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[Climate change worsens water crisis in PHL](#)

By: Francis Allan L. Angelo

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By: By Mohamed Alqataam Alzaabi, UAE Ambassador in Manila

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RAPPLER

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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By: Pia Lee-Brago

Government officials, scientists, academics and ocean experts convened to exchange views and collaborate on the Philippines' preparations for its participation in the third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) to be held in Nice, France in June 2025.

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[Climate Science: Key to effective strategies for Mindanao River Basin](#)

A strong grasp of climate science is crucial to formulate effective climate policies and strategies that will address the complex challenges posed by climate change.

PALAWAN NEWS

[Philippines' low carbon bill to bridge climate investment gap](#)

The Philippines' Low Carbon Economy Investment Act of 2023 could bring the nation closer to achieving its Paris Agreement targets by mobilizing climate-focused private investments, requiring large corporations to implement Paris-aligned decarbonization plans, and laying the foundation for the country's long-term climate strategy.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Climate change to drive up inflation in the long run — BSP](#)

By: Jean Mangaluz

Climate change could drive inflation up in the Philippines up by 0.79 percentage points (ppt) in the long run, the Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said on Friday.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

DAILY GUARDIAN

[Climate change worsens water crisis in PHL](#)

By: Francis Allan L. Angelo

The Philippines is facing a mounting water crisis as climate change exacerbates already strained resources, experts said during a recent seminar hosted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS).

The event, part of the Socio-Economic Research Portal for the Philippines (SERP-P) Knowledge Sharing Series, brought to light the urgent need for sustainable water management policies in the country.

The seminar opened with a sobering reminder of the Philippines' precarious position on the global stage.

According to the 2023 World Risk Report, the country ranks as one of the most disaster-prone nations worldwide, a status that has only been exacerbated by climate change.

Over the last decade, the Philippines has suffered damages amounting to PHP 463 billion due to extreme weather events, with Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in 2013 serving as a devastating example of the human and economic toll of these disasters.

Dr. Aniceto Arbeta Jr., President of PIDS, underscored the urgent need for a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to disaster risk management and climate change adaptation. "The effects of climate change are no longer theoretical; they are here, and they are intensifying," he said.

Dr. Arbeta also emphasized the importance of leveraging the newly established UN Loss and Damage Fund, which aims to support vulnerable countries like the Philippines in mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Dr. Sonny Domingo, a senior research fellow at PIDS, outlined the increasing risks posed by climate change.

"From 2010 to 2019, extreme natural events and disasters caused damages amounting to PHP 463 billion, with a peak impact of 4% of our GDP in 2013," Domingo said. He emphasized the economic threat posed by climate change, projecting a potential GDP loss of USD 124 billion by 2050 if current trends continue.

The seminar also highlighted the need for stronger institutional mechanisms and better resource management at both the national and local levels.

The current utilization rate of local disaster risk reduction management funds is below 50%, a statistic that Dr. Sonny Domingo of PIDS described as "suboptimal."

He called for improved capacity building, better fiscal management, and the establishment of a robust local loss and damage fund system that can effectively interface with global funding mechanisms like the UN Loss and Damage Fund.

“We need to better position and prepare the country to tap into the newly established UN Loss and Damage Fund,” he added.

The seminar also focused on the critical state of the country’s water resources.

Despite having an annual freshwater supply of 146 billion cubic meters, the Philippines is already withdrawing 91 billion cubic meters, highlighting the inefficiency and potential over-exploitation of its water supply.

Environmental degradation, population growth, and urbanization have further strained these resources, experts noted.

Assistant Professor Samantha De Los Santos from the University of the Philippines Los Baños presented on the potential of nature-based solutions to address these challenges.

Her study in Butuan City demonstrated the feasibility of integrating green strategies, such as reforestation and sustainable agriculture, into urban planning to enhance resilience against climate-related disasters.

“Climate change is a global challenge, but its impacts are deeply local. Our response must be equally nuanced and locally grounded,” De Los Santos said, emphasizing the need for region-specific solutions in infrastructure development.

The seminar concluded with a strong call to action for policymakers to prioritize climate resilience and sustainable water management.

Dr. Arbeta Jr. stressed the importance of proactive and innovative approaches to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

“The effects of climate change are no longer theoretical; they are here, and they are intensifying,” Arbeta said.

The experts agreed on the necessity of adopting nature-based solutions such as reforestation, mangrove restoration, and sustainable agriculture. These approaches, they argued, are essential not only for combating climate change but also for ensuring the long-term sustainability of the country’s water resources.

