



NEWS ROUNDUP

10 August 2022 [as of 08:25 am]

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ABS-CBN

'Fruits, veggies better for planet but chips have low environmental impact'

By: Agence France-Presse

Washington- Eating fruits and vegetables is better for the planet than eating meat and cheese, but a new study by scientists showed chips and sugary drinks also have a very low environmental impact.

BUSINESS WORLD

More than half of human infectious diseases can be worsened by climate change

By: Tristan McKenzie, Camilo Mora, and Hannah von Hammerstein

Climate change can exacerbate a full 58% of the infectious diseases that humans come in contact with worldwide, from common waterborne viruses to deadly diseases like plague, our new research shows.

CNN

[Many Americans still don't think climate change is coming for them](#)

By: Zachary Wolf

While parts of his state have been ravaged by deluge this summer, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky is pretty sure most Americans don't really care about the climate crisis.

CNN PHILIPPINES

[Billionaires are funding a massive treasure hunt in Greenland as ice vanishes](#)

By: Rene Marsh

Some of the world's richest men are funding a massive treasure hunt, complete with helicopters and transmitters, on the west coast of Greenland.

ENVIRO NEWS NIGERIA

[UNECA chief seeks increased, urgent funding to mitigate climate change in Africa](#)

Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Vera Songwe, has called for urgent and increased funding to mitigate the impact of climate change in Africa.

FOX NEWS

[Biden decries 'heartbreaking' Kentucky flood devastation, links it to climate change](#)

By: Kelly Laco

President Biden described the "heartbreaking" devastation in Kentucky in a trip to survey damage from floods that have killed nearly two dozen people, suggesting the natural disaster was related to climate change.

MANILA BULLETIN

PH asserts position on South China Sea at ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting

By: Joseph Pedrajas

The Philippines is committed to address concerns related to the South China Sea with its Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) neighbors and other countries from outside the bloc as it asserted again its position over the disputed waters.

Satellite Internet safeguards lives and businesses from natural disasters

Living in Barangay Santa Ines in Tanay, Rizal Province, Mylene Ramos is no stranger to floods. Surrounded by lush, mountainous, agricultural land at the foothills of the Sierra Madre Mountain, the town is also home to two large rivers. When a river floods, the locals are cut off from the nearby town, making it difficult to secure essential food and supplies; and halting trade for the locals who produce ginger and honey, as well as raise animals.

MANILA STANDARD

Climate emergency exhibit showcases 28 international art agencies

World Weather Network, a community of creatives reporting on weather and climate, has launched an international online exhibition that features a constellation of 28 arts agencies from around the world.

MIRAGE NEWS

UN officially recognised right to healthy environment. Here's what that means

The historic recent UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution, recognising a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a universal human right, did not come out of the blue.

ONE NEWS PH

UP Resilience Institute working with LGUs to improve climate change actions

UP Resilience Institute Director Prof. Mahar Lagmay says they are coordinating with various local governments to improve their climate change actions and disaster risk reduction management.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[OPINION] Makati's climate leadership

It is tempting for jaded observers to think of Mayor Abby Binay's move last week to declare a "state of climate emergency" in Makati City as a gimmick to buttress her position at the top of the political hierarchy of one of the country's wealthiest local government units (LGUs) and premier business hub.

Romualdez assures Japan: PH policy reforms would improve business climate

By: Gabriel Pabico Lalu

Manila, Philippines — House Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez has assured the Japanese ambassador to the Philippines that the policy reforms that the administration will institute are expected to improve the business climate in the country.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

EDC tapped by Monde Nissin for RE supply

By Richmond Mercurio

The Monde Nissin group has tapped First Gen Corp. subsidiary Energy Development Corp. (EDC) for the supply of renewable energy.

Floods hit Metro Manila anew

By Marc Jayson Cayabyab

A heavy downpour flooded parts of Metro Manila on Monday night, four days after torrential rains caused floods and power outages in parts of Luzon including the capital region and the Visayas on Friday.

Parañaque to build disaster-resilient evacuation center

A disaster-resilient evacuation center will be constructed in Parañaque City to strengthen its emergency response and recovery efforts during emergencies and occurrence of strong typhoons, severe flooding and other disastrous events.

[OPINION] We should look to renewables immediately

By John Altomonte

As climate change-induced heat waves, energy crises and inflationary concerns sweep across the globe, the Philippines sits at a critical junction with a new administration at the helm. Navigating a complex energy transition is notoriously difficult, especially while having to balance the need to adapt to climate change simultaneously.

THE VISAYAN DAILY STAR

[Opinion] Climate change and education

The Department of Education said it is eyeing a collaboration with experts to improve climate change education, particularly at the basic education level, in response to a new international study that urged people to start preparing for the possibility of a “climate endgame.”

CCC IN THE NEWS:

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM PRESS RELEASE

SSS and Climate Change Commission forge partnership to benefit more government job order, contract of service workers

Social Security System (SSS) President and Chief Executive Officer Michael G. Regino and Climate Change Commission (CCC) Secretary Robert E.A. Borje signed a pact on July 14, 2022 at the SSS Main Office in Quezon City that will provide social security coverage to additional job order and contract of service workers working in the government.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

DepEd on Climate education

By Janvic Mateo, Delon Porcalla

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has welcomed the DepEd’s commitment to strengthen climate education in the country.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS-CBN NEWS

'Fruits, veggies better for planet but chips have low environmental impact'

By: Agence France-Presse

Washington- Eating fruits and vegetables is better for the planet than eating meat and cheese, but a new study by scientists showed chips and sugary drinks also have a very low environmental impact.

Scientists analyzed some 57,000 products sold in supermarkets in Britain and Ireland, in a large study published by the scientific journal PNAS.

The researchers, who hope that their study may allow consumers to shop more sustainably without sacrificing anything to their health, also compared the results with the nutritional qualities of these foods.

They found that juice concentrates, sodas or other fruit juices are among the products sold with the lowest environmental impact -- because they are mostly composed of water -- but their nutritional quality is poor.

Researchers believe that in general, the more sustainable a food is, the better it is from a nutritional point of view.

The study confirms what other previous reports had already advanced by analyzing single ingredients, such as fruits or red meat.

The novelty of the latest report is that its analysis relates to products made up of multiple ingredients, such as sauces, prepared meals, and others.

That task was complicated by the fact that the quantity of each ingredient is considered a trade secret, and therefore no real details are disclosed: Only about three percent of the more than 57,000 products sold by eight food retailers had their composition fully disclosed.

Scientists responded by developing an algorithm based on the few known pieces of information to evaluate the missing products -- in Britain and Ireland, ingredients are notably listed in order of quantity used.

To assess the environmental impact, four factors were considered: greenhouse gas emissions, use of limited water resources, land use, and eutrophication, which is when waterways are enriched with minerals and nutrients, mostly from fertilizers.

Bread, but also certain cereals and prepared meals or desserts, have a relatively low or intermediate environmental impact.

On the other hand, fish, cheese and meat -- especially red meat -- have a high impact.

"Replacing meat, dairy, and eggs with plant-based alternatives could have large environmental and health benefits," the study notes.

