



NEWS ROUNDUP

19 September 2022 [08:00 am]

- Volunteers help clean up the Dolomite Beach
- Climate change: Pakistan floods 'likely' made worse by warming
- China lost its Yangtze River dolphin. Climate change is coming for other species next
- CHR welcomes increased budget for climate change
- DPWH expedites Manila Bay project to address NCR flooding
- Climate change to cause more diseases – study
- [Opinion] No, we are not going to be able to save the planet

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- House plenary debates on budget start Sept. 20
- Philippines, Germany sign €5 million grant deal for climate information dissemination
- PH gets German grant for climate info dissemination
- PCG collects 1,000 sacks of sea waste at Manila Dolomite Beach
- House opens debates on budget next week, expects swift approval
- Pitmaster Foundation sponsors national climate change summit
- Coastal Cleanup isinagawa sa Manila Bay at iba pang lugar sa NCR
- Dolomite Beach becomes focus of coastal cleanup
- Iba't ibang sector, nagsagawa ng coastal cleanup sa Manila Bay
- Pilipinas, kabilang sa Top 5 na may longest coastline sa mundo
- PH joins clean-up day with volunteer, gov't drives
- SM By the Bay International Coastal Cleanup
- SM "By the Bay" massive coastal cleanup draws thousands of volunteers from various organizations
- International Coastal Clean-up 2022 at the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach

ABS CBN

[Volunteers help clean up the Dolomite Beach](#)

By: George Calvelo

Volunteers from different government agencies and private organizations participate in the coastal cleanup at the Dolomite Beach in Manila on Saturday, on occasion of the International Coastal Cleanup Day. The multi-million-peso funded beautification project on the narrow strip of land on Roxas Boulevard has required regular maintenance since

it was first opened to the public in September 2020 due to the filth coming from Manila Bay.

BBC NEWS

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By: Math McGrath

Global warming is likely to have played a role in the devastating floods that hit Pakistan, say scientists. Researchers from the World Weather Attribution group say climate change may have increased the intensity of rainfall.

CNN PHILIPPINES

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By: Heather Chen

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DAILY TRIBUNE

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By Cherk Balagtas

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MANILA BULLETIN

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By: Chito Chavez

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THE MANILA TIMES

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By: Red Mendoza

(Update) Climate change may trigger more ailments such as heat-related, vector-borne and infectious diseases with pandemic potential, a study commissioned by an insurance firm showed.

[\[Opinion\] No, we are not going to be able to save the planet](#)

By: Ben Kritz

I think my empirically justified disgust with climate change denialism is fairly obvious at this point, but in one sense I understand the frustration of climate deniers with what they perceive as self-serving dogma: the constant mantra, "We must act to stop climate change before it's too late," annoys me to no end, just not for the same reasons.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS MIRROR

[House plenary debates on budget start Sept. 20](#)

By: Jovee Marie Dela Cruz

To ensure swift approval of the government's national spending program for 2023, the House of Representatives will start this week plenary debates on the P5.268-trillion national budget for next year.

GMA NEWS

[Philippines, Germany sign €5 million grant deal for climate information dissemination](#)

By: Ted Cordero

The Philippine government and German development agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on Friday signed a deal for a €5-million technical assistance grant to make climate information accessible to the public.

MANILA BULLETIN

[PH gets German grant for climate info dissemination](#)

By: Chino S. Leyco

The Philippine government and the German development agency sealed a technical assistance grant to make climate information accessible to the public, the Department of Finance (DOF) announced.

[PCG collects 1,000 sacks of sea waste at Manila Dolomite Beach – Manila Bulletin](#)

By Martin Sadongdong

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) racked up at least 1,000 sacks of non-biodegradable waste materials as it spearheaded a coastal clean-up drive at the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach in Manila on Saturday, Sept. 17.

MANILA STANDARD

[House opens debates on budget next week, expects swift approval](#)

By: Maricel Cruz

The House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations is set to submit on Tuesday the proposed P5.268 trillion 2023 budget to the plenary for sponsorship and deliberations, with a view to “judicious but swift approval” of the government’s National Expenditure Plan for next year.

[Pitmaster Foundation sponsors national climate change summit](#)

Private charity organization Pitmaster Foundation is the top non-profit sponsor of the National Climate and Disaster Emergency Policy Forum taking place on September 22, 2022.

NET 25

Mata ng Agila Weekend

Time code: 26:55 (at 5:06pm) Interview with Sec. Robert Borje by

[COASTAL CLEANUP ISINAGAGA SA MANILA BAY AT IBA PANG LUGAR SA NCR](#)

Coastal clean-up isinagawa sa Manila Bay at iba pang lugar sa NCR libu-libong volunteers lumahok.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Dolomite Beach becomes focus of coastal cleanup](#)

By: Angel Yabut and Dempsey Reyes

Manila, Philippines — In celebration of International Coastal Clean-Up Day on Saturday, the government took part in a cleanup drive right on the coast where it stirred up controversy over its expensive beautification of Manila Bay.

PTV NEWS

Balita Ngayon

[IBA'T IBANG SECTOR, NAGSAGAWA NG COASTAL CLEAN-UP SA MANILA BAY](#)

“Pinangunahan ito ng Climate Change Commission kasama ang DENR”

Ulat Bayan Weekend

(Time Aired: 6:35 Interview with Sec. Robert Borje)

[PILIPINAS, KABILANG SA TOP 5 NA MAY LONGEST COASTLINE SA MUNDO](#)

- Para sa Climate Change Commission may malaking epekto ang ganitong mga initiatibo para matugunan ang lumalalang problema ng pagbabago ng klima sa mundo..

PTV News Online

[PH joins clean-up day with volunteer, gov't drives](#)

-The CCC, the lead agency for climate change mitigation and adaptation, called on the public to join similar efforts even beyond the coastal clean up observation period to ensure a plastic-free Philippines.

