experienced extreme heat that had global warming's fingerprints, according to the report. That's different than the hottest day globally, which was July 7, according to the University of Maine's Climate Reanalyzer.

The study is not peer-reviewed, the gold standard for science, because the month just ended. It is based on peer-reviewed climate fingerprinting methods that are used by other groups and are considered technically valid by the National Academy of Sciences. Two outside climate scientists told The Associated Press that they found the study to be credible.

More than a year ago Climate Central developed a measurement tool called the Climate Shift Index. It calculates the effect, if any, of climate change on temperatures across the globe in real time, using European and US forecasts, observations and computer simulations. To find if there is an effect, the scientists compare recorded temperatures to a simulated world with no warming from climate change and it's about 2 degrees (1.2 degrees Celsius) cooler to find out the chances that the heat was natural.

“By now, we should all be used to individual heat waves being connected to global warming,” said Princeton University climate scientist Gabriel Vecchi, who wasn't part of the study. “Unfortunately, this month, as this study elegantly shows, has given the vast majority of people on this planet a taste of global warming's impact on extreme heat.”

In the United States, 22 US cities had at least 20 days when climate change tripled the likelihood of extra heat, including Miami, Houston, Phoenix, Tampa, Las Vegas and Austin.

The US city most affected by climate change in July was Cape Coral, Florida, which saw fossil fuels make hotter temperatures 4.6 times more likely for the month and had 29 out of 31 days where there was a significant climate change fingerprint.

The farther north in the United States, the less of a climate effect was seen in July. Researchers found no significant effect in places like North Dakota and South Dakota, Wyoming, northern California, upstate New York and parts of Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Heat waves in the US Southwest, the Mediterranean and even China have gotten special analysis by World Weather Attribution finding a climate change signal, but places like the Caribbean and Middle East are having huge climate change signals and not getting the attention, Pershing said. Unlike the other study, this one looked at the entire globe.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Scientist urges people to plan mitigation vs. climate change](#)

By Ma. Cristina Arayata

MANILA – A Balik Scientist on Thursday urged communities, especially those in coastal areas, to think of efforts that could mitigate the effects of climate change.

In a public briefing, Balik Scientist Hernando Bacosa, said communities must prepare for dry season, drought, flooding.

"Often, the tropical cyclones are strong, making the communities more vulnerable. People near the rivers, estero, or the squatters shouldn't be there since water surge is possible," he said.

"We have to think of mitigation (measures), especially for the informal settlers, because they are at risk of problems caused by climate change or global warming," Bacosa continued.

The Philippines being an archipelagic country is one of the most vulnerable to climate change, including the rising sea level, he said.

Bacosa also pointed out that the Philippines is among the biggest polluters of plastics. "Plastics coming our rivers are also connected with climate change... There's also coral bleaching that damages the corals, affecting the fishes."

He also mentioned that the warm weather can be felt more now compared to 10 or 20 years ago.

"Aside from flooding, tropical cyclones, extreme drought, the climate change also disrupted the climate pattern," he said.

Bacosa said he thinks the government will intensify efforts in creating resilient communities, mitigating climate change risks, and investing in clean energy and reforestation to minimize carbon dioxide emissions.

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST), he said, has developed technologies and innovations related to these efforts.

During the Luzon leg of the Handa Pilipinas event last July 27, DOST Secretary Renato Solidum, Jr. said the country needs to acknowledge that the cities are at risk.

"We are faced with the challenges posed by decades of rapid urbanization and unregulated growth. Our cities and municipalities are at risk also because of climate and disaster risks brought by our exposure, vulnerability, and lack of coping and adaptive capacities," Solidum said.

Handa Pilipinas seeks to increase public awareness of preventable and solvable problems. It aims to introduce Filipino-made technologies that are ready for adoption and transfer, ready to be maximized for disaster prevention and mitigation, preparedness and response.

The event, Solidum said, is a call to action to empower citizens, and all stakeholders in taking an active role to achieve resiliency.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Opinion: The rise of climate lawsuits](#)

By: Ben Kritz

LEGAL action against climate violators is gaining popularity as a tactic to stop big polluters' destruction of the environment, but the trend raises a few troubling questions. While the intentions behind these actions are unquestionably right and proper, it is debatable whether litigation is a practically effective tactic, and whether those who are using it are pursuing it in a manner that is most likely to have some practical outcome.

A July 27 article by Eco-Business cited the UN Environment Program's (UNEP) Climate Litigation Report 2023, which in turn relies on data mostly gathered by Columbia University and revealed that there has been "a huge rise" in climate-related lawsuits since 2017. About 70 percent of those, or a total of 1,522, have been filed in the US, but the number in the Asia-Pacific region is growing. Australia has seen 127 cases filed, followed by New Zealand (26), Indonesia (12) and India (11). The Eco-Business story singles out the Philippines, where "Asia's most high-profile climate lawsuit was settled last year," that being a ruling of the Human Rights Commission that 47 major oil and gas companies are liable for the climate calamity.