“The challenge now is for policymakers to adapt to the dynamic needs of the country,” Diaz concluded, emphasizing the urgency of acting to secure water resources for future generations.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[From passion to action: Getting involved with aid efforts](#)

The Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, frequently affected by tropical cyclones, earthquakes, and other natural hazards. Climate change has heightened the need for humanitarian efforts, which makes organizations that provide aid, relief, and long-term development assistance crucial in helping vulnerable communities rebuild, recover and adapt.

If your passion lies in helping those who are in need, joining a humanitarian organization will give you the opportunity to directly contribute to disaster relief, recovery and the strengthening of community resilience.

The first step is to identify where your skills and passion align with the needs of these organizations. Do you have a background in healthcare, education, disaster response, or community organizing? Humanitarian organizations require a diverse range of skills — from medical professionals and logistics coordinators to educators and environmental advocates. Understanding your strengths will help you choose the right organization.

Many humanitarian organizations operate in the Philippines, including international agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and local groups like the Philippine Red Cross. Research these organizations to learn about their missions, values, and the work they do. For example, the Philippine Red Cross offers volunteer roles in disaster response, blood donation drives and various other services.

Humanitarian work often requires dedication, resilience and a commitment to long-term efforts. Whether you focus on emergency response, community development or advocacy, your work and involvement can have a profound and lasting impact. Stay engaged with your chosen organization, continue to build your skills, and recognize that every contribution plays a part in creating positive change.

By joining a humanitarian organization, we can help those in need, contribute to the broader goal of building stronger, more resilient communities, and ensure that no one is left behind in the face of adversity. Let's take the first step towards making a difference and explore this meaningful path.

MANILA BULLETIN

[\[Opinion\] UAE and the Philippines: Strategic partners looking ahead to the next 50 years](#)

By: By Mohamed Alqataam Alzaabi, UAE Ambassador in Manila

Since its founding more than 52 years ago, the UAE has actively cultivated political ties and fostered economic cooperation with the international community. Our partnership with the Republic of the Philippines epitomizes shared aspirations, building bridges of collaboration and communication, and strong people-to-people ties.

Over the past 50 years, the UAE and the Philippines have embraced a flourishing relationship built on solid and historic ties. These bilateral bonds, which started under the rule of the UAE's founding father, Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, have grown stronger and deeper for decades and have reached new heights under the dedication and wise leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE President, and the ambitious vision of His Excellency Ferdinand Marcos Jr., President of the Republic of the Philippines.

Our close ties with the Philippines are reflected in our joint endeavors and long-term development initiatives, exemplifying a commitment to mutual prosperity and sustainability. Both nations cooperate in various sectors, including energy, infrastructure, agriculture, tourism, minerals, and telecommunications. Moreover, through people-to-people exchanges, we have been able to forge a profound understanding of each other's history, culture, and progress in shaping our shared future. The UAE is home to over 200 nationalities, including Filipinos, living together in harmony, and the country stands out as one of the most diverse and secure nations globally.

Within less than one year, the UAE and the Philippines have signed six Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) in different fields, paving the way for enhanced concrete collaboration. Moreover, both governments are working to finalize additional agreements in various sectors, most notably the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), a free trade agreement that is expected to spur tremendous advances in bilateral trade and investment between the two countries.

While meetings and consultations between government officials and joint committees have become more frequent, bilateral exchange between the leaderships of both countries over the past two years has demonstrated increasing keenness on further enhancing ties. This was evident during the phone conversation between H.H. Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan and H.E. President Marcos Jr., in June 2023, which paved the way for extensive government discussions to further develop bilateral cooperation.

One year later, in June 2024, the visit by H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Manila reaffirmed and

reinforced these strong ties, as he met with H.E. President Marcos and H.E. Enrique A. Manalo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

During these meetings, both sides confirmed that although bilateral relations between the two countries had indeed reached new heights, there nevertheless remained a strong determination to seek and pursue new and even greater opportunities that would elevate and prioritize the relationship even further. In the same month, we were pleased to welcome First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos to the UAE on an exceptional and fruitful working visit.

Climate change, sustainability, and disaster resilience and preparedness are also key focuses for the UAE-Philippine partnership. In this regard, the UAE has supported the Philippines' bid to host the Board of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, which was launched last year in Dubai during the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), hosted by the UAE, which concluded with the historic agreement "the UAE Consensus" by 198 Parties to usher in a new era of climate action.