RMN - DZXL

Unang Radyo Unang Balita

[SM BY THE BAY INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEAN UP](#)

TC: 1:40:15-1:144:15 – (Audio) Interview with Sec. Robert E. A. Borje

SMNI NEWS

LIVE:

[International Coastal Clean-up 2022 at the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach](#)

Time Code: 0:50 -Interview Comm. Albert Dela Cruz

Weekender World:

[SM 'BY THE BAY' MASSIVE COASTAL CLEANUP DRAWS THOUSANDS OF VOLUNTEERS FROM VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS](#)

Time code: 39:10 Interview with Sec. Robert Borje

Led by the the SM by the Bay and SM Mall of Asia in collaboration with the Climate Change Commission and Department of Environment National Resources NCR the said Coastal Cleanup Drive drew thousands of volunteers.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

Volunteers help clean up the Dolomite Beach

By: George Calvelo

Volunteers from different government agencies and private organizations participate in the coastal cleanup at the Dolomite Beach in Manila on Saturday, on occasion of the International Coastal Cleanup Day. The multi-million-peso funded beautification project on the narrow strip of land on Roxas Boulevard has required regular maintenance since it was first opened to the public in September 2020 due to the filth coming from Manila Bay.

BBC NEWS

Climate change: Pakistan floods 'likely' made worse by warming

By: Math McGrath

Global warming is likely to have played a role in the devastating floods that hit Pakistan, say scientists. Researchers from the World Weather Attribution group say climate change may have increased the intensity of rainfall.

However there were many uncertainties in the results, so the team were unable to quantify the scale of the impact.

The scientists believe there's roughly a 1% chance of such an event happening in any coming year. In the two months since flooding began in Pakistan, tens of millions of people have been affected, with around 1,500 dying because of the rising waters.

The intensity of the downpours saw the river Indus burst its banks, while landslides and urban flash floods swamped many areas.

Right from the start, politicians pointed to climate change as having made a significant contribution to the desperate scenes.

But this first scientific analysis says the picture is complex.

Certainly, the crippling heatwaves that gripped India and Pakistan earlier this year were easier to attribute, with researchers finding that climate change had made them up to 30 times more likely to happen.

But extreme rainfall events are hard to assess. Pakistan is located on the edge of the monsoon region where the rainfall pattern is extremely variable from year to year.

Further complications include the impact of large-scale weather events such as La Niña, which also played a role in the last major floods in Pakistan in 2010.

During the 60-day period of heaviest rainfall this summer scientists recorded an increase of about 75% over the Indus river basin, while the heaviest five-day period over the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan recorded a rise in rainfall of around 50%.

The researchers then used climate models to determine how likely these events would be in a world without warming.

Some of the models indicated that the increases in rainfall intensity could all be down to human-caused climate change - however there were considerable uncertainties in the results.

"Our evidence suggests that climate change played an important role in the event, although our analysis doesn't allow us to quantify how big the role was," said Friederike Otto from Imperial College London, one of the report's authors.

"What we saw in Pakistan is exactly what climate projections have been predicting for years. It's also in line with historical records showing that heavy rainfall has dramatically increased in the region since humans started emitting large amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. And our own analysis also shows clearly that further warming will make these heavy rainfall episodes even more intense."

"So while it is hard to put a precise figure to the contribution of climate change, the fingerprints of global warming are evident."

The researchers say that the heavy rainfall that Pakistan endured this year now has around a 1% chance of recurring in any given year, although this estimate does come with a large range of uncertainty as well.

CNN PHILIPPINES

[China lost its Yangtze River dolphin. Climate change is coming for other species next](#)

By: Heather Chen

They called it the "Goddess of the Yangtze" — a creature so rare that it was believed to bring fortune and protection to local fishermen and all those lucky enough to spot it. But overfishing and human activity drove it to the brink of extinction and it hasn't been seen in decades.

"The baiji, or Yangtze River dolphin, was this unique and beautiful creature — there was nothing quite like it," said Samuel Turvey, a British zoologist and conservationist who spent more than two decades in China trying to track the animal down.

"It was around for tens of millions of years and was in its own mammal family. There are other river dolphins in the world but this one was very different, so unrelated to anything else," Turvey said. "Its demise was more than just another species tragedy — it was a huge loss of river diversity in terms of how unique it was and left huge holes in the ecosystem."

Experts have expressed grave concern that other rare native Yangtze animal and plant species are likely to suffer a similar fate to the baiji river dolphin as worsening climate change and extreme weather conditions take their toll on Asia's longest river.

China has been grappling with its worst heat wave on record and the Yangtze, the third longest river in the world, is drying up.

With rainfall below average since July, its water levels have plunged to record lows of 50% of their normal levels for this time of year, exposing cracked river beds and even revealing submerged islands.

The drought has already had a devastating effect on China's most important river, which stretches an estimated 6,300 kilometers (3,900 miles) from the Tibetan plateau to the East China Sea near Shanghai and provides water, food, transport and hydroelectric power to more than 400 million people.

The human impact has been enormous. Factories were shut to preserve electricity and water supplies for tens of thousands of people have been affected.

Less talked about, experts say, is the environmental impact that climate change and associated extreme weather events have had on the hundreds of protected and threatened wildlife and plant species living in and around the river.

"The Yangtze is one of the world's most ecologically critical rivers for biodiversity and freshwater ecosystems — and we are still discovering new species yearly," said conservation ecologist Hua Fangyuan, an assistant professor from Peking University.

"Many of the little (known) and unknown fish and other aquatic species are most likely facing extinction risks silently and we simply do not know enough."

Hundreds of species at risk

Over the years conservationists and scientists have identified and documented hundreds of wild animal and plant species native to the Yangtze.

Among them are the Yangtze finless porpoise which, similar to the baiji, faces extinction due to human activity and habitat loss, and critically endangered reptiles like the Chinese alligator and Yangtze giant softshell turtle — believed to be the largest living species of freshwater turtle in the world.

Experts have also noticed a drastic decline of many native freshwater species of fish, like the now extinct Chinese paddlefish and sturgeon.

At high risk is the Chinese giant salamander, one of the largest amphibians in the world. Wild populations have crashed, Turvey the zoologist said, and the species is "now on the verge of extinction."

"Although they are a protected species, Chinese giant salamanders are under greater threat from climate change — increasing global temperatures and droughts will definitely do it no good when it is already extremely vulnerable," Turvey said.

"They have for a long time faced threats like poaching, habitat loss and pollution but when you add climate change into the mix, their chances of survival become drastically thin," he added.

"They can only live within freshwater environments and lower water levels would inevitably place greater pressure on their numbers across China."

A problem for the world

Nature conservation groups like the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) say the Yangtze's plight is a major concern not only for the Chinese people and government, but also for the wider international community.

"Rivers around the world, from Europe to the United States, have declined to historically low flow levels that are negatively impacting ecosystems," said its lead scientist Jeff Opperman.

