



NEWS ROUNDUP

01 September 2022 [08:00 am]

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- Lack of climate risk expertise seen to hinder financial disclosure
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- England faces longer, drier summers due to climate change—national forecaster
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- The future is bright for clean energy and transportation in the country

AL JAZEERA

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BUSINESS WORLD

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By: Ashly Erica Jose

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By: Robin Millard

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Beijing — China said on Wednesday that a condition for the resumption of bilateral climate talks with the United States was Washington dispelling the "negative influence" left by U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan earlier this month.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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By: Priam Nepomuceno

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PHYS ORG

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By: Shaun Tandon

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REUTERS

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By Kate Lamb and Yuddy Cahya Budiman

Nusa Dua, Indonesia, Aug 31 (Reuters) - Officials from the Group of 20 major economies meeting on Wednesday for climate talks in Bali have been unable to agree a joint communique, amid objections over language used on climate targets and the war in Ukraine, two sources told Reuters.

THE MANILA TIMES

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[\[Opinion\] Demystifying SDG, ESG and DEI \[Part 1\]](#)

By: Ernie Cecilia

WE have read or heard the terms "sustainability" and "sustainable development" used these days by so-called futurists or influencers. Many years ago, sustainability was identified as a megatrend "that is vast in scope, and which reflects the economic, political, cultural, philosophic milieu ..." Sustainability as a concept is gaining more importance as the whole world is trying its best to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by 2030. In this trilogy, I shall attempt to clarify the meaning and implications of Sustainability, as it relates to 1) the UN SDG; 2) ESG (environment, social and governance) goals; and 3) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) issues.

[Opinion] [Demystifying SDG, ESG and DEI \[Part 2\]](#)

By: Ernie Cecilia

Part 2: Sustainability and ESG

THE way people live today will dramatically impact how future generations will lead their lives. The essence of the concept of "sustainability" is that we should leave the Earth in a better state than when we found it.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR GLOBAL

[UN appeals for \\$160M to help worst hit in Pakistan floods](#)

Agence France-Presse

GENEVA, Switzerland — The United Nations and the Pakistani government launched an emergency appeal for \$160 million on Tuesday to help those hardest hit by the devastating floods in the country.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

JOURNAL ONLINE

[Experts call for united front against poor air quality and its impact on lung health](#)

Experts and officials from the Department of Health (DOH), Climate Change Commission, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), called for concerted efforts to improve air quality in the Philippines and mitigate its effects on lung health.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[Address inequalities and inequities by promoting social justice to accelerate the country's post-pandemic recovery](#)

Quezon City -- The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing socioeconomic inequalities and cultural inequities, which greatly affected the vulnerable and marginalized sectors of society. It is crucial to address these disparities to build their resilience to future shocks and accelerate the country's post-pandemic recovery.

THE MANILA TIMES

[\[Opinion\] The future is bright for clean energy and transportation in the country](#)

By: Jeremiah Belgica

With all the local and international push and support for the institutionalization of "sustainable growth" using renewable energy sources, the Philippines is now on an upward motion towards a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

AL JAZEERA

[UN weather agency predicts rare 'triple-dip' La Nina in 2022](#)

The United Nations weather agency predicts the phenomenon known as La Nina is poised to last through the end of this year, a mysterious “triple dip” – the first this century – caused by three straight years of its effect on climate patterns such as drought and flooding worldwide.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) on Wednesday said La Nina conditions, which involve a large-scale cooling of ocean surface temperatures, have strengthened in the eastern and central equatorial Pacific with an increase in trade winds in recent weeks.

A natural and cyclical cooling of parts of the equatorial Pacific, La Nina changes weather patterns worldwide and is usually associated with wetter conditions in some parts of the world, and drier conditions in others.

The better-known El Nino – an opposite phenomenon – is associated with warming in parts of the world.

“It is exceptional to have three consecutive years with a La Nina event,” WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas said.

Taalas was quick to caution that the “triple dip” of cooling does not mean global warming is easing.