Furthermore, last month, following the directives of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE President, and as part of the UAE's continuous humanitarian efforts to support all countries during times of need, the UAE was the first country to dispatch a plane carrying relief aid to the Philippines in response to landslides and floods caused by Typhoon Carina. The directives of His Highness demonstrate the dedication of the UAE to the values of solidarity and partnership, and reflects the country's support and appreciation for the Filipino community living in the UAE, who contribute to the development, and growth of the country.

Now, through strong collaboration and cooperation, we are working towards a more prosperous and sustainable future, unlocking new partnerships to benefit our peoples and the wider world for future generations. The potential for enhancing the development of both countries has been underscored, and the foundations have been laid for a new, closely-aligned phase in our relations, as we look ahead to the next 50 years of growth and prosperity.

Maligayang anibersaryo UAE... Maligayang anibersaryo Pilipinas!

PCO

[Philippines, Singapore exchange MOUs on protection of health workers, environment](#)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam on Thursday witnessed the exchange of two memoranda of understanding aimed at protecting Filipino health workers and the environment.

Presented to the two leaders were the MOU on the Recruitment of Filipino Healthcare Workers to Singapore and the MOU for Collaboration on Carbon Credits Under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

Under the MOU on the Recruitment of Healthcare Workers, both governments will promote the mutual protection of healthcare workers through the observance of fair, ethical, and sustainable recruitment practices in the employment of healthcare workers, anchored on the laws and regulations of both countries.

Currently, there are 250,000 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in Singapore.

The agreement also recognizes the importance of knowledge transfer and the sharing of expertise between the participants through meaningful cooperation in the field of healthcare.

During the Joint Press Conference at Malacañan Palace, President Marcos noted that the two countries' ministries have worked hard on this MOU to "ensure that a balance is achieved between the needs of the healthcare sector of both countries as well as the need for personal development and growth of our healthcare workers."

"Through this MOU, we express our confidence in Singapore's legal and judicial system, which will ensure that the rights, welfare, and well-being of our kababayan OFWs will be protected as they pursue their careers in Singapore," the President said.

In addition to the MOU on the Recruitment of Filipino Healthcare Workers to Singapore, President Marcos said another MOU on Health Cooperation is being negotiated by the health ministries of both countries.

"So that when the contracts of our OFWs are nearing completion, they will be able to reintegrate into the Philippine economy with ease," President Marcos said.

Also presented to the two leaders was the MOU on Collaboration on Carbon Credits Under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

"Hopefully, with this memorandum, we will be able to incentivize both industries and individuals to actively work to reduce their carbon footprint, while allowing the government to mobilize financial resources to boost fiscal space," the President said.

The Philippines became a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in August 1994 and subsequently ratified the Paris Agreement in April 2017.

The President of Singapore arrived in Manila on Thursday for a three-day State Visit to the Philippines.

The two leaders had a bilateral meeting at Malacañan Palace.

Presidents Marcos and Tharman then witnessed the exchange of the agreements.

The Singapore leader was also accorded arrival honors at Malacañan Palace on Thursday afternoon, where he was greeted by President Marcos, First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos, and Cabinet officials.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Climate without borders

By: Ali Tauqeer Sheikh

Climate change does not need passports as it does not respect borders. Pakistan's climate risks are rooted in shared ecosystems with its neighbors.

Major regional climatic developments and trends often cast a shadow on our national economic progress and well-being. Our climate threats originate in regional climate systems, often located in neighboring countries. In fact, as climatic changes unfold, new "climate borders" may emerge, requiring a distinct form of regional climate diplomacy.

From the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea, and from the Tibetan Plateau to the Pamirs that link the Karakorams and the Hindu Kush ranges, they are all part of the Himalayan mountain system defining Pakistan's water resources, ecology, economy, and cultural heritage. As the entire region is recording profound changes in monsoon patterns, all our climate neighbors have begun to experience compound extreme weather events (CEWEs), whereby each climate disaster triggers another one.

Like Pakistan, our climate neighbors have also been witnessing CEWEs. In the South Asian landmass, dry areas have become drier with less than normal precipitation coupled with less cooling off at night. The frequency of hot summer days and hot summer nights has increased in the region. Record-setting daily temperatures have become more common. We have seen that heat waves have often triggered torrential rains as experienced recently in several parts of India and Pakistan.

Record-high temperatures in Delhi and Lahore, for example, have resulted in record-breaking rains in both cities. It should be recognized that flooding is often attributed to weak governance rather than climate change. We have seen severe heat waves in the upper Indus Basin result in downstream flooding. Record-high temperatures in Balochistan, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have invited heavier monsoon rains in several parts of the country.