"Reduced river flow and warmer waters in the Yangtze are a threat to freshwater species and increase pressure on already critically endangered animals like the remaining Yangtze finless porpoises and Chinese alligators left in the wild. Lower river

levels also impact the health of (nearby) lakes and wetlands, which are vital to millions of migratory birds along the East Asian Flyway."

Hua, the conservation ecologist, said more public awareness and greater efforts were needed to help China's shrinking great river. "Humans depend on nature for survival, period. This is a lesson for any civilization," she said.

"The Yangtze is the longest river in China and (all of) Asia and has long been a cradle of civilization. Despite severe conservation threats and losses over the years, there is still much biodiversity to conserve in and along the Yangtze."

Few would deny the importance and symbolism of the Yangtze. But experts say unless action is taken — and soon — more species will follow the fate of the baiji and Chinese paddlefish.

Turvey, the British zoologist, warned against the sort of complacency that allowed the baiji to disappear.

"The Yangtze was a jewel in Asia's crown. There is still so much biodiversity to fight for and we must not give up hope for saving species like giant salamanders, river reptiles and others," Turvey said.

"If there's anything we can learn from the death of the Yangtze River dolphin, it's that extinction is forever and we can't afford to take it lightly."

DAILY TRIBUNE

[CHR welcomes increased budget for climate change](#)

By Cherk Balagtas

CHR welcomes the proposed increased budget allocation for climate change expenditures for FY 2023.

From the P289.7 billion budget in 2022, it was raised by 56% making it P453.1 billion for the next fiscal year.

According to the statement by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), the expanded climate fund is in line with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s agenda highlighting the following areas: food, water, and human security; environmental sustainability; climate smart industries and services; knowledge and capacity development; sustainable energy; and cross-cutting concerns.

“CHR stress that climate change is a human rights issue. We reiterates that all human rights are interrelated, interdependent, and indivisible. Any threat to the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment is a threat to all other civic, political, economic, social, and cultural rights,” according to CHR Executive Director, Atty Jacqueline Ann de Guia.

Subsequent programs and policies by the government to address climate change must then be grounded on a human rights-based approach.

To this, CHR offer our National Inquiry on Climate Change (NICC) report (bit.ly/NICCRReport) as a guiding framework with specific recommendations to governments, including our own; carbon majors and other carbon-intensive industries; financial institutions and investors; UN and other international bodies; national human rights institutions; courts and those in the legal profession; non-government and civil society organisations; and citizens around the world.

In the report, CHR has found evidence that major fossil-fuel companies or so-called ‘carbon majors’ engaged in willful obfuscation of climate science and obstruction of efforts towards a global transition from fossil fuels to clean renewable energy.

Since the right to a healthy environment is a ‘claim right’, other parties, such as, businesses and other private enterprises, also entail responsibility towards right-holders.

Citizens can therefore demand accountability from major polluters.

The Philippines only accounts for 0.3 percent of global emissions. The Commission on Human Rights (CHR), however, believes that the country can set a strong precedent for climate action.

MANILA BULLETIN

[DPWH expedites Manila Bay project to address NCR flooding](#)

By: Chito Chavez

The construction of Estero de Abad Drainage System/Outfall Extension at the Manila Bay is being rushed in a bid to help eliminate flooding in Metro Manila, Department of Public Works and Highways-National Capital Region (DPWH-NCR) Director Nomer Abel P. Canlas said on Sunday, Sept. 18.

Based on the project, Canlas said two 1000 millimeter (mm) diameter structured wall pipe-high density polyethylene pipe at the two outfalls will be utilized to discharge floodwater from Manila to Manila Bay. The pipes are located 350 meters away from the sea wall.

He added that two submersible axial and mixed flow sewage pumps will be installed at each outfall to aid with the water discharge to Manila Bay.

Canlas noted that the flood control project is part of the rehabilitation program of the Department of Environment and National Resources (DENR) that includes addressing pollution at the Manila Bay.

As of Aug. 31, 2022, Canlas said the project is 88.21 percent complete.

Canlas pointed out “that he shares the vision of creating a safer and greener NCR together with the DENR, underscoring that the completion of this project will provide valuable aid in keeping the residents of the city of Manila safe during weather disturbances, as well as the cleanup, rehabilitation, and preservation of the coastal and Marine ecosystem of the Manila Bay.”

DPWH-NCR Clean and Green project

Canlas said that since assuming his post in Dec. 2021, a total of 50,000 caballero trees were planted in Metro Manila as part of the ‘clean and green’ program of the DPWH-NCR office.

The DPWH-NCR chief said that instead of giving ‘ayuda (cash aid)’, the department hired people with work in the ‘Clean and Green’ project at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic where trees were planted and plant boxes were made with no names but only DPWH logos printed on them.

This scheme provided the workers to earn a living while helping the government implement this project.

Canlas noted that the program is not merely a project of just planting trees at the center islands and getting photo opportunities, saying that regular maintenance work is part of the ‘Clean and Green’ process.

The maintenance work includes trimming and watering of the plants and repair of the plant boxes as the need arises.

Canlas admitted having suggested the planting of caballero trees as their 'adult size' of eight to 10 feet will not distract the motorists and the plant boxes will deter informal settlers and vendors in using the center islands for undesirable purposes.

The plant boxes contain the soil where the caballero trees get their nutrients, maintain the soil moisture when it rains, protects the trees from vandals and serves as a safety measure to avoid people from getting tripped by the tree roots and lead them to using the pedestrian lanes when crossing the street as the center islands are now blocked.

Citing more benefits, Canlas noted that fully-grown caballero trees convert the exhausts from the vehicles to oxygen and they start to bear pink, yellow and orange flowers at the height of one foot aside from providing homes for birds and insects.

Canlas also urged the public to plant trees, maintain clean surroundings, instill discipline, maintain housekeeping practices citing and treat the environment as our homes.

[PCG collects 1,000 sacks of sea waste at Manila Dolomite Beach – Manila Bulletin](#)

By Martin Sadongdong

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) racked up at least 1,000 sacks of non-biodegradable waste materials as it spearheaded a coastal clean-up drive at the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach in Manila on Saturday, Sept. 17.

Rear Admiral Robert Patrimonio, commander of the PCG's Marine Environmental Protection Command, led the command's efforts in taking part with the celebration of the International Coastal Clean-Up Day 2022 that carried the theme "Fighting for Trash-Free Seas, Pilipinas!"