But "smaller" transitions can also help. For example, beef lasagna, with a high environmental impact, could be replaced by chicken or pork lasagna, or vegetarian.

In the future, better knowing the proportions and origin of different ingredients would help to determine more precisely their impact on the environment, the researchers said.

BUSINESS WORLD

More than half of human infectious diseases can be worsened by climate change

By: Tristan McKenzie, Camilo Mora, and Hannah von Hammerstein

Climate change can exacerbate a full 58% of the infectious diseases that humans come in contact with worldwide, from common waterborne viruses to deadly diseases like plague, our new research shows.

Our team of environment and health scientists reviewed decades of scientific papers on all known pathogenic disease pathogens to create a map of the human risks aggravated by climate-related hazards.

The numbers were jarring. Of 375 human diseases, we found that 218 of them, well over half, can be affected by climate change.

Flooding, for example, can spread hepatitis. Rising temperatures can expand the life of mosquitoes carrying malaria. Droughts can bring rodents infected with hantavirus into communities as they search for food.

With climate change influencing more than 1,000 transmission pathways like those and climate hazards increasingly globally, we concluded that expecting societies to successfully adapt to all of them isn't a realistic option. The world will need to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change to reduce these risks.

To be able to prevent global health crises, humanity needs a comprehensive understanding of the pathways and the magnitude with which climate change might affect pathogenic diseases.

We focused on 10 climate-related hazards linked to rising greenhouse gas emissions: atmospheric warming, heat waves, drought, wildfires, heavy precipitation, flooding, storms, sea-level rise, ocean warming and land cover change. Then we looked for studies discussing specific and quantifiable observations of human disease occurrences linked to those hazards.

In total, we reviewed over 77,000 scientific papers. Of those, 830 papers had a climatic hazard affecting a specific disease in an explicit place and/or time, allowing us to create a database of climatic hazards, transmission pathways, pathogens and diseases. An interactive map of every pathway between hazard and pathogen is available online.

The largest number of diseases aggravated by climate change involved vector-borne transmission, such as those spread by mosquitoes, bats or rodents. Looking at the type of climate hazard, the majority were associated with atmospheric warming (160 diseases), heavy precipitation (122) and flooding (121).

We found four key ways climatic hazards interact with pathogens and humans:

1) Climate-related hazards bring pathogens closer to people.

In some cases, climate-related hazards are shifting the ranges of animals and organisms that can act as vectors for dangerous pathogenic diseases.

For example, warming or changes in precipitation patterns can alter the distribution of mosquitoes, which are vectors of numerous human pathogenic diseases. In recent decades, geographic changes in outbreaks of mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue have been linked to these climatic hazards.

2) Climate-related hazards bring people closer to pathogens.

Climate disasters can also alter human behavior patterns in ways that increase their chances of being exposed to pathogens. For example, during heat waves, people often spend more time in water, which can lead to an increase in waterborne disease outbreaks.

Notably, *Vibrio*-associated infections increased substantially in Sweden and Finland following a heat wave in northern Scandinavia in 2014.

3) Climate-related hazards enhance pathogens.

In some cases, climate-related hazards have led to either environmental conditions that can increase opportunities for pathogens to interact with vectors or increase the ability of pathogens to cause severe illness in humans.

For example, standing water left by heavy precipitation and flooding can provide breeding grounds for mosquitoes, leading to increased transmission of diseases such as yellow fever, dengue, malaria, West Nile fever and leishmaniasis.

Studies have shown that rising temperatures may also help viruses become more resistant to heat, resulting in increased disease severity as pathogens become better able to adapt to fever in the human body.

For instance, studies have suggested that rising global temperatures are leading to increased heat tolerance of fungal pathogens. The sudden appearance on multiple continents of treatment-resistant human infections of *Candida auris*, a fungus that was previously nonpathogenic to humans, has been associated with increasing global temperatures. Similarly, fungi in urban environments have been shown to be more heat tolerant than those in rural areas, which tend to be cooler.

4) Climate-related hazards weaken the body's ability to cope with pathogens.

Climate-related hazards can affect the human body's ability to cope with pathogens in two key ways. They can force people into hazardous conditions, such as when disaster

damage leads to people living in crowded conditions that might lack good sanitation or increase their exposure to pathogens.

Hazards can also reduce the body's capacity to fight off pathogens, through malnutrition, for example. Living through climatic hazards may also induce increased cortisol production from stress, leading to a reduction in the human body's immune response.

Climate change presents a significant threat to human lives, health and socioeconomic well-being. Our map shows just how extensive that threat can be. In our view, to dial back the risk, humanity will have to put the brakes on the human-caused greenhouse gas emissions fueling global warming.

CNN

Many Americans still don't think climate change is coming for them

By: Zachary Wolf

While parts of his state have been ravaged by deluge this summer, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky is pretty sure most Americans don't really care about the climate crisis.

McConnell has been rightly pushing for federal disaster relief to get Kentuckians back on their feet after the freak floods.

He did the same late last year when freak tornadoes swept through the state. That kind of spending is OK.

But when he led Republican opposition to the massive bill Democrats hope will get the country off of carbon-emitting energy sooner, McConnell said people are concerned with other things.

"The American people are clear about their priorities. Environmental regulation is a 3% issue," McConnell said in a statement on Sunday following the Senate's passage of the bill. "Americans want solutions for inflation, crime, and the border," he added, suggesting Democrats shouldn't be spending on the climate crisis.

A failure to tie floods to climate spending

Neither of Kentucky's Republican senators voted for the climate bill. The state's Democratic governor, Andy Beshear, rarely mentions climate change and, as Inside Climate News has pointed out, he does not list climate change as a driving force behind his environmental policy.

Democrats like Beshear and West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin who can succeed in coal states aren't going to advertise the climate crisis.

"I wish I could tell you why we keep getting hit here in Kentucky," Beshear said of the flooding and to the consternation of climate activists who know exactly why Kentucky keeps getting hit. "I wish I could tell you why areas where people may not have much continue to get hit and lose everything. I can't give you the why, but I know what we do in response to it. And the answer is everything we can. These are our people. Let's make sure we help them out."

In the wake of tragic flooding might not be the time to caterwaul about the climate crisis, but as the rate of natural disasters increases, as scientists say it will, the dots will have to be connected for more Americans.

About half the country doesn't think the climate crisis will hurt them

A majority of Americans acknowledge that climate change is real and that humans contribute to it.

But a lot of people in eastern Kentucky might not know they're feeling the effects of the climate crisis.

About half the country in 2021 -- 47% -- believed global warming would harm them personally, according to data gathered by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication.

It used a statistical model to apply the results on a state-by-state basis and estimated that Kentucky residents were less likely than the American public as a whole to believe that humans are mostly to blame for climate change or that climate change would harm them personally.

Even mentioning climate change can be polarizing
When the climate bill was in doubt last year, CNN's René Marsh visited parts of West Virginia that suffered disastrous flooding in 2016.