Emerging trends in slow-onset climate events have also become perceptible in recent years. Monsoon currents, for example, have begun to visit the upper mountain reaches in Chitral and Swat. Likewise, tropical storms in the coastal belts of Balochistan and Sindh are now influenced by disturbances in weather patterns in the Arabian Peninsula, affecting the frequency and intensity of rains in the Gulf region. Easterly winds from the Arabian Sea are resulting in increased torrential rains in Balochistan.

Many urban centers in South Asia, from Karachi to Kolkata, have seen that droughts, heat waves, and floods in their hinterland have spurred outward migration. Seasonal and permanent displacement and migration have become major sources of rapid urban growth. It is perhaps felt nowhere more strongly than in Karachi which has provided refuge to a steady stream of migrants from Dadu and Jacobabad propelled by high

temperatures, from Tharparkar accelerated by prolonged droughts, and from Sajawal, Badin, and Thatta because of seawater intrusion and salinization.

A fundamental difference between traditional and nontraditional security challenges is the emergence of new climate borders. While traditional security is fundamentally concerned about geopolitical borders, the new climate frontiers are defined by transboundary impacts and the implications of change in climate systems and their cross-border impacts and implications.

The just-released Global Transboundary Climate Risk Report, 2023, by the Stockholm Environment Institute and others partnering in the initiative on “Adaptation Without Borders,” has drawn attention to some critical blind spots in national climate policies as well as the solutions offered by international climate diplomacy. It is an important report as it has pointed out—based on nine case studies—that transboundary climate risks also include those transmitted by national adaptation responses. The report has observed that national adaptation measures can have both positive and negative results across borders. In some instances, these can be negotiated to deliver shared benefits.

Climate risks impact local livelihoods, and critical sectors, such as finance, health, and global supply chains, including agricultural commodities and manufacturing components. In the South Asian context, transboundary climate risks include shared rivers, mountain ranges, melting glaciers, flood disasters, and cross-border risks to infrastructure, and livelihoods.

In a nutshell, the challenge is to rethink the way in which we manage climate risks and plan adaptation. The report sets out four potential areas to build resilience: (i) Create opportunities for innovative research on transboundary climate risks; (ii) Develop national or regional indicators to track transboundary climate risks; (iii) Strengthen research based on climate scenarios, modeling and projections; and (iv) Negotiate preferred options to mitigate transboundary climate risks.

In order to manage regional climate risks and climate threats to security, nontraditional responses will be needed. Since most climate disasters are transboundary by nature, they require regional management approaches. Managing regional climate threats that do not respect national borders will need process-oriented approaches that are not zero-sum but, instead, aspire to win-win scenarios.

In Pangasinan, farm time shifts amid climate change

By: Yolanda Sotelo

Eva Penullar, 56, suits up just before midnight in a long-sleeved shirt and tattered pants, completing her work outfit with a headgear fitted with a small “hunter” flashlight. “I drink a cup of coffee, and I am ready to go to work,” said Penullar, a mother of six from Barangay San Leon in Pangasinan’s Umingan town.

In the nearby village of San Vicente, also in Umingan, 10 women of different ages perform the same late-night ritual while waiting to be fetched by a vehicle sent by a farmer from this town.

Their destination is an agricultural field where they will uproot and bundle palay (rice plant) seedlings from the nursery in preparation for transplanting in the paddy.

Penullar and the other women are farm laborers, commonly referred to as “manag-sikka,” responsible for this specific task. The headlight guides them in the dark as they plunge into the watery paddy, where they briskly uproot foot-long seedlings, hoping to finish the job before daybreak.

Somewhere in Mangatarem, also an agricultural town in western Pangasinan, the manag-sikka start “early” in the night, at 10 p.m., and finish the job around 4 a.m. the following day.

But why do they work in the dead of night?

RAPPLER

[Waste-to-energy projects? Cebu youth demand better solutions focused on climate justice](#)

By: John Sitchon

At a summit with environmentalists, lawyers, and members of the private sector in Cebu City on Thursday, August 15, youth leaders called for solutions that prioritized climate justice over introducing waste-to-energy (WTE) technologies in cities and towns.

In recent years, public officials have pushed for the construction of WTE plants in Cebu as a solution to waste management and energy generation issues.

Organizations like the EcoWaste Coalition and Philippine Earth Justice Center warned against the use of WTE technologies which, they said, would produce large amounts of pollutants via incinerators.