"The International Coastal Clean-up Drive is vital as it promotes and unites countries and people with one common objective which is to take care of our environment by maintaining the cleanliness of our shorelines, rivers, lakes, and other waterways," the PCG said.

Wearing casual shirts and shorts in their trademark color orange and black, coast guardians picked up pieces of trash that were washed ashore on the artificial white sand beach along the stretch of Roxas Boulevard as early as 6 a.m.

All in all, there were 310 coast guardians and representatives from PCG Auxiliary, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Heirs of the World Inc., Hotel 101 Manila, Climate Change Commission, and Eagles Club who participated in the initiative.

The coastal clean-up drive was simultaneously held in PCG stations nationwide.

In Tagum City, the PCG District Southeastern Mindanao collected approximately 800 kilos of waste materials along the coastline of Barangay Madaum.

They were joined by representatives from the Hijo Resources, Bureau of Fire Protection, Provincial Environmental and Natural Resources Office, Boy Scout of the Philippines Tagum City Council, La Filipina Elementary School, and United States Marines.

In Basilan, the PCG Station Basilan also racked up 20 sacks of waste materials along the 500-meter long coastline of Barangay Baluno, Isabela City.

The International Coastal Clean-up Day was declared on the third Saturday of September of each year in the Philippines under the Presidential Proclamation No. 470 issued in 2003.

The clean-up drive also coincided with the observance of the Maritime Archipelagic Nation Awareness Month (MANA Mo) and 23rd Maritime Week which aims to dedicate

the month of September to “harmonize, integrate, and synchronize programs and activities that will raise national consciousness on maritime archipelagic concerns.”

THE MANILA TIMES

Climate change to cause more diseases – study

By: Red Mendoza

(Update) Climate change may trigger more ailments such as heat-related, vector-borne and infectious diseases with pandemic potential, a study commissioned by an insurance firm showed.

Based on the 2021 Healthscape Study commissioned by PruLife UK, climate change leads to injury and deaths due to typhoons and floods but also to soil-borne diseases due to poor hygiene and sanitation, water-borne and food-borne diseases, air and water pollution, and forced displacement due to these disasters.

It also said that climate change could have contributed to the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Dr. Renzo Guinto, one of the researchers of the study, said that the Philippines should learn from the lessons of the pandemic as it is a "dress rehearsal" for more pandemics in the future.

"If we are not reaping the lessons of this crisis in order that we ensure that we have a stronger capacity not just to address the future one, but to prevent future pandemics, then it is likely we will be seeing the same effects not only in human health, but also on the economy and society," Guinto added.

Eng Teng Wong, president of PruLife UK, said that insurance companies like theirs are "more prepared" to face similar events with the adoption of "pandemic playbooks" and creation of policies that are more attuned to the evolving landscape.

He added that they are continually raising awareness of the importance of insurance protection against climate health risks.

"We have become more resilient and more understanding in terms of how we can reach Filipinos who are underserved and unserved," Eng said.

[\[Opinion\] No, we are not going to be able to save the planet](#)

By: Ben Kritz

I think my empirically justified disgust with climate change denialism is fairly obvious at this point, but in one sense I understand the frustration of climate deniers with what they perceive as self-serving dogma: the constant mantra, "We must act to stop climate change before it's too late," annoys me to no end, just not for the same reasons.

It annoys me because it is naïve; it is already "too late" to reverse the effects of human activity on the climate. The most optimistic models already indicate that, if all human-generated greenhouse gas emissions were to instantly cease and disappear forever, the warming of the climate that began in the late 19th century and has accelerated at an exponential rate since about 1970 would continue for some time. The best case scenario is that average global temperatures would reach about 1.8 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels; given the results of some recent research, a more likely level of global warming is between 2.0 and 2.4 C.

For reference, global average temperatures are now between 1.1 and 1.3 C above the benchmark, and are increasing by 0.2 to 0.3 C every 10 years. At the 2015 Paris climate summit, it was agreed that the most catastrophic effects of climate change could be avoided if global warming was kept below 2.0 C, and that ideally, 1.5 C should be the goal in order to keep climate impacts to a level to which a majority of the human population could adapt without unimaginable disruption to civilization.

The problem with these targets, however, is that they are as much politically motivated as they are indicated by scientific research; they are expressions of "what the market is willing to bear," so to speak, with the empirical findings essentially only serving as parameters for debate.

Recent research has revealed that these targets are very likely ludicrously optimistic, and that several critical climate "tipping points" will be crossed before 1.5 C of warming is reached, and may have already gone past the point of no return.

In a widely reported paper published on September 9 in the journal *Science*, researchers identified six such tipping points, defined as events which, once they occur, are irreversible and cannot be stopped even if no further warming occurs. These are: the collapse of the Greenland ice sheet; the collapse of the West Antarctic ice sheet; the collapse of ocean circulation in the North Atlantic, which is mainly caused by ice melting in Greenland; the widespread die-off of corals in tropical regions; the thawing of the permafrost in the northern regions; and the loss of permanent sea ice in the Barents Sea.

Except for the loss of the North Atlantic ocean circulation, which is unique among the effects in that it would happen more or less instantly, all of these effects are already happening on a large scale. There is just simply no way to be certain yet, without

observing them for a few more seasons, whether they have actually "tipped" and become self-sustaining, runaway effects.

Over the past two or three years, it has become painfully obvious, both through scientific research such as the recently published study and through observation of spectacular heat waves, droughts, floods and other extreme weather phenomena, that the "effects of climate change" are much closer to real time than anyone imagined even as recently as the Paris summit. Despite climate deniers' efforts to paint climate science as irrationally pessimistic, it turns out that it has been, in fact, entirely too optimistic.

The notion of expecting positive results — that is, being able to maintain a close approximation of our way of life by being just a bit more environmentally responsible — from the exhortation to "stop climate change before it's too late" is a fallacy. Our life as a species on this planet is going to change profoundly, in ways that are going to be uncomfortable for almost all of us, and unfortunately, probably fatal to millions.

And the most terrifying realization in all of this is that scientists do not yet understand and are not able to predict what lies beyond the tipping points. It is understood that a failure of one system can lead to the failure of another, such as ice melt from Greenland stopping the North Atlantic ocean circulation, but the impacts of other tipping points are not as easy to identify, particularly when several of them are occurring all at once.