'I'm not buying into the whole climate change thing,' Jimmy Rader, a retired Iraq war veteran in Elkview, West Virginia, told Marsh. He was still rebuilding his house years after it was taken out by the flooding. Watch that report here.
And read Marsh's great story this week about how melting ice in Greenland could create an opportunity to mine nickel and cobalt needed to power electric vehicles.
Not driving voters

The climate crisis might be the existential threat driving an increase in weird weather and national disasters, but it's not likely to drive the majority of people out to vote in November.

In a CNN poll conducted by SSRS in June and July, only about a third of registered voters said that climate change would be extremely important to their vote for Congress this year. That includes about half of Democrats and Democratic-leaning voters and just 13% of Republicans and Republican-leaning voters.

To McConnell's point about Americans' concerns, the economy and inflation were the top-cited issues.

A climate bill sold as an inflation bill
Democrats decided to market their climate and health care bill as the Inflation Reduction Act, even though it probably will have little or no short-term effect on inflation.
That doesn't mean Democrats can't claim to have done the world a solid by uniting to spend billions to more quickly cut down on carbon emissions.

But as long as they can't effectively tie the need for the spending to the natural disasters, it won't do much for them politically.

Climate spending will help red states too

Framed as economic opportunity, the move to renewable energy is finding an audience in red states, as CNN's Ella Nilsen wrote in April, when she looked at the booming wind industry in places such as Oklahoma.

That industry will certainly benefit from the nearly \$370 billion in climate spending over 10 years that Democrats are on track to deliver when the House votes on the sweeping bill later this week.

"Let's be clear: If we tackle our emissions, the root cause of what is driving global warming and a changing climate, then we will stabilize temperatures and we will keep the worst effects of climate change from impacting our communities and our people," said Ali Zaidi, the Biden administration's deputy national climate adviser, who appeared on CNN on Monday to talk about the climate bill but was also asked about the Kentucky flooding.

One more click

CNN's Brandon Tensley wrote for his Race Deconstructed newsletter that climate change is hitting some communities harder than others. He talked to Deke Arndt, the chief of climate science and services at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Centers for Environmental Information.

Key lines: "The reality is that when creeks get up and out of their banks, they almost always find the folks who are already living closer to the margins, whether these are people in manufactured housing or mobile homes or people in homes that are well within the floodplain," Arndt told CNN. "We saw it in eastern Kentucky last week. We saw it in my home region of western North Carolina last summer."

It's an unrelenting theme, experts say: Flash floods, in particular, punch hard on already vulnerable communities. To help protect against climate-related hazards, we must think about disaster mitigation not as a short-term goal -- but rather as a long-term one.

CNN PHILIPPINES

Billionaires are funding a massive treasure hunt in Greenland as ice vanishes

By: Rene Marsh

Some of the world's richest men are funding a massive treasure hunt, complete with helicopters and transmitters, on the west coast of Greenland.

The climate crisis is melting Greenland down at an unprecedented rate, which -- in a twist of irony -- is creating an opportunity for investors and mining companies who are searching for a trove of critical minerals capable of powering the green energy transition.

A band of billionaires, including Jeff Bezos, Michael Bloomberg and Bill Gates, among others, is betting that below the surface of the hills and valleys on Greenland's Disko Island and Nuussuaq Peninsula there are enough critical minerals to power hundreds of millions of electric vehicles.

"We are looking for a deposit that will be the first- or second-largest most significant nickel and cobalt deposit in the world," Kurt House, CEO of Kobold Metals, told CNN.

The Arctic's disappearing ice -- on land and in the ocean -- highlights a unique dichotomy: Greenland is ground zero for the impacts of climate change, but it could also become ground zero for sourcing the metals needed to power the solution to the crisis.

The billionaire club is financially backing Kobold Metals, a mineral exploration company and California-based startup, the company's representatives told CNN. Bezos, Bloomberg and Gates did not respond to CNN's requests for comment on this story. Kobold is partnered with Bluejay Mining to find the rare and precious metals in Greenland that are necessary to build electric vehicles and massive batteries to store renewable energy.

Thirty geologists, geophysicists, cooks, pilots and mechanics are camped at the site where Kobold and Bluejay are searching for the buried treasure. CNN is the first media outlet with video of the activity happening there.

Crews are taking soil samples, flying drones and helicopters with transmitters to measure the electromagnetic field of the subsurface and map the layers of rock below. They're using artificial intelligence to analyze the data to pinpoint exactly where to drill as early as next summer.

"It is a concern to witness the consequences and impacts from the climate changes in Greenland," Bluejay Mining CEO Bo Møller Stensgaard told CNN. "But, generally speaking, climate changes overall have made exploration and mining in Greenland easier and more accessible."

Stensgaard said that because climate change is making ice-free periods in the sea longer, teams are able to ship in heavy equipment and ship out metals out to the global market more easily.

Melting land ice is exposing land that has been buried under ice for centuries to millennia -- but could now become a potential site for mineral exploration.

"As these trends continue well into the future, there is no question more land will become accessible and some of this land may carry the potential for mineral development," Mike Sfraga, the chair of the United States Arctic Research Commission, told CNN.

Greenland could be a hot spot for coal, copper, gold, rare-earth elements and zinc, according to the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland. The government of Greenland, according to the agency, has done several "resource assessments throughout the ice-free land" and the government "recognizes the country's potential to diversify the national economy through mineral extraction."

Sfraga said that pro-mining stance is not without regard for the environment, which is central to Greenland's culture and livelihood.

"The government of Greenland supports the responsible, sustainable, and economically viable development of their natural resources to include mining of a broad range of minerals," Sfraga said.

Stensgaard noted that these critical minerals will "provide part of the solution to meet these challenges" that the climate crisis presents.

In the meantime, Greenland's vanishing ice -- which is pushing sea level higher -- is a great concern for scientists who study the Arctic.

"The big concern for Arctic sea ice is that it's been disappearing over the last several decades its predicted to potentially disappear in 20 to 30 years," Nathan Kurtz, a NASA scientist who studies sea ice, told CNN. "In the fall, what used to be Arctic ice cover year-round is now just going to be seasonal ice cover."

ENVIRO NEWS NIGERIA

UNECA chief seeks increased, urgent funding to mitigate climate change in Africa

Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Vera Songwe, has called for urgent and increased funding to mitigate the impact of climate change in Africa.

The UNECA chief called for a transparent and fair carbon pricing mechanism so that Africa would be able to receive about \$180 billion a year to mitigate the effects of climate change.

She urged African countries to build food self-sufficiency by making use of their fertile lands and boosting their capacity for production of fertiliser in the continent.

She said at least 23 African countries have seen their currencies depreciate by over 15 per cent owing to the recent disruption of food supply to the continent.

“The Ukraine crisis highly affects Africa’s capacity to be able to afford the already escalating food, fuel, and fertiliser prices.

“The continent is highly dependent on food imports from Russia and Ukraine.”

Songwe advised countries in the continent, especially South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, to enhance their agricultural productivity by making use of their fertile lands and fertiliser produced in other parts of the continent.

According to her, Africa exports more volume of fertiliser than it consumes.

The UNECA chief urged countries such as Morocco, Egypt, Nigeria, and Tanzania to produce high quality and cleaner fertiliser to meet demands in the continent.