“Its cooling influence is temporarily slowing the rise in global temperatures, but it will not halt or reverse the long-term warming trend,” WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas said.

Horn of Africa drought

Taalas said the drought in the Horn of Africa and southern South America “bears the hallmarks of La Nina”.

“The new La Nina update unfortunately confirms regional climate projections that the devastating drought in the Horn of Africa will worsen and affect millions of people,” he said.

That drought is set to worsen with a fifth consecutive failed rainy season, the WMO projected on Friday, fearing an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe.

Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia are already going through their worst drought for 40 years.

La Nina's cooling effect also did not stop 2021 from being one of the seven hottest years on record.

"Despite the stubborn La Nina in the equatorial central and eastern Pacific, widespread warmer-than-average sea-surface temperatures elsewhere are predicted to dominate the forecast of air temperatures for September to November," the WMO said in a statement.

"This will contribute to above normal temperatures over land areas, including much of the Northern Hemisphere."

La Nina also often leads to more Atlantic hurricanes, less rain and more wildfires in the western United States, and agricultural losses in the central US. Studies have shown La Nina is more expensive in its effects on the US than the El Nino.

Together El Nino, La Nina and the neutral condition are called ENSO, which stands for El Nino Southern Oscillation.

Together they have one of the largest natural effects on climate, at times augmenting and other times dampening the big effects of human-caused climate change from the burning of coal, oil and gas, scientists say.

BUSINESS WORLD

Lack of climate risk expertise seen to hinder financial disclosure

By: Ashly Erica Jose

Climate-related risks will have financial disclosure impacts in the Philippines, according to Willis Towers Watson (WTW), citing the lack of expertise in managing climate risks and the availability of data as major obstacles.

Starting in 2023, listed companies in the Philippines will be required to comply with the sustainability reporting guidelines of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the global advisory, broking and solutions firm said.

It added that more firms need to undertake climate financial reporting based on the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure (TFCD).

The TFCD has created a framework to help listed firms disclose climate-related risks and opportunities through existing processes, while the sustainability reporting guidelines issued by the SEC aim to help them in managing non-financial performance covering environmental, social and governance of organizations.

According to WTW, about 24% of publicly listed firms in the Philippines have disclosed or have shown readiness to issue their processes for identifying, assessing, and managing climate-related risks or opportunities. More than half or 55% of the respondents intend to disclose such information.

WTW also said that challenges faced by companies include a shortage of in-house capability on climate risk, as well as a lack of data availability and standardized metrics

GMA NEWS ONLINE

[UN forecasts rare 'triple-dip' La Niña climate effect](#)

By: Robin Millard

Geneva — The La Niña weather phenomenon is likely to last until at least the end of the year, the United Nations forecast Wednesday, becoming the first "triple-dip" La Niña this century.

La Niña will likely span three consecutive northern hemisphere winters—southern hemisphere summers—according to the UN's World Meteorological Organization.

It would be only the third time this has happened since 1950, the WMO said.

The current La Niña event—the cooling of surface temperatures which can cause widespread impacts on global weather conditions—started in September 2020.

The WMO predicts it will continue over the next six months, with a 70 percent chance of doing so into September-November 2022.

That gradually decreases to a 55-percent chance into December-February.

La Niña is the large-scale cooling of surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, normally occurring every two to seven years.

The effect has widespread impacts on weather around the world—typically the opposite impacts to the El Niño phenomenon, which has a warming influence on global temperatures.

La Niña is usually associated with wetter conditions in some parts of the world, and drier conditions in others.

But the UN's weather agency said all naturally-occurring climate events now take place in the context of human-induced climate change, which is increasing global temperatures and exacerbating extreme weather.

"It is exceptional to have three consecutive years with a La Niña event," said WMO chief Petteri Taalas.

"Its cooling influence is temporarily slowing the rise in global temperatures—but it will not halt or reverse the long-term warming trend."

La Niña's cooling effect was not enough to stop 2021 being one of the seven hottest years on record.

Taalas said the drought in the Horn of Africa and southern South America "bears the hallmarks of La Niña."