Charlize Mae Gadiane, a convener of youth-led environmental conservation group Code Green PH, said that government agencies should strive for environmental solutions that are truly sustainable and would hold entities accountable.

“For waste management, let’s not put the blame on consumers but pressure big companies that contribute most of the pollution,” Gadiane told Rappler.

Gadiane slammed companies like San Miguel, which recently drew criticism from environmental groups after its subsidiary was confirmed to have chartered the MT Terronova that sank off the coast of Bataan, causing a massive oil spill.

She added that many private companies get away with polluting the environment by masquerading their products and projects as being “green” or “eco-friendly” while marginalized communities suffer at the cost of these projects.

A 2023 plastic brand audit by international network Break Free From Plastic (BFFP) reported that the Philippines was flooded with plastic pollution due to “a prevailing sachet economy driven primarily by corporations.”

Tap the youth

For Israela Krissan Sala of the Union of Progressive Students (UPS), governments should tap the youth in crafting pro-environment solutions.

Sala said that many students, especially those studying biology and environmental sciences, are conducting research on sustainable and innovative green projects in universities for their degree programs.

“If we can contain this intellect in the Philippines and if the government can support them in terms of their careers, they would stay here and their intellect would be used for the betterment of Filipinos,” she said.

She added that the youth should campaign for climate justice and lobby for better green policies from public officials.

According to a February 2024 report by social change agency Mindworks, government corruption and environmental pollution are top contributors to Gen Z youth anger in the Philippines.

During the summit, youth leaders also highlighted the implementation of a ban on single-use plastics at the Cebu Technological University (CTU) in Carmen town.

CTU student council president Pauline Neonelle Tibay said their ban was implemented in 2023.

“What we did is that for people entering the school, our guards would confiscate all their single-use plastics to ensure none of it enters the school and set up designated trash cans for biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste for proper disposal,” Tibay said.

She added that students from their fisheries studies program invented bangus fish crackers with paper packaging and introduced them in canteens, replacing plastic-wrapped snacks.

“We encourage the use of paper packaging so as to be truly environment-friendly...we’ve reduced our [plastics] because of our bangus fish crackers,” Tibay said.

Better technologies

Alternativa Verde chief climate justice officer Martsu Rissan Ladia told Rappler there are more technologies beyond incinerators that can help address the demand for energy and waste management.

“We believe that incineration is not a natural process because we are burning and contributing to pollution...so our WTE technology involves biomethanation, anaerobic digestion, these are natural processes that do not include incineration,” Ladia said.

Anaerobic digestion produces biogas by letting bacteria break down organic matter like animal manure, wastewater biosolids, and food wastes in the absence of oxygen. Biogas is considered a renewable source of energy.

“In the West, they are exercising [incineration] because they have facilities and are capable of being accountable for the effects of this but in the Philippines, we do not have those kinds of facilities and we are not yet capable of managing the effects,” Ladia added.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Philippines prepares for UN ocean meet](#)

By: Pia Lee-Brago

Government officials, scientists, academics and ocean experts convened to exchange views and collaborate on the Philippines' preparations for its participation in the third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) to be held in Nice, France in June 2025.

The inter-agency consultation meeting was recently hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Maritime and Ocean Affairs Office.

Participants included representatives from the Climate Change Commission, National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippine Statistics Authority, Department of Transportation, Department of Energy, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine Navy, ASEAN Center for Biodiversity, Department of Science and Technology-National Academy of Science and Technology, Department of Defense, DFA, key ocean experts, scientists and academics.

The group discussed various approaches, principles and modalities in preparation for the conference.

“With the conference looming, sustained inter-agency collaboration is seen as essential to developing a unified and effective national position,” the DFA stated.

The group agreed on the importance of bringing into the process other sectors including business, the scientific community, academe, the youth and indigenous and local communities.

In this regard, further work will be undertaken by the group to organize a national stakeholder meeting later this year with a view to having a whole-of-nation effort that will inform the national positions and views to be advocated by the Philippine delegation at the 2025 UNOC.

The UNOC aims to mobilize action for SDG 14 or the conservation, protection and sustainable use of the ocean, seas and marine resources.

“As an archipelagic state, the Philippines is acutely aware of the need to conserve and sustainably use the ocean and seas,” the DFA said.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Humanitarian workers in climate crisis](#)

As the climate crisis worsens, humanitarian workers emerge as today's heroes. These passionate and committed professionals help those affected by crises such as climate-induced disasters, in effect helping countries adapt to and recover from pressing global challenges.