Those here in the Philippines will immediately recognize, of course, that the case cited was not actually a lawsuit and that because the Commission on Human Rights is constitutionally straitjacketed from having any real authority to do anything but offer opinions; its decision has absolutely no practical effect. And, as it took place shortly before last year's national elections, the ruling by the CHR was completely ignored here; although, to be fair, most things the commission has to say generally are, as a matter of government policy and decades of indoctrinated public suspicion against "leftists."

Despite the enthusiasm for climate litigation, the abovementioned case seems to be emblematic of the effect of such actions. Another good example is the case brought against Royal Dutch Shell BV in the Netherlands in May 2021. The case was filed before the District Court of The Hague by a huge number of claimants, including seven environmental foundations and nongovernmental organizations and over 17,000 individuals. The petitioners had argued that, as the policy-setting center of the giant Shell group, Royal Dutch Shell had acted unlawfully to skirt CO2 emissions reduction rules and had not taken sufficient action to reduce harmful emissions.

The court ruled in the petitioners' favor but in a rather ambiguous way, finding that "Royal Dutch Shell is not currently in breach of its reduction obligation, as the claimants argue. Royal Dutch Shell has enhanced the Shell group's policy and is working it out in more detail. However, seeing that as the policy is not concrete, the court finds that there

is an imminent breach of the reduction obligation. The court has come to the conclusion that Royal Dutch Shell is obliged to ensure through the Shell group's corporate policy that the CO2 emissions of the Shell group, its suppliers and its customers are reduced."

As part of the ruling, the court ordered Shell to reduce its overall emissions by 45 percent from 2019 levels by 2030. However, because the court also found that Shell had not, or at least not yet, committed any specific violation, it was obliged to implicitly note that the requirement was not necessarily binding; it could be removed or modified by a higher court on appeal from Shell, which the company filed within a few weeks of the original ruling.

What is discouraging about the many news reports and commentaries about the growing trend of climate litigation is that, for the most part, the common attitude seems to be that obtaining some sort of official acknowledgment that climate violators such as oil and gas companies are indeed causing environmental harm is some kind of achievement. As detailed in my last column, Shell and its counterparts in the petroleum industry already know that; they knew it before anyone else did, put it in writing, developed an organized plan to hide that information from the public so as to be able to continue willfully causing environmental harm, and put that in writing, too. A civil court decision or opinion from a toothless committee of professors telling them that they are doing all that is not news to them at all and utterly pointless.

It would not be if such decisions had specific, fairly immediate, and tangibly damaging consequences attached to them, but so far, that has not been the case for most successful climate lawsuits. Even when it is, the legal process moves slowly; 2030 may come and go before Shell exhausts its legal remedies to avoid adhering to the 45-percent reduction target ordered by the lower court in the Netherlands. And that is in a country where government and judicial processes are routinely carried out with an astonishingly high level of efficiency. Imagine how long it might take for Shell or some other climate violators to actually be penalized under the system in this country.

Advocates of civil action, of course, point to the value of such efforts for raising "awareness" of climate issues. At this point, with the climate emergency already having become a real-time disaster and with the time that the planet will remain habitable for humans being measurable in decades, if not mere years, "raising awareness" is a cynical cop-out, nothing more than a performative substitute for objective action.

Legal actions could be effective, objective actions, but they have to be much harsher than they are now and be aimed at imposing real consequences on offenders. Instead of filing toothless civil cases, look for criminal violations; Shell again may be a good example, as there are now moves underway in the US to have the company investigated for racketeering. Criminal cases are much more difficult to pursue — as

they should be — but if successful, they can result in real behavior-changing penalties. This is especially true in jurisdictions where criminal charges brought against a corporate entity can also be laid against that company's executives. Put a few of these pompous SOBs' butts on the line personally, and positive actions have a magical way of appearing quickly.

[More research on Manila Bay reclamation projects needed — expert](#)

By Red Mendoza

WITH many ongoing or planned reclamation projects in the Manila Bay area, a scientist urged additional research as to their impact on the environment amid increasing threat from climate change.

Speaking at a public briefing on Thursday, Dr. Hernando Bacosa, Balik Scientist awardee and Mindanao State University - Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) professor, said that reclamation disturbs the natural environment of coastline creatures.

"When you disturb that, talagang mayroong impact yan (there will really be an impact), and that impact should be assessed, there should be an environmental impact assessment for you to do the project," Bacosa said.