“On average, in Africa, we use about 15 kilograms of fertilizer per hectare, compared to about 171 kilogrammes in Ukraine and Russia.”

“That is why we are importing food from them,” Songwe said.

FOX NEWS

Biden decries 'heartbreaking' Kentucky flood devastation, links it to climate change

By: Kelly Laco

President Biden described the "heartbreaking" devastation in Kentucky in a trip to survey damage from floods that have killed nearly two dozen people, suggesting the natural disaster was related to climate change.

Biden landed in Kentucky on Monday to survey the flooding that killed at least 37 people last week. Biden and First Lady Jill Biden are meeting with Democratic Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear and touring the devastation throughout the afternoon.

During an open press briefing, Biden brought up climate change as a cause of many disasters that have occurred since he took office.

"As you all know, we've suffered a consequence of climate change, a significant number of other catastrophes around the nation. Just in the year and a half I've been the president I know over thousands of acres of forests are burning. More forests have burned down in the West than the entire state of New Jersey, New York, all the way down to the Delmarva peninsula," said Biden.

The president praised first responders and a rapid state, government and local response to the crisis and recounted the "heartbreaking" stories of families whose homes were destroyed and lives ripped apart.

He said: "And Jill and I are grateful for the first responders, and the National Guard, for what you do. You know, I think the first responders at least up until not too long were kind of taken for granted around the country. Not now, after Covid and some of the other things.

"And you think of how incredibly heartbreaking it is that people-- as you look at those creeks and streams that are now running brown. And you see from the helicopter, you see, automobiles, everything from buses to automobiles to homes, literally in the middle of the water on the side of the road. And you think to yourself, what in God's name happened to those 37 now? Thirty-eight people who are dead, you know, and you hear about the grandmother and granddaughter climb 16 hours to get out of the way and ended up in trouble."

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre also stated that the flooding is yet another sign that climate change is exacerbating natural disasters during a press gaggle en route to the commonwealth.

Beshear has deployed more than 400 National Guardsman to the affected region. Victims who lost their homes have had little respite in the days since, with the state suffering 100-degree weather and skyrocketing humidity.

So far, first responders have rescued some 1,300 people amid the debris of washed-away towns.

MANILA BULLETIN

PH asserts position on South China Sea at ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting

By: Joseph Pedrajas

The Philippines is committed to address concerns related to the South China Sea with its Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) neighbors and other countries from outside the bloc as it asserted again its position over the disputed waters.

During the 55th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Cambodia, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Undersecretary for Bilateral Relations and Foreign Affairs Ma. Theresa Lazaro raised the country's priorities in this year's event, which would include asserting its territorial ownership of the South China Sea by citing the arbitral award.

In the meeting, ASEAN nations would get the chance to discuss with each other and external partners common and pressing concerns, which in this year included the situation in the South China Sea, Myanmar crisis, Covid-19 pandemic, Ukraine-Russia conflict and developments on the Cross-Strait relations.

According to DFA, Lazaro reiterated before the Philippine neighboring nations that the Arbitral Award and the 1982 UNCLOS are the twin anchors of policy and actions of the Philippines on the West Philippine Sea.

Lazaro said that while the Philippines remains committed to efforts within ASEAN to resolve the South China Sea disputes, it also recognizes the growing list of countries supporting the Award.

Meanwhile, the department official also said the country hopes that the new East Asia Summit (EAS) Plan of Action in 2023 to 2027, which was adopted during the EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting, will continue the momentum of identifying concrete ways to address pressing regional and global challenges.

Among challenges included public health emergencies, climate change, and emerging opportunities in digital technologies, among the new generation of issues.

Lazaro represented Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Enrique Manalo at the 55th AMM after the latter tested positive for Covid-19 and was not able to push through with his scheduled meeting with his Asian counterparts.

Aside from the 55th AMM, there were also other foreign minister-level meetings attended by Lazaro on behalf of the Philippine government.

There, Lazaro also announced that the Philippines will host the EAS Workshop on Maritime Cooperation in Manila in September as she noted that "maritime cooperation will remain at the heart of Philippine initiatives in the East Asia Summit."

Satellite Internet safeguards lives and businesses from natural disasters

Living in Barangay Santa Ines in Tanay, Rizal Province, Mylene Ramos is no stranger to floods. Surrounded by lush, mountainous, agricultural land at the foothills of the Sierra Madre Mountain, the town is also home to two large rivers. When a river floods, the locals are cut off from the nearby town, making it difficult to secure essential food and supplies; and halting trade for the locals who produce ginger and honey, as well as raise animals.

“The river flood here lasts for about three days,” says Mylene, who operates the local general store in Sitio Nayon with her family. “We cannot work, because the main livelihood here is trading.”

In this area there is no mobile phone signal or internet access, making them reliant on the local town for these services. So, when a disruptive natural event occurs, they lose all access to the wider world.

Satellite Technology is a game changer for rural areas

This all changed recently when local Internet Service Provider, Stellarsat connected the Ramos family store to affordable and high-speed internet via satellite. This connection vastly improved their everyday communication and provided a way for the Ramos family and their small community to prepare for natural events.

Using satellite technology, Kacific has been able to deliver an alternative to fiber connection that is dependable, high-speed, and affordable for rural and remote areas. The first Ka-band High-throughput Satellite, Kacific1, was launched in 2019 as a geostationary satellite. Kacific has concentrated spot beams that cover all the remote areas — from Batanes to Palawan and even all the way to Sulu. These spot beams are high power, resulting in availabilities between 99.5% and 99.9%. Additionally, Kacific can mitigate the effects of rain fade through diverse uplink availability, having two local teleports located in Subic Bay and Clark as its backup sites to ensure that connectivity remains available even in inclement weather.

Ka-band technology as a viable solution

Kacific’s Ka-band technology provides higher throughput in small 1.2-m antennas or terminal kits, making it simple and fast to install. This also means higher download and upload speeds that can provide better internet performance. Ka-band also allows lower prices per megabit. This new approach has drastically reduced the cost of both the internet and voice calls. Kacific achieves speeds of 85Mbps (70Mbps in download speeds; 15Mbps in upload speeds), with bandwidths offered at inexpensive rates. This speed is more than enough for a smooth internet experience. For bigger businesses and communities, Kacific can even provide 100Mbps in download and 20Mbps in upload speeds for up to 60 users. Stellarsat offers unlimited plans starting at ₱5,940 in the Philippines. Terminals are offered for a one-time terminal fee of ₱34,000 or ₱52,000

depending on the model. A one-time installation fee of ₱10,000 is charged by distributors to install the terminal in a specific area.

The Philippines is highly exposed to flooding

Mylene's husband Raynold, a merchant who delivers ginger to the city-based co-operative, agrees that satellite broadband access is hugely beneficial. He can contact the co-operative without needing to leave his area in search of a communication network. This helps him and the growers in managing logistics and customer demand, especially in preparation for extreme weather and flooding.

The story of the Ramos family is common. The Philippines is particularly prone to flooding, with the region experiencing an average of 20 cyclones a year and heavy rainfall. An estimated 176,000 Filipinos are affected by flooding annually, with the damage reaching over US\$600 million. With climate change leading to more unstable weather events, these figures are set to climb.