Humanitarian workers provide life-saving support during emergencies such as more intense natural hazards, conflicts, wars, and other crises. They deliver essential services, including providing food, water, shelter and assistance, to those affected. Their mission is clear: alleviate human suffering and help communities recover from crises.

These workers address diverse needs across sectors like healthcare, education, construction, transportation, communications, engineering and agriculture. This support helps communities build resilience and improve their ability to face future challenges.

Humanitarian workers, including farmers, significantly impact our ecosystem. Farmers supply our food and preserve and conserve green areas and forests, which act as carbon sinks by absorbing carbon dioxide and reducing greenhouse gases. These ecosystems also support biodiversity by protecting habitats and stabilizing temperatures.

Unfortunately, many overlook the broader contributions of these workers. By maintaining healthy ecosystems, they meet our daily needs and actively combat climate change.

As vital providers of our food supply, farmers play a key role in sustaining our planet and enhancing resilience against the climate crisis.

Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, vice chairperson and executive director of the Climate Change Commission, emphasized the importance of recognizing farmers as unsung heroes.

"Farmers sustain our ecosystem, provide food and nurture the trees that act as carbon sinks. Their hard work significantly contributes to initiatives to mitigate climate change and maintain ecological balance," he stated.

He also stressed the need for collaborative efforts to protect ecosystems and support humanitarian aid workers. These initiatives are crucial for preserving ecological health and uplifting committed individuals who play pivotal roles in our well-being.

As we celebrate World Humanitarian Day, let us recognize and support the diverse roles of our humanitarian workers, including farmers, who uphold and protect our planet's future.

World Humanitarian Day is commemorated every 19 August in honor of all humanitarian workers, as established by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 63/139.

MINDANAO TIMES

[Climate Science: Key to effective strategies for Mindanao River Basin](#)

A strong grasp of climate science is crucial to formulate effective climate policies and strategies that will address the complex challenges posed by climate change.

At the recent Mindanao Development Forum held in Davao City, panelists in a discussion on “Planet: Enhancing Resilience and Sustainable Development of the Mindanao River Basin” underscored the importance of popularizing science among policymakers, local chief executives, and other stakeholders, particularly at the grassroots level. “Planet” is one of the five thematic sessions, along with “People,” “Prosperity,” “Partnerships,” and “Peace,” during the forum organized by the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA).

Secretary Robert E. A. Borje, Vice Chairperson and Executive Director of the Climate Change Commission (CCC), emphasized the need for a science-based, data-driven approach to better understand and address climate change issues. This includes the necessity for more granular projections and updated frameworks to align with the current climate situation.

“We can review historical records and data that we have, but we certainly need to work on a range of probabilities and projections to assess climate change risks and create strategies to manage and reduce the impacts of these risks,” he stated.

Borje cited the formulation and implementation of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and the Nationally Determined Contributions Implementation Plan (NDCIP) as examples of a science-backed, evidence-based approach used to outline the country’s transformative climate action goals.

The NAP, developed under the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., serves as a guide for adaptation strategies, which focuses on addressing the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities. The Philippines is the third ASEAN country and the 56th in the world to submit its NAP to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The NDCIP, on the other hand, aims for a 75 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and outlines key actions across various sectors, including transport, energy, waste, industry, and agriculture.

“Understanding the science behind initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance resilience can lead to more effective climate actions and adaptation strategies. Scientific findings offer reliable insights to make informed decisions,” said Borje as he acknowledged that outside the scientific and academic community, there is a general sense of aversion towards science.

Another panelist, Dr. Hilly Ann Roa-Quiaoit, a professor at the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology and an expert on marine biology, shared insights on the need to support government efforts, particularly among local government units (LGUs), by providing scientific knowledge for ecological protection, climate resilience, and disaster prevention.

“While LGUs have the power to implement policies, they sometimes lack the necessary knowledge. The academe and technical agencies can help popularize scientific findings which are vital for informing policy and practice,” she emphasized.

Specific to the Mindanao River Basin (MRB), panel discussions highlighted the risk of the basin’s collapse and the flooding issues that require scientific and engineering solutions to manage water resources and prevent disasters.

The MRB is the second-largest river basin in the Philippines, covering 21,503 square kilometers, around 7.21 percent of the country’s total land area and 22.04 percent of Mindanao. It encompasses 163 municipalities across four regions.