He added that aside from disturbing marine animals, reclamation may also affect the capability of coastal areas to mitigate floods.

"We should thoroughly study whether this could lead to long-term benefit or a long term suffering, dapat pag-aralan ng mga experts yan (the experts should study it)," Bacosa said.

He stressed that the country "cannot afford to reclaim everything" as the coastal environment only has a "limited capacity" to handle certain disturbances.

On Wednesday, Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is assembling a team of scientists and experts to conduct an impact assessment of reclamation projects around Manila Bay.

South America sweats under high temps – in the middle of winter

By: Agence France-Presse

SANTIAGO, Chile: Far away from the extreme summer temperatures of the northern hemisphere, Southern Cone countries such as Chile and Argentina are also experiencing record heat, but in the middle of what is supposed to be their winter.

On Tuesday, the mountain town of Vicuna in central Chile hit 37 degrees Celsius (almost 99 degrees Fahrenheit).

"It's been more than 70 years since a temperature like this was recorded" in Vicuna, Chilean meteorologist Cristobal Torres told Agence France-Presse.

Unusually high temperatures were also recorded 450 kilometers (280 miles) south in the capital Santiago: 24C (75F) on Wednesday, with similar levels forecast for Thursday and Friday.

Meanwhile in Buenos Aires, the temperature exceeded 30C (86F) on Tuesday, making it the highest August 1 temperature since record-keeping began, according to Argentina's National Meteorological Service. The average August temperature in Buenos Aires is usually between 18C (64F) and 9C (48F).

Several cities across Uruguay also recorded temperatures of 30C (86F) on Wednesday.

"What we are experiencing is the combination of two phenomena: a global warming trend due to climate change plus the El Nino phenomenon," said Chile's Environment Minister Maisa Rojas, a climatologist.

"When El Nino ends, the global weather situation should stop being so extreme," she said.

An El Nino event is characterized by increased Pacific Ocean temperatures, causing rainfall, floods and avalanches in western South America, as well as heat waves.

Santiago, Buenos Aires and Montevideo are expected to return to normal temperatures in the coming days, but it is believed that similar heat waves will occur with increasing frequency.

"It is very likely that the heat record will be broken this year (in Santiago), and that is extraordinarily abnormal. Ten years ago we had two heat waves a year and now we are talking about nine," explained University of Santiago climatologist Raul Cordero.

One of the most significant impacts of the warm weather is on snowpacks in the mountains, which are vital for the water supply in Chile's capital.

"Winter heat waves have devastating effects on glaciers and snow," Cordero said.

Rojas also warned about the effects of heat at the poles.

"The ice around the polar areas is at minimum levels," she said on X, formerly known as Twitter.

"Especially around Antarctica, where at this time of year sea ice grows to reach a maximum in September, it is at a historic minimum."

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PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[DENR, DOE to update offshore wind, floating solar guidelines](#)

By Andrea Bancud

MANILA -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is working closely with the Department of Energy (DOE) on updating the offshore wind and floating solar guidelines so they would become components of next year's National Expenditure Program (NEP).

"I think what's also very important is to take note of our energy roadmap because, for us, at this point, we would like to see the transitions, of course, that we all need to actually support in terms of the movement towards renewable energy sources," Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said during a Palace press briefing on Wednesday.

"So, for the DENR, in this case, we have worked very closely with the DOE to update the guidelines for offshore wind and for a floating solar and those investments would be components of the next year's NEP."

The DENR secretary made the remarks when asked by reporters what climate-related projects will be funded by the P500 billion-climate change expenditures as proposed under the 2024 NEP.

Yulo-Loyzaga expressed elation on the implementation of convergence budgeting, through climate tagging, which involves the work of different departments and their contributions to either climate change adaptation or mitigation.

The Program Convergence Budgeting is an approach that aims to focus government resources on key programs and projects, which shall be coordinated in a holistic approach across departments/agencies working towards the same goals.

"Whether it involves the investments of the DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways), whether it involves the DOTr (Department of Transportation) for example in their design of their transportation infrastructure, whether it involves DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) for example in the preparation for possibly the impacts of typhoons such as the one that we've had... we are very glad for that," she said.

In terms of the DENR's own climate change agenda, Yulo-Loyzaga said that the agency now represents the President in the Climate Change Commission (CCC), and will be presenting soon the National Adaptation Plan during the 2024 budget deliberations.

"The National Adaptation Plan has really evolved over the number of years. It never has been finalized but we are happy to say that this is now in the process of being completed," Yulo-Loyzaga said.

"The National Adaptation Plan will mention the different ways by which the investments in the NEP actually will realize positive values for us in terms of adaptation to climate change." (PND)

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