Businesses need backup internet connection

Natural disasters hit businesses hard as well. According to a report by Swiss Re, global economic losses from natural catastrophes reached \$270 billion in 2021. Companies and governments lose money every year due to inevitable short telecom network disruptions, bringing business to a standstill.

This is where Kacific Enterprise Internet Backup can help, by providing a secondary high-speed internet connection via a small satellite dish. This very affordable on-demand, hot-backup package allows organizations, factories, and enterprise branches to recover quickly and automatically. They will be able to continue with normal activities, even if their primary internet access is compromised.

Kacific Enterprise Backup includes a one-off satellite dish installation at each site, combined with a simple per-month, per-site package, far offsetting the cost of regular, short, or mid-term internet disruptions. It can be scaled to suit business needs from SMEs up to large-scale enterprise sites.

With Stellarsat powered by Kacific, businesses and residents all over the Philippines now have the option to use Ka-band satellite internet to ensure that connectivity remains following a natural disaster.

MANILA STANDARD

Climate emergency exhibit showcases 28 international art agencies

World Weather Network, a community of creatives reporting on weather and climate, has launched an international online exhibition that features a constellation of 28 arts agencies from around the world.

Dubbed as Weather Stations, each of the institutions demonstrates the respective country's atmospheric condition through artworks, stories, reflections, and images to create an archipelago of world views and voices. Thus, it better depicts the issue of climate change across multiple localities and languages.

The Philippine Weather Station is represented by Tropical Climate Forensics by Filipino trans-disciplinary artist Derek Tumala.

It is a virtual world that provides an in-depth look at the anchors of the crisis in the tropics across the past, present, and a speculative future. It features a single crosshatch plane that holds biomes that float as seemingly independent entities. A world in its own right, each diorama encapsulates a timeline of climate decisions that led to the current catastrophe.

The collection includes Init (Heat), Bulkan (Volcanoes), Bagyo (Typhoon), Tubig (Water), Gubat (Forest), Komunidad (Community) and Obserbatoryo (Observatory).

It drew inspiration from the artist's residency, through an Art Fair Philippines grant, at the Manila Observatory, one of the oldest meteorological observatories in Southeast Asia. Built by the Jesuit fathers in 1865, the scientific research institution immersed Tumala into archival research which eventually shed light on the shifting patterns of the weather and climate in the country and in the region.

For the project, Tumala brings with him remarkable artistry that delves into the intersections of art, science, and technology. His exploratory works, which mostly engage new media, have been shown at Art Basel Hong Kong, Salzburg Global Seminar, Tokyo Design Week, and Beyond Time Residency Poland. He likewise initiated Mvltiverse, a group of multimedia artists that explores the wonders of moving images and STEAM/Projects, a collective of technologists and artists.

Tumala was commissioned by the Museum of Contemporary Art and Design (MCAD) of the De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde, with support from the British Council's Creative Commissions for Climate Action, a global program exploring climate change through art, science, and digital technology.

The Philippine Islands: Tropical Climate Forensics is the first fully online exhibition of Benilde MCAD.

The 28 weather stations likewise include Lichens Never Lie in Grasse, France by Nicoletta Fiorucci Foundation; Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty in Great Salt Lake, Utah, USA by Holt-Smithson Foundation; The Library of Water in Stykkishólmur, Iceland by Icelandic Art Center; Coastline, Andes, and Rainforest in Peru by MALI-Museo de Arte Lima; NJAF Cemetary and Mesopotamian Marshes in Iraq by Ruya Foundation; and Guiana Shield Rainfest, Guyana, South America by Sophia Point Research Center.

The Comporta Weather Station in Tomar, Portugal by Terra Foundation; Great Ocean of Kiwa in Auckland, New Zealand by Te Tuhi; Cloud Atlas – the Tang, Aranya Gold Coast in Qinhuangdao, Hebei Province, China by UCCA Center for Contemporary Art and Aranya Art Center; Seoul Weather Station in Seoul, South Korea by Art Sonje Center; Wodiwodi in New South Wales, Australia by Bundanon Arts Organization; and The Farm, Ijebu, Nigeria by Yinka Shonibare Foundation are also included in the map.

The climate emergency was likewise presented through the perspectives of diverse towns, cities, and countries, such as Turin, Guarene, and Venice in Italy by Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo; Fogo Island, Canady by Fogo Island Arts; Dubai, Jeddah, and Arabian Peninsula by Art Jameel; Basque Country in Spain by Artingenium Art Office; and Bangladesh by Dhaka Art Summit.

Other participating art agencies and institutions include Enoura Observatory in Kanagawa, Japan; Artangel in London, UK; IHME Helsinki/Pro Arte Foundation in Helsinki, Finland; NEON Organization in Athens, Greece; Office for Contemporary Art Norway in Oslo, Norway; POOL in Johannesburg, South Africa; The Waag in Amsterdam, Netherlands; SAHA Association in Istanbul, Turkey; and 32° East Arts Center in Kampala, Uganda.

The exhibition will run until July 2023.

MIRAGE NEWS

UN officially recognised right to healthy environment. Here's what that means

The historic recent UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution, recognising a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a universal human right, did not come out of the blue.

Landslide support for the resolution (161 votes in favour, none against, eight abstentions*) followed more than a decade of activism and advocacy by professionals, communities and environmental justice movements all over the world.

When the UN appointed an independent expert on human rights and the environment in 2012, it was already 40 years since the first global UN Conference on the Environment in Stockholm, whereupon the Stockholm Declaration positioned the environment as a major world issue for the first time. The current Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, David R. Boyd, backed by a groundswell of demand from Indigenous Peoples, social movements, local communities, academics and groups including Greenpeace, led the push for adoption in October last year of the right to a healthy environment by the UN Human Rights Council ('HRC').

Climate and environmental litigation – lawyering up for the planet – had been gathering pace and, less than a year after the HRC, the UNGA's historic resolution smashed through the wall of cynical billion-dollar industrial propaganda, in the attempt to deny, disown and downplay the environmental and human rights atrocities their businesses caused.

While many cases have been argued, many more major ones are still under way – each case establishing a stronger foothold for others and adding weight to the central argument that governments must protect – and corporations must respect – the right of present and future generations to enjoy a healthy and safe environment, essential for the fulfilment of the right to life (and future family life).

Cases currently pending before the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) include the Greenpeace-supported Swiss 'KlimaSeniorinnen' (Senior Women for Climate Protection), whose advanced ages mean, if States fail to act, they will be at risk of premature death, and their descendants left to foot the bill for climate disasters. Meanwhile, at the other end of the generational scale, six young Portuguese applicants are taking 33 countries to the ECtHR for failing to act to protect vulnerable youths already experiencing physical and psychological impacts, including eco-anxiety, and the costs of climate breakdown for which they bear no responsibility. The ECtHR will also hear the first challenge to new oil exploration, brought by Greenpeace Nordic, Nature & Youth, together with six young Norwegian applicants.