So no, we are not going to save the planet by buying electric cars or using wooden stir sticks in our morning coffee instead of plastic ones. Climate advocates consider this sort of "doomism" heretical; if we give the impression that climate mitigation efforts are essentially futile, then no one will bother to make those efforts. Even if they believe at heart — and I think many of them must — that we and the planet are actually doomed, saying so out loud will stop people from making more responsible, sustainable choices.

That shouldn't be the case, because every step taken to mitigate climate change is also a step taken to adapt to it. We might not be able to save ourselves, but there is no reason not to try extend our survival for as long as we can. And contrary to what the climate activists who are afraid to say that aloud believe, maybe if people understood it they would try to make the time we have left a little more meaningful.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS MIRROR

[House plenary debates on budget start Sept. 20](#)

By: Jovee Marie Dela Cruz

To ensure swift approval of the government's national spending program for 2023, the House of Representatives will start this week plenary debates on the P5.268-trillion national budget for next year.

House Committee on Appropriations Senior Vice Chairperson Stella Luz Quimbo confirmed the target is to get approval of the 2023 national budget at the committee level on Monday (today).

"The committee approval [of the 2023 national budget will be] tomorrow (Monday) and plenary debates begin on Tuesday 9 am with DBCC [Development Budget Coordination Committee]," Quimbo told BusinessMirror on Sunday.

House Majority Leader Manuel Jose Dalipe said that the budget panel worked at a record pace to scrutinize the budget and ensure that it is responsive to the needs of the people and compliant with the spending requirements of the Marcos administration.

Dalipe also assured the public that the national budget and all of its provisions are transparent, above-board and are designed to uplift the lives of the Filipino people.

"The House leadership is confident that the NEP [national expenditure program] will be adequately reviewed and scrutinized to ensure that the best interest of our people is protected. We will not allow any manipulation by any syndicate or by any group to favor certain groups or individuals," he said.

"We will scrutinize the budget [at the plenary] and ensure the judicious allocation and use of our national budget," Dalipe added.

On instructions of House Speaker Martin Romualdez, Dalipe said the House Appropriations Committee and the House Committee on Rules have agreed to submit the NEP to the plenary for sponsorship and floor debates starting Tuesday, September 20, to cover the general principles and provisions of the budget measure.

The GAB, or the General Appropriations Bill, is the budget measure to be filed by the House just before the plenary debates.

The P5.268-trillion NEP for 2023 is the precursor of the GAB.

The proposed P5.268-trillion national budget, the highest ever if approved by Congress, is P244 billion more than this year's P5,023.6-trillion spending program. It represents 22.1 of GDP.

For 2023, the Department of Budget and Management said revenues are expected to grow by 10 percent year-on-year to P3.632.9 trillion, or 15.3 percent of GDP, while disbursements will increase by 2.6 percent to P5.085.8 trillion. Deficit, on the other hand, is expected to decline to P1.453.0 trillion, or 6.1 percent of GDP, from this year's program of P1.650.5 trillion or 7.6 percent of GDP.

By sector, social services will receive the biggest chunk of the P5.268-trillion national budget with P2.071 trillion; followed by economic services with P1.528 trillion; general public services with P807.2 billion; debt burden with P611 billion and defense, P250.7 billion.

This proposal would be the first full one-year outlay of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.

Speaker Romualdez said the proposed P5.268-trillion national budget is envisioned to pave the way for economic recovery in the first year of Marcos administration.

He described it as an exceptional fiscal program carefully formulated to provide a continuing "booster shot" to revitalize an economy still reeling from the pandemic.

Romualdez said the House leadership is eyeing to finish committee and plenary deliberations on the budget proposal before October 1, or before the 19th Congress goes on its first recess that will last up to November 6.

The House created three teams—composed of Deputy Majority Leaders and Assistant Majority Leaders—for the plenary deliberations.

Dalipe estimated that the floor debates would last until September 28 as the House is determined to approve the measure on or before September 30.

The plenary debates will start on Tuesday, September 20 to cover the general principles and provisions of the budget measure and at least seven government departments and constitutional bodies namely: Department of Finance, including Attached Agencies/Corporations; National Economic and Development Authority, including Attached Agencies/Corporations; Office of the Ombudsman; Commission on Human Rights, including Human Rights Violations Victims' Memorial Commission; Commission on Elections; Department of Science and Technology, including Attached Agencies and other Executive Offices such as the Anti-Red Tape Authority and the Mindanao Development Authority.

On Wednesday, scheduled for floor deliberations are: State Universities and Colleges (NCR, Regions 1 to Caraga Region, CAR, BARMM); Commission on Higher Education; Climate Change Commission; Commission on Filipinos Overseas; Games and Amusement Board; Philippine Space Agency; Philippine Sports Commission; Movie and Television Review and Classification Board; Commission on the Filipino Language; Film Development Council of the Philippines; Optical Media Board; National Commission for Culture and the Arts; National Historical Commission of the Philippines;

National Library of the Philippines; National Archives of the Philippines; Philippine Racing Commission; Philippine Competition Commission; Governance Commission for GOCCs; Budgetary Support to Government Corporations; Cultural Center of the Philippines; Philippine Center for Economic Development; Development Academy of the Philippines; Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan; Cagayan Economic Zone Authority; Bases Conversion and Development Authority; Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority; Southern Philippines Development Authority; Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority; Allocation to Local Government Units and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority; Department of Justice, including Attached Agencies; Civil Service Commission Including Career Service Executive Board and the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development.

For Thursday, the budget of these agencies will be tackled: The Judiciary; Office of the Vice President; Department of Education, including Attached Agencies; Other Executive Offices such as the Dangerous Drugs Board; Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency; Anti-Money Laundering Council and the Department of Health, including Attached/Agencies/Corporations.

Scheduled on Friday are: Department of Agrarian Reform; Department of Labor and Employment, Including Attached Agencies; Department of Migrant Workers; Department of National Defense, including Attached Agencies and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity.

Other agencies that will face the plenary starting next week onwards are the Department of Trade and Industry, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Energy, Energy Regulatory Commission, Office of the Press Secretary, Department of Information and Communications and Technology, Department of Foreign Affairs and Department of Public Works and Highways.

GMA NEWS

[Philippines, Germany sign €5 million grant deal for climate information dissemination](#)

By: Ted Cordero

The Philippine government and German development agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on Friday signed a deal for a €5-million technical assistance grant to make climate information accessible to the public.

The Philippine government and German development agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on Friday signed a deal for a €5-million technical assistance grant to make climate information accessible to the public.