"The new La Niña update unfortunately confirms regional climate projections that the devastating drought in the Horn of Africa will worsen and affect millions of people."

That drought is set to get even worse with a fifth consecutive failed rainy season, the WMO projected on Friday, fearing an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe.

Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia are already going through their worst drought for 40 years.

La Niña conditions in the tropical Pacific have strengthened as trade winds intensified in recent months, affecting temperature and precipitation patterns and exacerbating drought and flooding, the WMO said.

The last La Niña, which was brief and relatively weak, began developing in November 2017 and ended in April 2018

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Bangkok likely to face massive flooding as in 2011, climate expert says](#)

Bangkok — A global-warming expert warned on Wednesday that Bangkok could face massive flooding similar to what happened in 2011 mainly because of possible 1,200-millimetre rainfall or the so-called “100-year-level rains”.

Dr Seri Suprathit, director of Rangsit University’s Climate Change and Disaster Centre, also urged the government to start preparing now or rising seas would swamp the capital in a mere 20 years.

Seri said Bangkok could be hit with 1,200mm rainfall during September, October and November.

He reiterated his centre’s forecast that the country could be hit by 23 storms this year. Eight storms have passed but 15 more are to come.

Seri’s apocalyptic view of possible storms earlier prompted the government to issue a “fake news warning” and urge the public to monitor and believe information only from the Meteorological Department.

Seri warned that the heaviest rainfall would be similar to heavy downpours in Seoul recently that caused massive flooding there. The Seoul situation was dubbed “80-year-level” rains.

“The chance is high that the situation here will be similar to the massive floods in 2011 because the amount of rainfall would be similar,” Seri claimed.

“In 2011, the floodwaters came very fast from upstream and by water released from dams. But this year, the floods would be caused by rainfall and by the fact that the storm belt would move down to the central region, causing all rice fields to be flooded and spilling over to economic areas,” he warned.

Seri forecast the heavy rains that could last for days would fall between September and November.

He said his center would be able to predict coming storms about ten days in advance and the amount of rainfall.

He expressed concern whether farmers in the Chao Phraya basin, whose rice fields would become flood retention areas, would be able to harvest their rice within 15 days on being alerted that storms were coming.

Seri also called on the government to make models of possible weather scenarios to warn people in advance so that they would cooperate in mitigation measures.

Seri said Bangkok and suburban areas are at risk of being inundated and the capital might have to be moved out if nothing was done to avert a disaster.

He explained three major factors for likely flooding in greater Bangkok:

- Rainfall. Fifteen more storms would possibly hit Thailand and might unleash more than 1,200mm rainfall or the so-called “100-year rains”.
- Runoffs and overflowing rivers, which would be caused by heavy rains in upper Thailand. Seri said the heaviest rainfalls there would happen in October.
- Rising sea water. Seri is “very worried” as it could be permanent.

“Rainfall and runoffs occur in the rainy season, but the phenomenon of permanent high sea levels is very worrying. Foreign research ranks Bangkok seventh highest at risk of flooding caused by constantly rising seas,” the director pointed out.

He noted that earlier studies by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Japan and Nasa found that Bangkok’s seashores would be under water because of a sea rise.

“Together with high amounts of rain and runoffs, Bangkok would be sandwiched with flood troubles and it would unavoidably go under water,” he warned.

Seri said it required urgent measures from the national government to avert the effect of a sea rise as the Bangkok governor would not have enough power to carry out such megaprojects.

The climate-change expert said it would require the building of a comprehensive network of seashore embankments, similar to those constructed in South Korea, to prevent flooding from rising sea levels. He noted that embankments to prevent inundation at Changi took 30 years to complete.

Moreover, he said, the entire drainage system of Bangkok would have to be overhauled as the current one could no longer handle the flood situation.

Seri said comprehensive seashore embankments would prevent flooding in Bangkok, Samut Prakan, Samut Sakhon, Samut Songkhram and Chachoengsao.

However, the megaprojects would affect the way of life of local people like fishermen.