From young to old, these and other climate cases will be bolstered by the UNGA resolution: it empowers the climate-vulnerable and emboldens judges to take firmer

stances on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and to order governments to hold polluters to account and guarantee higher environmental standards for present and future generations. This resolution provides a precedent, which may soon be strengthened further if progressed to the International Court of Justice. It underscores the gathering worldwide wave of environmental litigation that will ultimately help overrun the fortress of fossil fuel fraud and make the polluters pay for harming this Earth and its people for so long.

around the world that will benefit from or intersect with the UNGA resolution:

Africa

- Greenpeace Africa and Natural Justice vs Shell on South Africa's Wild Coast
- Lawsuits continue against Shell's appalling record in Ogoniland, Nigeria
- STOPEACOP challenge to the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), threatening the biodiversity, communities and environmental integrity of Uganda and Tanzania

Americas

- Greenpeace Argentina and others' challenge to offshore oil exploration in the Argentine Sea
- The Escazu Agreement in Latin America and the Caribbean to protect environmental rights defenders
- CARICOM support for Advisory Opinion from International Court of Justice
- USA: Numerous cases filed by cities and states across the US allege major fossil fuel industry players misled the public on climate change to devastating effect, while many Federal courts and the Supreme Court remain hostile to climate cases

Asia & Pacific

- The implementation of the Philippines Human Rights Commission Report, whose hearings found in May 2022 that Carbon Major companies are legally and morally accountable for their role in climate change
- The call by Vanuatu and the Pacific Island Forum to "take the world's biggest issue to the world's highest court", asking the International Court of Justice to set out legal obligations on States to protect their peoples from the adverse impacts of climate change

Europe

- The Urgenda climate case in Netherlands, whereby the Dutch Supreme Court found that the government must reduce emissions in line with human rights obligations
- The Klimaseniorinnen in Switzerland bringing a lawsuit against the Swiss government
- The People v Arctic Oil in Norway bringing Arctic oil drilling to the ECtHR (petition in Norwegian)
- The Neubauer case: young people in Germany challenging the government's climate goals
- L’Affaire du Siècle in France
- Shell ordered to reduce emissions by 45% in the Netherlands
- The Polish energy giant PGE GiEK ordered to decide whether to prepare decarbonisation strategy
- The appeal by Greenpeace Belgium and others against state approval of petrochemicals giant Ineos's plastics plant project in the Port of Antwerp
- The challenge to the UK government over the approval of Shell's new Jackdaw oil field exploration

Maria Alejandra Serra Barney is Climate Justice and Liability Counsel at Greenpeace International; Richard Harvey is Legal Counsel, Campaigns and Actions, in the Greenpeace International Legal Unit

*Belarus, Cambodia, China, Ethiopia, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation and Syria abstained, arguing that the right can only be recognised as legally enforceable through international treaties.

ONE NEWS PH

UP Resilience Institute working with LGUs to improve climate change actions

UP Resilience Institute Director Prof. Mahar Lagmay says they are coordinating with various local governments to improve their climate change actions and disaster risk reduction management.

This comes after Mayor Abby Binay declared a climate emergency in Makati City, pushing to implement climate resilience initiatives and address the effects of climate change.

Lagmay notes that the Comprehensive Land Use Plan will help the local governments to make sure their sectors won't be heavily affected by climate change, citing other natural disasters like floods.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Makati's climate leadership

It is tempting for jaded observers to think of Mayor Abby Binay's move last week to declare a "state of climate emergency" in Makati City as a gimmick to buttress her position at the top of the political hierarchy of one of the country's wealthiest local government units (LGUs) and premier business hub.

But to do so would be to dismiss unfairly all the good that the policy pronouncement can bring to the city and, ultimately, to the rest of the country if this experiment is executed properly and ends up achieving its goals.

A cursory glance at the city will reveal that, while its central business district is dominated by high rise buildings and gleaming skyscrapers, many residential areas along its fringes are less affluent and particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Yes, Makati City has its share of densely packed and densely populated neighborhoods that are not part of its iconic skyline. In these parts, pollution caused by human activities is high and, when the rains come, the waters rise, trapping residents in their flooded homes and preventing people from moving from one place to another whether in their vehicles, bicycles, or on foot.

In fact, no less than nine of the city's 33 barangays—almost a third of them—are classified by the city government as "flood prone."

But flooding is just one visible challenge that Makati City is grappling with. The others are less visible, but no less grave.

Because of its unique position as the Philippines' top location for commerce and industry, Makati City also has one of the largest carbon footprints and greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, among LGUs in the country.

Its central business district is a leading consumer of electricity and all that power, though generated elsewhere, adds to the emissions that eventually aggravate climate change by pushing the planet's temperature higher, slowly but surely.

The same can be said of all the public and private vehicles that move into Makati City each morning to deliver up to four million workers, prepandemic, to their offices and take them back to their homes in the evening. All those buses, jeepneys, cars, and motorcycles emit carbon monoxide, which adds to the world's climate problem.

For the city's chief executive, it can be tempting to simply kick the proverbial can down the road and leave it to future generations to solve. But Mayor Binay did the right thing by grabbing the problem by the horns in an attempt to solve it.

For one, by declaring a state of climate emergency, the city's chief executive elevates the issue to the top of a list of challenges that the LGU must handle. Such a declaration makes climate change a "clear and present danger" to which all the resources of the city's instrumentalities must be oriented to address.

Hopefully, this move will result in policies that will require businesses operating in the city to consume electricity more efficiently, including installing more power-saving devices, using more cost effective appliances and office apparatus, and relying more on renewable energy in its many forms for their electricity needs.

And such a policy that will be imposed on office, commercial, or industrial users should eventually be cascaded down to the city's residents.

We also hope that the Makati LGU will put a priority on reducing the city's dependence on vehicles that use internal combustion engines and will instead shift reliance on those that use hybrid or electric engines.

There are many ways to go about this, including incentivizing ownership of hybrid or electric vehicles, or incentivizing the use of urban mobility solutions, like traditional and electric bicycles (the latter through a bike sharing program, for example).

The government can also implement disincentives like imposing charges on the use of cars in the city during peak hours, similar to an electronic toll program used in Singapore to discourage vehicle use during the morning and evening rush hours.

And that's just the tip of the solutions iceberg for starters. There are a host of other innovative solutions available to the city to address problems of flooding, garbage disposal, and urban blight, all easily implementable with the political will that has distinguished this Binay from the previous holders of power from her family.

Indeed, it is tempting to think of all this as a political gimmick. But if Mayor Abby Binay's track record in her past two terms is any indication, there's a good chance that her initiative to help protect the climate on a city level will bear fruit and, more importantly, serve as a model for other LGUs around the country in facing down their own climate challenges.

Romualdez assures Japan: PH policy reforms would improve business climate

By: Gabriel Pabico Lalu

Manila, Philippines — House Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez has assured the Japanese ambassador to the Philippines that the policy reforms that the administration will institute are expected to improve the business climate in the country.

Romualdez said this on Tuesday, after Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Koshikawa Kazuhiko and his team paid a courtesy call at the House of Representatives, where the two officials discussed several matters, including the strong bilateral relations between Manila and Tokyo.