In a statement, the Department of Finance (DOF) said Finance Secretary Diokno, Climate Change Commission (CCC) Executive Director Robert Borje, GIZ country director Immanuel Gebhardt, and GIZ Principal Adviser Dr. Bjoern Surborg signed the implementation agreement for the South-South Collaboration for Climate Information and Services (SSCIS) project.

“This Project provides the Philippines with a tailored knowledge exchange and learning platform to mitigate the increasing risks posed by the climate crisis,” said Secretary Diokno in his keynote message during the ceremonial signing event on September 16, 2022.

The SSCIS project will run for five years and will primarily focus on producing usable climate information, enhancing tripartite capacities, generating science- and evidence-based knowledge products, and establishing the Climate Vulnerable Forum South-South Center of Excellence.

“The SSCIS will enable our target stakeholders, especially farmers and fisherfolk, to make informed decisions when adverse effects of climate change arise. I trust that the partnership of the CCC, the DOST-PAGASA, the University of the Philippines, and our development partners from Germany will lead to the development of resilient and adaptive communities in the Philippines,” said Diokno.

The Global Climate Risk Index 2021 ranks the Philippines fourth among countries most affected by extreme weather globally from 2000 to 2019. The country is hit by an average of 20 tropical cyclones every year.

As part of efforts to curtail the effects of climate change, the Philippines joined nearly 200 countries in a landmark deal in Paris in December 2015 to cut greenhouse gas emissions to limit the rise in global temperatures to below two degrees Celsius.

The Philippines is among countries that are most vulnerable to the ill effects of climate change.

“I urge the implementing entities of this project to ensure that these are accessible and understandable. This will enable our target stakeholders, particularly farmers and fisherfolk, to make informed decisions when adverse effects of climate change arise,” said Diokno.

“Rest assured that the Marcos administration is determined to rise to the twin challenge of recovering strongly from the pandemic and mitigating the impact of climate change,” said the Finance chief.

MANILA BULLETIN

[PH gets German grant for climate info dissemination](#)

By: Chino S. Leyco

The Philippine government and the German development agency sealed a technical assistance grant to make climate information accessible to the public, the Department of Finance (DOF) announced.

In a statement, the DOF said that Manila and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) signed a five million euro grant for the South-South Collaboration for Climate Information and Services (SSCIS) Project.

“This Project provides the Philippines with a tailored knowledge exchange and learning platform to mitigate the increasing risks posed by the climate crisis,” said Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno in his keynote message during the signing ceremony last Friday, Sept. 16.

The SSCIS project will run for five years and will primarily focus on producing usable climate information, enhancing tripartite capacities, generating science- and evidence-based knowledge products, and establishing the Climate Vulnerable Forum South-South Center of Excellence.

Diokno, Climate Change Commission (CCC) Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje, GIZ Country Director Immanuel Gebhardt, and GIZ Principal Adviser Dr. Bjoern Surborg signed the implementation agreement.

German Ambassador to the Philippines Anke Reiffenstuel also attended the event, where she underscored the importance of international collaboration on climate change mitigation.

Reiffenstuel said that the climate crisis does not stop at any border; hence, the response should take on an international approach and outreach.

The Philippines is among countries that are most vulnerable to the ill effects of climate change.

With the devastating impacts and incalculable damages climate change poses on the economy, the government sees having an integrated knowledge system as critical for the development of premium quality climate information services.

Diokno said that the SSCIS project will make climate information available down to the grassroots level.

“I urge the implementing entities of this Project to ensure that these are accessible and understandable. This will enable our target stakeholders, particularly farmers and

fisherfolk, to make informed decisions when adverse effects of climate change arise,” the DOF chief said.

Diokno counts on the collaboration of the CCC, Department of Science and Technology – Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, the University of the Philippines, and other development partners from Germany in the next five years to lead to the development of resilient and adaptive communities in the country.

“Rest assured that the Marcos administration is determined to rise to the twin challenge of recovering strongly from the pandemic and mitigating the impact of climate change,” said Diokno.

[PCG collects 1,000 sacks of sea waste at Manila Dolomite Beach – Manila Bulletin](#)

By Martin Sadongdong

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) racked up at least 1,000 sacks of non-biodegradable waste materials as it spearheaded a coastal clean-up drive at the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach in Manila on Saturday, Sept. 17.

Rear Admiral Robert Patrimonio, commander of the PCG's Marine Environmental Protection Command, led the command's efforts in taking part with the celebration of the International Coastal Clean-Up Day 2022 that carried the theme "Fighting for Trash-Free Seas, Pilipinas!"

"The International Coastal Clean-up Drive is vital as it promotes and unites countries and people with one common objective which is to take care of our environment by maintaining the cleanliness of our shorelines, rivers, lakes, and other waterways," the PCG said.

Wearing casual shirts and shorts in their trademark color orange and black, coast guardians picked up pieces of trash that were washed ashore on the artificial white sand beach along the stretch of Roxas Boulevard as early as 6 a.m.

All in all, there were 310 coast guardians and representatives from PCG Auxiliary, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Heirs of the World Inc., Hotel 101 Manila, Climate Change Commission, and Eagles Club who participated in the initiative.

The coastal clean-up drive was simultaneously held in PCG stations nationwide.

In Tagum City, the PCG District Southeastern Mindanao collected approximately 800 kilos of waste materials along the coastline of Barangay Madaum.

They were joined by representatives from the Hijo Resources, Bureau of Fire Protection, Provincial Environmental and Natural Resources Office, Boy Scout of the Philippines Tagum City Council, La Filipina Elementary School, and United States Marines.

In Basilan, the PCG Station Basilan also racked up 20 sacks of waste materials along the 500-meter long coastline of Barangay Baluno, Isabela City.

The International Coastal Clean-up Day was declared on the third Saturday of September of each year in the Philippines under the Presidential Proclamation No. 470 issued in 2003.

The clean-up drive also coincided with the observance of the Maritime Archipelagic Nation Awareness Month (MANA Mo) and 23rd Maritime Week which aims to dedicate

the month of September to “harmonize, integrate, and synchronize programs and activities that will raise national consciousness on maritime archipelagic concerns.”

MANILA STANDARD

[House opens debates on budget next week, expects swift approval](#)

By: Maricel Cruz

The House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations is set to submit on Tuesday the proposed P5.268 trillion 2023 budget to the plenary for sponsorship and deliberations, with a view to “judicious but swift approval” of the government’s National Expenditure Plan for next year.