The basin, which supports a diverse wetland ecosystem crucial for the development of Mindanao, is particularly susceptible to various natural hazards such as flooding, landslides, earthquakes, drought, typhoons, and soil erosion. Its strategic location and role as a water source for around 6.4 million people – almost a quarter of Mindanao’s 26.1 million population – underscore the importance of sustainable water management and ecological conservation to prevent further damage to both ecosystem and inhabitants.

Cardinal Orlando Quevedo, chairperson of the Mindanao River Basin Management Council, said frequent flooding has turned fertile lands, once abundant with crops, into “ghost towns,” highlighting its impacts on agriculture – a critical area for food security and land management.

He said that heavy siltation has worsened flooding conditions, making riverbeds shallow and causing overflows during heavy rains. For instance, Cardinal Quevedo noted that siltation at Cotabato City Wharf affects water levels, which prevents cargo and passenger vessels from docking, impacting economic activities.

He also emphasized that responsible resource management and development of the basin will enhance its role in supporting life, providing ecological balance, and ensuring sustainable use of natural resources.

For his part, Dr. Romulo Tagalo, Senior Policy Advocacy Officer of Oxfam Philippines, reiterated that the term “natural disaster” no longer fits the present-day context. He emphasized that disasters are now influenced, if not directly caused, by human actions and systemic factors, a concept which began to gain prominence in the early 2000s. This shift in understanding, developed by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk

Reduction (UNDRR), was formalized through the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030).

Another panelist, Director Jose Harry Barber of the Office of Civil Defense, pointed out the importance of collaboration between and among national and local government agencies, academe, regional and international development organizations, civil societies and private organizations.

“Sustainable development and community engagement are crucial to address environmental challenges scientifically and systematically,” he said.

The CCC reaffirms its dedication to advance climate science for evidence-based decision-making and foster a more informed and engaged citizenry in our collective efforts to achieve the Philippines’ climate resilience and sustainability goals.

For more information on the CCC’s climate mainstreaming activities, visit www.climate.gov.ph and www.facebook.com/CCCPhl.

PALAWAN NEWS

[Philippines' low carbon bill to bridge climate investment gap](#)

The Philippines' Low Carbon Economy Investment Act of 2023 could bring the nation closer to achieving its Paris Agreement targets by mobilizing climate-focused private investments, requiring large corporations to implement Paris-aligned decarbonization plans, and laying the foundation for the country's long-term climate strategy.

Congresswoman Anna Victoria Veloso-Tuazon said this at a recent sustainable finance summit in Manila.

Tuazon provided the opening keynote on August 14 at the Philippine edition of Unlocking Capital For Sustainability (UCFS) 2024, which was hosted by Eco-Business in partnership with United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) and themed "A new nexus for energy and nature in the Philippines".

The event convened over 100 policymakers and leaders across business, governance, and civil society to discuss how the country will chart its course to net zero.

"Through this bill, we hope to get the private sector to decarbonise and fund viable and cost-competitive, low-carbon investments. Although the Philippines doesn't have a formal net zero commitment, this bill [champions] decarbonisation aligned with the Paris Agreement goal of keeping global temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels," added Tuazon, representative of the Third District of Leyte and co-author of House Bill 7705, or the Low Carbon Economy Investment Act of 2023.

The House Committee on Climate Change approved the Low Carbon Economy Investment Act 2023 on 6 August, a bill that will mandate large enterprises across various sectors to develop decarbonisation plans aligned with the Paris Agreement. These plans must include clear milestones and targets, ensuring that businesses progressively reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over time.

"The economic cost of inaction is apparent, estimated at ₱645 billion per year across [vital] sectors which include energy, transport and communications. In establishing a whole-of-nation and whole-of-society approach to low carbon, the [Low Carbon Economy Bill] should be viewed alongside policy instruments recently released also by the Climate Change Commission including the Philippine National Adaptation Plan and the Philippine Nationally Determined Contribution Plan," said Veloso-Tuazon.

"[These could] form the cornerstone of long-term climate change planning in the Philippines, geared towards a low carbon, inclusive, sustainable and transformative development path for the Filipino people," Veloso-Tuazon added.

Despite capping 2023 as Southeast Asia's fastest-growing economy – on the back of heightened public infrastructure spending – the archipelago maintains its record as the most coal-dependent nation in the region.

The Philippines' coal dependence has increased, comprising nearly 62 per cent of the nation's energy mix and outpacing countries such as Indonesia, in spite of the country's administration aims to peak its national emissions by 2030.