“It’s really great that Japan remains and has been one of the country’s foremost trade, investment and development partner for a very long time,” the Speaker said in a statement.

“Through strategic policy reforms, we will improve the business climate in the Philippines to attract more direct investments from Japan,” he added.

Aside from Koshikawa, other officers of the Japanese Embassy were also present, including the following:

Kuronuma Kenji, Senior Representative of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

Akihiko Hitomi, First Secretary

Yukari Koike, Political Officer

Romualdez said that Japan is a vital trading partner of the Philippines, with total trade in 2021 amounting to US\$21.83 billion — up by 17.1 percent compared to numbers in 2020.

This also makes Japan the country’s second-largest trading partner.

The House leader also thanked the country as it was among the first to extend help to the country after the Magnitude 7.0 Abra earthquake last July 27, through JICA.

“We deeply appreciate the aid provided and acknowledge the strong cooperation with Japan on humanitarian assistance and disaster response,” he said.

Another topic discussed during the talks was the untimely demise of former Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe, who was assassinated near a train station at Nara City last July 8.

Recently, the House passed resolutions offering the sincerest condolences of the House for the people of Japan regarding Abe’s passing.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

EDC tapped by Monde Nissin for RE supply

By Richmond Mercurio

The Monde Nissin group has tapped First Gen Corp. subsidiary Energy Development Corp. (EDC) for the supply of renewable energy.

The group, composed of Monde Nissin Corp., Monde M.Y. San Corp., and Sarimonde Foods Corp., has signed up for close to 16 megawatts (MW) of clean power for its nine facilities in the country.

The move aims to lower the group's carbon footprint.

EDC said the supply agreement was finalized in 2021 and commenced for five of its facilities last month.

Two other facilities will start getting their power supply by December and two more next year, it said.

Under the partnership with EDC, the Monde Nissin group expects to cut in half or by as much as 100,000 tons per year its annual emission of carbon dioxide.

The five-year power supply comes from EDC's Unified Leyte Geothermal Power Plant complex, one of the company's largest facilities.

"It is heartening to partner with like-minded companies who are also as committed in addressing the society's present needs without harming the ability of future generations to meet theirs. And our new partners do this by making a conscious decision of creating a more positive impact on its consumers and on the environment through shifting to RE," said Carlo Vega, vice president and head of First Gen's power marketing, trading, and economics.

"We thank Monde Nissin for joining us in our journey towards a decarbonized and regenerative future by choosing our green power supply," Vega said.

Apart from being able to lower their carbon footprint, Monde Nissin will also enjoy more affordable electricity rates because of the value-added tax zero rating on geothermal power generation.

Geothermal rates are stable and relatively predictable, as they are not indexed to any fuel commodities and foreign currencies that are subject to fluctuation.

"The message is clear and consistent. We should embrace sustainability and look into more ways of incorporating sustainable practices in our businesses. What Monde Nissin and First Gen made possible is just a fraction of what the world needs. Let us hope that

more companies move in this direction for the sake of the planet and future generations,” Monde Nissin chief sustainability officer Marivic Cajucom-Uy said.

EDC has over 1,480 MW total installed capacity that accounts for 20 percent of the country’s total installed renewable energy capacity.

Its 1,185.40-MW geothermal portfolio accounts for 62 percent of the country’s total installed geothermal capacity.

Floods hit Metro Manila anew

By Marc Jayson Cayabyab

A heavy downpour flooded parts of Metro Manila on Monday night, four days after torrential rains caused floods and power outages in parts of Luzon including the capital region and the Visayas on Friday.

The rain caused gutter-deep flood as of 8:30 p.m. in the following areas, according to the city disaster risk reduction and management office: Finance Road corner Taft Avenue northbound, UN Avenue corner Taft northbound, Taft corner Quirino Avenue, Pedro Gil corner Taft southbound, V. Mapa corner Old Sta. Mesa, Magsaysay Boulevard and Taft-Padre Faura.

The flood in Manila, especially in Malate and Ermita, took time to subside because of the closure of three drainage outfalls – Padre Faura Drainage Main, Remedios Drainage and Estero de San Antonio de Abad – and the pending construction of pumping stations to expel water from these areas.

According to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), the Department of Public Works and Highways has yet to finish the construction of the pumping station and pipe installation.

The excess water is discharged to the Pasig River and not to Manila Bay because of the need to treat floodwaters being discharged to the bay through a sewage treatment plant, as part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program, according to MMDA flood control and sewage management office director Baltazar Melgar.

Dolomite beach link

Speaking to dzMM radio yesterday, Public Works Secretary Manuel Bonoan said the project is not yet finished because of the need to install longer pipes in order to divert floodwater and discharge it away from the artificial white sand dolomite project at the Manila Baywalk.

He said it is also part of the bay rehabilitation program to keep the dolomite beach clean.

Amid criticisms of being an artificial white beach project, the dolomite beach project is part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation efforts following a Supreme Court mandamus ordering government agencies to clean up the historic bay.

Monday night's downpour also caused flooding in the following areas of Caloocan, according to the city's disaster risk reduction and management office: 11th Avenue corner Rizal Avenue, 10th Avenue corner A. de Jesus, MacArthur Highway-Valenzuela boundary, EDSA Balintawak southbound-Quezon City boundary and 10th Avenue corner B. Serrano.

It also caused flood in parts of Valenzuela, such as portions of MacArthur Highway, the Dalandanan market and Arkong Bato, among others.

Parañaque to build disaster-resilient evacuation center

A disaster-resilient evacuation center will be constructed in Parañaque City to strengthen its emergency response and recovery efforts during emergencies and occurrence of strong typhoons, severe flooding and other disastrous events.

Mayor Eric Olivarez disclosed yesterday that the multimillion-peso evacuation center will be constructed beside the city's socialized housing project along C-5 Road Extension in Barangay La Huerta.

The evacuation center is designed specifically to be disaster-resilient to ensure that affected residents have access to safe and comfortable shelters in emergencies, according to Olivarez.

He said that during strong typhoons, severe flooding and other calamitous events, affected families were housed in school buildings, public gymnasiums, temporary tents and other government-owned facilities.

Olivarez said that most of the school buildings have no decent bathrooms, laundry area, water supply and comfortable sleeping area for evacuees.

"It's the right time that the city government build a dedicated evacuation center that has basic facilities and adequate emergency supplies, such as medicine, relief goods and sufficient potable water so that evacuees will no longer be jam-packed," he said.

To maintain cleanliness and prevent the spread of diseases, the proposed evacuation center will accommodate five to eight displaced families in a room, he said.

Aside from the socialized housing project, three other major projects are currently located in the government lot: the materials recovery facility, the city motor pool and the animal shelter, all initiated projects of former mayor Edwin Olivarez.

[OPINION] We should look to renewables immediately

By John Altomonte

As climate change-induced heat waves, energy crises and inflationary concerns sweep across the globe, the Philippines sits at a critical junction with a new administration at the helm. Navigating a complex energy transition is notoriously difficult, especially while having to balance the need to adapt to climate change simultaneously.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. outlined his administration's initiatives in his first State of the Nation Address last month, setting a sustainable energy agenda within the context of climate change. Stressing the need for cheap and reliable energy, renewables were highlighted as having immense potential in the country, particularly through wind and solar.