“House Majority Leader and Zamboanga City Rep. Manuel Jose Dalipe said he expects the floor debates to last from Sept. 20 to 28, as the House is determined to approve the measure on or before Sept. 30.

Upon the instruction of Speaker Martin Romualdez, Dalipe said the House Appropriations Committee and the House Committee on Rules, which he chairs, have agreed to submit the NEP to the plenary for sponsorship and floor debates beginning Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Senator Sonny Angara said almost 90 percent of the proposed 2023 national budget will be spent on government projects and only around 11 percent will be used in paying for loan interests.

Dalipe said the House leadership under Speaker Romualdez, Appropriations committee chair Bicol Rep. Elizaldy Co, and the other committee members pushed the budget panel to work at “record breaking” speed to scrutinize the budget and ensure that it is “responsive to the needs of the people and compliant with the spending requirement of the Marcos administration.”

Dalipe also assured that the NEP and all its provisions are transparent, above-board, and designed to uplift the lives of the Filipino people.

“The House leadership is confident that the NEP will be adequately reviewed and scrutinized to ensure that the best interest of our people is protected. We will not allow any manipulation by any syndicate or by any group to favor certain groups or individuals. We will scrutinize the budget and ensure the judicious allocation and use of our national budget,” Dalipe said.

The debates will cover the general principles and provisions of the budget measure, starting with at least seven government departments and constitutional bodies.

These are the Department of Finance including its attached agencies and corporations, the National Economic and Development Authority, the Office of the Ombudsman; the Commission on Human Rights including the Human Rights Violations Victims’ Memorial Commission, the Commission on Elections, the Department of Science, and other Executive offices such as the Anti-Red Tape Authority and the Mindanao Development Authority.

Scheduled for floor deliberations on Wednesday are the following agencies: State Universities and Colleges (NCR, Regions I to CARAGA Region, CAR, BARMM); Commission on Higher Education; Climate Change Commission; Commission on Filipinos Overseas; Games and Amusement Board; Philippine Space Agency; Philippine Sports Commission; Movie and Television Review and Classification Board; Commission on the Filipino Language; Film Development Council of the Philippines; Optical Media Board; National Commission for Culture and the Arts; National Commission for Culture and the Arts; National Historical Commission of the Philippines; National Library of the Philippines; National Archives of the Philippines; Philippine Racing Commission; Philippine Competition Commission; Governance Commission for GOCCs; Budgetary Support to Government Corporations; Cultural Center of the Philippines; Philippine Center for Economic Development; Development Academy of the Philippines; Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan; Cagayan Economic Zone Authority; Bases Conversion and Development Authority; Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority; Southern Philippines Development Authority; Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority; Allocation to Local Government Units and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority; Department of Justice, including Attached Agencies; Civil Service Commission Including Career Service Executive Board and the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development.

For Thursday, the budget for the following agencies will be tackled on the floor: The Judiciary; Office of the Vice President; Department of Education, including Attached Agencies; Other Executive Offices such as the Dangerous Drugs Board; Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency; Anti-Money Laundering Council and the Department of Health, including Attached/Agencies/Corporations.

Scheduled on Friday are the following agencies: Department of Agrarian Reform; Department of Labor and Employment, Including Attached Agencies; Department of Migrant Workers; Department of National Defense, including Attached Agencies and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity.

Angara said the proposed national expenditures program lower than in the '80s and '90s when the government allotted 25 to 30 percent of the national budget to pay for loan interests.

Angara, who chairs the Senate Committee on Finance, also said out of the P5.2 trillion proposed 2023 budget, almost 70 percent will be sourced out from tax collections and more than 20 percent will be coming from international loans.

He also dismissed assumptions that these loans will have negative effects on the financial status of the country.

“Our people should not be alarmed because we are actually borrowing money every year. Since then, several decades ago. The important thing is that the borrowed money

should all be allotted in significant projects and programs that would really help our countrymen,” Angara said in an interview with DWIZ.

He said the loans will be spent on education, health, and other government programs that are considered “human capital investment.”

The Senate Finance committee recently concluded a series of briefings with the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) which has already submitted the 2023 National Expenditure Program (NEP).

The DBCC is composed of the Departments of Finance, Budget and Management, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, National Economic Development Authority, and the Office of the President.

After being scrutinized, the 2023 NEP will become the 2023 General Appropriations Bill, which will be brought to the plenary and ratified by both the Senate and the House of Representatives to become the General Appropriations Act of 2023.

NET 25

Mata ng Agila Weekend

Time code: 26:55 (at 5:06pm) Interview with Sec. Robert Borje by

COASTAL CLEANUP ISINAGAGA SA MANILA BAY AT IBA PANG LUGAR SA NCR

Coastal clean-up isinagawa sa Manila Bay at iba pang lugar sa NCR libu-libong volunteers lumahok.

Pinaalala naman ng Climate Change Commission ang kahalagahan ng pag-iingat ng mamamayan sa mga coastline sa bansa na nakakatulong ng malaki para proteksyonan ang mga tao mula sa bagyo, ang biodiversity at nakapagbibigay ng kabuhayan.

PTV NEWS

Balita Ngayon

IBA'T IBANG SECTOR, NAGSAGAWA NG COASTAL CLEAN-UP SA MANILA BAY

“Pinangunahan ito ng Climate Change Commission kasama ang DENR”

Ulat Bayan Weekend

(Time Aired: 6:35 Interview with Sec. Robert Borje)

PILIPINAS, KABILANG SA TOP 5 NA MAY LONGEST COASTLINE SA MUNDO

- Para sa Climate Change Commission may malaking epekto ang ganitong mga
initiatibo

para matugunan ang lumalalang problema ng pagbabago ng klima sa mundo...

PTV News Online

[PH joins clean-up day with volunteer, gov't drives](#)

By Alec Go

Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) personnel and volunteers join forces for the coastal clean-up drive along Manila Bay Dolomite Beach on Saturday, Sept. 17, 2022, in line with the observance of world clean-up day. (Photo courtesy of PCG)

By Alec Go

The Philippines joined the world on Saturday, Sept. 17, in observing this year's International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) day with volunteers and agencies teaming up in cleaning shorelines and other waterways from plastic and other wastes.

In Metro Manila, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) set up clean-up drives along the polluted Manila Bay, Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park, and other water bodies in Navotas, Manila, Pasay, and Quezon City.