Discourse from the one-day event's three key panels proved to be a barometer for what's to come for the Philippines' green economy amid increasing climate risks and more frequent extreme weather facing the nation. The panels touched on the country's foray into carbon markets, its critical energy and construction industries, and why more companies recognise the business case of a net zero-aligned portfolio.

In addition to the Low Carbon Economy Bill, there are hopes that initiatives such as the Green Energy Auction Programme will increase renewable energy share, while the Natural Capital Accounting System Act could consolidate the accounting of the country's environmental resources and natural capital.

"The Philippines is one of the most coal-dependent countries in Southeast Asia. However, it [still] has significant potential to take the regional lead in energy transition," said Law Heng Dean, Managing Director, Pollination.

Law noted that the Philippines has built up a pipeline of 99 gigawatts of wind and solar developments, which is more than enough power to supply all Philippine households. He also highlighted the planned retirement of the 246-megawatt South Luzon Thermal Energy Corporation coal plant in 2030 – 10 years ahead of its scheduled retirement – as an example of how the region could accelerate the phase-out of coal plants.

"Given its vulnerability to extreme climate events caused by global warming, the Philippines will need to do more on mitigation and adaptation. Pollination is committed to deploying its expertise in identifying opportunities and assembling finance to underpin the nation's transition to a net zero future," Law added.

"The Philippines is making significant strides towards advancing net zero, ESG, and sustainable finance, and decarbonising its economy. The government has set ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and is actively promoting renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind and hydropower," said Daniele Coronacion, Executive Advisor, GHD.

"Our aim is to support the nation by enhancing its regulatory frameworks to support ESG practices and encourage transparency in environmental impact. These efforts will foster a resilient and sustainable economic future while addressing the pressing challenges of climate change," added Coronacion.

BDO Unibank Inc (BDO) President and CEO Nestor V Tan disclosed the impact of BDO's US\$100 million Blue Bond financing water and wastewater management projects in water-stressed areas in the Philippines.

"Blue financing will work best in a country where many of the utilities are privatised and may be financed by banks. Ours is a modest initiative, but we have been seeing good results and impact. Remaining true to BDO's sustainability philosophy, we continue to integrate sustainability into everything that we do. We are committed to building a better and greener future for our stakeholders, clients and employees," Tan said.

"Our country stands at a crossroads in its just transition. We're convening policy leaders, banks, investors and key stakeholders to catalyse development and solutions that are net zero, nature-positive and beneficial to the long-term well-being of the Philippines and the Filipinos," said Ping Manongdo, Country Director, Philippines, and Assistant Director, Partnerships, Eco-Business.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Climate change to drive up inflation in the long run — BSP

By: Jean Mangaluz

Climate change could drive inflation up in the Philippines up by 0.79 percentage points (ppt) in the long run, the Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said on Friday.

The BSP has released its 2023 Sustainability Report, which outlined its study on the impacts of rising temperatures on economic activities, as well as inflation.

According to the BSP, temperature shocks could lead to a 0.46 ppt spike in inflation in the short term.

“On a disaggregated level, the inflationary impact of temperature shocks on food prices is deeper in magnitude and long-lasting in period at 0.79 ppt, persistent until eight years after the shock,” the BSP said.

The BSP also noted a smaller impact on non-food prices. There could be a 0.31 ppt increase, which could last for up to two years.

In addition to inflation impact, the BSP also said that climate change could slow down economic activity.

“On average, temperature shocks in the form of a 1-degree increase in the annual mean temperature generally leads to a 0.37 ppt decline in economic activity,” the central bank said.

The BSP sees that the manufacturing and services sector will experience a great decline. Impact of the climate change on the agriculture sector will vary per crop, but rice and corn are expected to be negatively impacted.

Rice has been the primary driver for food inflation in the Philippines for several months.

Meanwhile, the BSP said that temperature shocks have an insignificant impact on livestock, fishing, real investment, and labor productivity in heat-exposed industries.

Citing the National Adaptation Plan of the Philippines, the BSP said that inaction on climate change in the 2030s could lead to a loss of P645 billion per year in the following sectors:

- Agriculture, fisheries and food security
- Water resources
- Health
- Ecosystems and biodiversity
- Cultural Heritage, population displacement and migration

- Land use and human settlements
- Livelihood and industries
- Energy, transport and communications

The Climate Change Commission found that the Philippines' greenhouse gas emissions decline in 2020 when compared to 2015. Despite this, the country has been deemed as one of the most disaster prone countries on the planet.

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