Marcos also briefly mentioned other renewable technologies such as geothermal and hydropower, and specifically highlighted the need to re-examine nuclear as an option. Other key considerations include expansion of transmission and distribution networks and strengthening electric cooperatives with the ultimate aim of reducing energy costs, particularly for households.

Overall, President Marcos outlined an admirable energy agenda, with the exception of one glaring, fossil-based issue: the "need" for natural gas.

Stating the long transition time needed to shift to renewables, "in the interim, natural gas will hold the key," said Marcos. In a continuation of the previous administration's efforts to develop natural gas in the country, Marcos stated that incentives would be granted to help development of the industry.

Here's the catch: the entirety of the country's natural gas sector is fueled by our only indigenous source in the Malampaya gas field, which is set to be fully depleted in a few years. Malampaya currently supplies five power plants for a combined installed capacity of 3,453 megawatts (MW). In the latest iteration of the Philippines' Energy Plan put forth by the previous administration, natural gas supply will rely almost entirely on imports to replace local supply.

Natural gas imports have proven detrimental across the globe this year, driving global inflation. Russia weaponizing gas supply to Europe has led to a tumbling Euro, fears of recessions and a lack of energy security. Asian gas markets have not fared much better, with spot prices almost triple what they were last year. Supply crunches in countries such as Pakistan, Thailand, Myanmar and India coupled with increased demand from heat waves have caused power prices to soar.

The rational reaction to global LNG markets would be to transition AWAY from the fossil fuel, not towards it. Even prior to the current energy crises, investors in natural gas risked exposure to \$14 billion in stranded assets. When compared against the already-cheaper option of renewables, there is clearly no need to develop the natural gas industry.

Wind and solar, technologies specifically highlighted by President Marcos, combine for a measly 0.3 percent of the country's energy supply. Around the world, these technologies are being deployed at rapid scales, providing cheap, reliable and secure power. Prioritizing natural gas at this point would only serve to set the Philippines back, likely even increasing power prices for consumers.

If we are to achieve the proposed climate agenda and accomplish a clean and just energy transition, President Marcos should forego natural gas and look to renewables immediately.

THE VISAYAN DAILY STAR

[Opinion] Climate change and education

The Department of Education said it is eyeing a collaboration with experts to improve climate change education, particularly at the basic education level, in response to a new international study that urged people to start preparing for the possibility of a “climate endgame.”

DepEd noted that while key climate change concepts were already integrated into the K-12 curriculum, there was a need to “strengthen [their] presence... by refining learning competencies and standards, and monitoring learning delivery.”

From kindergarten to junior high school, topics on disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) and climate change action are included in subject areas like health, science, Araling Panlipunan and Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao. On the other hand, a special subject on DRRM is offered as part of the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) strand in senior high school.

A new international research said that despite growing public consensus about the urgency of the climate crisis, high-impact climate scenarios still remain “dangerously underexplored” by both scientists and policymakers. The study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, scientists from the University of Cambridge argued that climate scientists must now look into outcomes “ranging from a loss of 10 percent of the global population to eventual human extinction.”

The scientists added that the consequences of global warming and its related risks are currently underexamined, and much of climate-related action remain naïve to extreme scenarios such as mass extinction. At the same time, phrases like “catastrophic climate change” remain deeply ambiguous and thus undermine scientific inquiry into the crisis.

The DepEd has started the initiative with a recently concluded “Climate Changemakers”, a 10-week online training course for some 400 teachers which consists of a core subject on the introduction to climate change, a specialized subject for teaching climate change, and a supplemental course for online learning facilitators.

Climate change is undoubtedly accelerating and the most affected will be the succeeding generations who must be prepared and equipped with the knowledge and tools to address and mitigate its impacts if mankind remains unable to do what must be done now. The role that the Department of Education will play in these necessary preparations will be crucial. It is good we are finally starting to take it seriously.*

CCC IN THE NEWS:

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM PRESS RELEASE

SSS and Climate Change Commission forge partnership to benefit more government job order, contract of service workers

Social Security System (SSS) President and Chief Executive Officer Michael G. Regino and Climate Change Commission (CCC) Secretary Robert E.A. Borje signed a pact on July 14, 2022 at the SSS Main Office in Quezon City that will provide social security coverage to additional job order and contract of service workers working in the government.

Regino said that job order and contract of service workers in the CCC will get SSS coverage under the KaltaSSS-Collect Program. Under the program, contract of service and job order workers will be classified as self-employed members of SSS. Government contract of service and job order workers are not covered by the Government Service Insurance System due to their employment status.

“Through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), CCC will serve as an authorized Coverage and Collection Partner of SSS. They can collect and remit monthly contributions of its job order and contract of service workers through a salary-deduction scheme,” Regino said.

He added that as SSS self-employed members, they will be entitled to receive social security benefits such as sickness, maternity, disability, retirement, funeral and death benefits. “They may also apply for our various loan programs which include salary and calamity, among others. On top of that, they will also get additional coverage from the Employees’ Compensation Program (ECP) for work-related contingencies,” he continued.

Regino lauded CCC for looking after the welfare of its job order and contract of service workers. “We salute CCC for taking time to give their job order workers the social security protection that they really deserve. We hope that other government agencies will be further inspired to imitate the effort of CCC’s leadership in securing the future of each of its employees and ensure that they have something to lean on in time of emergencies,” he added.

Also present during the MOA signing are (standing from left to right) CCC Strategic Partnership Division Chief Alexis D. Lapid and SSS Cooperatives and Informal Sector Department Concurrent Acting Head Carlo C. Villacorta.

As of May 2022, more than 350,000 job order and contract of service workers in 1,442 local government units (LGUs), 475 national government agencies, 106 state universities and colleges (SUCs), and 65 local water districts now have social security coverage through the KaltaSSS-Collect Program.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

DepEd on Climate Education

By Janvic Mateo, Delon Porcalla

Climate Education

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has welcomed the DepEd's commitment to strengthen climate education in the country.

"Climate change education is imperative as we develop our homegrown science and engage our children, youth, educators and education administrators in transformative climate actions," CCC Secretary Robert Borje said.

"A strengthened curriculum integrating climate change education is a vital step in empowering the citizenry in thinking critically and preparing for challenges of climate change," Borje added.

He emphasized that integrating climate change into the basic education curriculum is one way to raise the awareness of children and the youth about climate change.

The DepEd earlier vowed to further strengthen its climate education initiatives to develop students and personnel "who are proactive in championing resilient and sustainable schools."

It said climate change concepts are integrated in the K-12 curriculum, particularly in science, health, Araling Panlipunan, Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao, mathematics, English, Filipino, Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan/ Technology and Livelihood Economics, and Music, Arts and Physical Education.

"While climate change concepts are already integrated with the K-12 curriculum, there is a need to strengthen its presence in the curriculum by refining learning competencies and standards and monitoring learning delivery," the agency said.

=END=