These were participated by the military, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), the Climate Change Commission (CCC), volunteer groups, and private organizations. The Dolomite Beach activity had 310 volunteers, according to the PCG.

The CCC, the lead agency for climate change mitigation and adaptation, called on the public to join similar efforts even beyond the coastal clean up observation period to ensure a plastic-free Philippines.

“Ang Pilipinas ay panglima sa may pinakamahabang coastline sa buong mundo, kaya't mahalaga na pangalagaan natin ito at panatilihin plastic-free... Ang pagtugon sa plastic pollution ay kabahagi ng mas malawak na climate action,” CCC Vice Chair and Executive Director Robert Borje said in a post.

The DENR shared that its clean-up activities in the Cordillera Administrative Region yielded 3,599.241 kilograms (kg) of mixed wastes through the help of 989 volunteers, while DENR Caraga with 182 volunteers collected 454 kg of trash.

In 2003, former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed Proclamation No. 470 declaring every third Saturday of September each year as ICC day in observance of the global coastal clean-up celebrations.

Meanwhile, environmental groups continue to call on corporate polluters to take accountability for the plastic pollution crisis.

“We can end plastic clean ups by doubling down on corporate accountability,” Break Free from Plastic global coordinator Von Hernandez said in a release, adding that its brand audit initiative to identify polluters continues.

“While the number of events and locations change each year, the culprits in this story remain the same, and unless these top corporate polluters invest in real solutions that move us away from dependence on single-use plastics, we will continue to see the same brands and companies wreaking havoc on the climate and our environment,” Hernandez said.

RMN - DZXL

Unang Radyo Unang Balita

SM BY THE BAY INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEAN UP

TC: 1:40:15-1:144:15 – (Audio) Interview with Sec. Robert E. A. Borje

SMNI NEWS

SMNI LIVE:

[International Coastal Clean-up 2022 at the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach](#)

Time code: 0:50 - Interview Comm. Albert Dela Cruz

Weekender World

[SM 'BAY THE BAY' MASSIVE COASTAL CLEANUP DRAWS THOUSANDS OF VOLUNTEERS FROM VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS](#)

Time code: 39:10 - Interview with Sec. Robert Borje

- Led by the the SM by the Bay and SM Mall of Asia in collaboration with the Climate Change Commission and Department of Environment National Resources NCR the said Coastal Cleanup Drive drew thousands of volunteers.

Pitmaster Foundation sponsors national climate change summit

Private charity organization Pitmaster Foundation is the top non-profit sponsor of the National Climate and Disaster Emergency Policy Forum taking place on September 22, 2022.

At least five Marcos Cabinet members, the heads of the University of the Philippines and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and climate policy expert and Albay Representative Joey Salceda are headlining the event as speakers.

The Foundation, chaired by businessman Charlie “Atong” Ang, is also supporting environmental rehabilitation efforts in Siniloan, Laguna and Real, Quezon.

Confirmed speakers include Secretaries Benjamin Diokno, Arsenio Balisacan, Raphael Perpetuo Lotilla, Robert Borje, and Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga.

UP President Danilo Concepcion and BSP Governor Felipe Medalla will also be speaking.

Pitmaster Foundation Executive Director Caroline Cruz highlighted the emphasis the Foundation places on sustainability.

“Green solutions are atop our concerns in Pitmaster Foundation. Our partners and partner communities are affected by climate issues. So, we want solutions that will both create growth and solve our climate problems,” Cruz said.

“Pitmaster Foundation is committed to doing all that it can to support better climate policies for the Philippines, especially in community adaptation and renewable energy. We are proud to have engaged in environmental conservation since early in our founding as a non-profit organization. This is a continuation of that commitment,” she added.

The recommendations from the climate summit will be officially submitted to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Dolomite Beach becomes focus of coastal cleanup](#)

By: Angel Yabut and Dempsey Reyes

Manila, Philippines — In celebration of International Coastal Clean-Up Day on Saturday, the government took part in a cleanup drive right on the coast where it stirred up controversy over its expensive beautification of Manila Bay.

Around 5,000 volunteers took part in the cleanup effort led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Climate Change Commission, and other agencies, according to Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones. Members of the Philippine Coast Guard roamed the bay, collecting trash from its waters, while Manila Mayor Sheila “Honey” Lacuna, joined by members of the Manila police and other volunteers, concentrated their efforts at Baseco Beach at Manila’s port area.

Environmental groups were already at the historic bay ahead of International Coastal Clean-Up Day, which was first observed in the American state of Washington in 1986.

On Friday, 20 people from the Earth Island Institute undertook cleanup efforts at the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat Ecotourism Area — a part of the 1,994-square-kilometer bay which the group said has become a habitat for marine animals and migratory birds from other parts of Asia.

Earth Island Institute said it was able to collect more than 20 sacks of plastic waste. The group attributed the proliferation of plastic waste to the increased use of plastics in the delivery of goods, as people were restricted in their mobility because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also noted that many used face masks and test kits were collected, saying the “amount of medical waste that is not properly collected is concerning.”

But no other area at Manila Bay highlighted the importance of the environmental activity being celebrated on Saturday better than Dolomite Beach — which critics saw as an unnecessarily costly project on the watch of the DENR at that.

The agency on Saturday posted a “public advisory” on its Facebook page inviting the public to take part in the cleanup.

Leones said when reached for comment that this “aims to help clean our seas and oceans through volunteerism and emphasize their life-giving importance to humans.”

But the post prompted criticism on Facebook and other social media platforms.

“You spent millions for the dolomite, then it would be the Filipino people who ended up cleaning,” said one commenter.

Jon Bonifacio, national coordinator of Kalikasan People’s Network for the Environment, said it was important to clean up trash washed up on shores.

But “cleanup drives like this risk just being photo opportunities for our public officials,” he said.

Von Hernandez, global coordinator of the group Break Free From Plastic, said: “We can’t be spending millions of resources yearly without effectively addressing the roots of the problem.”

“[[I]t’s better investment for the government to [just] compel producers and companies to reduce and stop the production of single-use plastics and invest in proven reusable and ... refill[ing] systems,” he added.

The project, which began in the pandemic year of 2020, had been touted by the previous administration of then President Rodrigo Duterte as a way to ease the mental health of Filipinos amid the pandemic lockdowns.

Then Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, who now heads the National Irrigation Administration, defended the project, even saying the funds were “not enough” to improve the bay’s water.

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