Seri was the one who came out to warn about massive flooding in Bangkok in 2011. At that time, his centre used scales of numbers of whales to illustrate the amount of massive floodwaters that would flow down to Bangkok because the Yingluck government miscalculated the water amount and had to release huge volumes of water from reservoirs after a series of big storms. His warning was dismissed by the government at that time.

England faces longer, drier summers due to climate change—national forecaster

London — England is likely to experience longer, drier summers later this decade that could worsen the risk of droughts, according to British national forecaster the Met Office, which said the change was due to increasing climate change.

Large parts of England have declared a drought in recent weeks and a record-breaking European heatwave has pushed the country's infrastructure to its limits, forcing the impact of climate change up the political agenda.

The Met Office, Britain's meteorological service, reached its conclusion that the changes were human-driven by comparing different emissions scenarios, which showed the effects were stronger when emissions were high.

It said summer-like conditions were expected to last longer and a 4-12% reduction in rainfall in English regions was likely in the future in autumn (fall).

"Our research found that the largely 'summer-like' weather patterns – bringing drier conditions – will begin to extend into the start of autumn," Met Office scientist Daniel Cotterill said in a statement.

"Although we don't expect to see this shift in pattern imminently, a key finding from this study is that from the mid-2020s warmer and drier autumns following hotter and drier summers could increase drought risk."

The findings were presented in a paper titled "Future extension of the UK summer and its impact on autumn precipitation". It adds to a body of research showing seasonal changes caused by climate change.

Earlier this year a study said climate change was spurring earlier springs in North America and causing many birds to lay their eggs earlier in the year. Older studies have shown the same thing happening in Britain.

US must dispel Pelosi's 'negative influence' before climate talks—China

Beijing — China said on Wednesday that a condition for the resumption of bilateral climate talks with the United States was Washington dispelling the “negative influence” left by U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan earlier this month.

In response to the visit on Aug. 2-3, China on Aug. 5 suspended bilateral cooperation with the United States in a number of areas, including climate talks and dialogue between senior-level military commanders.

U.S. Special Envoy on Climate Change John Kerry, who earlier this month said the suspension of bilateral climate talks punished the entire world, urged Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday, in an interview with the Financial Times, to resume the discussions.

The former U.S. Secretary of State, who is currently the Biden administration’s top climate diplomat, also told the newspaper he was hopeful the countries could “get back together” ahead of the United Nations’ COP27 climate summit in November in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

China, which claims the self-ruled island of Taiwan as its own territory, responded to Kerry’s remarks on Wednesday by stating that the resumption of climate talks with the United States was dependent on actions taken by Washington to address the “negative influence” of Pelosi’s Taiwan visit.

“The U.S. side should dispel the negative influence of Pelosi scuttling to Taiwan, this is an indispensable condition of China-U.S. climate change cooperation,” China’s foreign ministry said in a written statement sent to Reuters.

The statement also said China would continue to actively participate in international forums on climate change.

Beijing’s response highlights the divergent approaches to global climate change cooperation between the world’s two superpowers.

While officials in the Biden administration, including Kerry, have repeatedly expressed hope that U.S.-China cooperation on climate change would not be affected by tensions on other fronts, Beijing has rejected any separating of issues in U.S.-China relations.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

DND hails EU support for PH disaster relief ops

By: Priam Nepomuceno

Manila – Department of National Defense (DND) officer in charge Undersecretary Jose Faustino Jr. thanked the European Union (EU) for its assistance to the country's disaster relief operations.

Faustino made this remark after he met with EU Ambassador to the Philippines Luc Véron at the DND main building in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City on August 25.

"Considering the effects of climate change on a country prone to tropical cyclones and other natural disasters, Senior Undersecretary Faustino expressed appreciation for the EU's aid and assistance to the Philippines' disaster relief operations," DND spokesperson Arsenio Andolong said in a statement late Tuesday.

The details of Véron's visit were only released to reporters on August 30.

Andolong also said both Faustino and Véron welcomed the positive developments in the ongoing bilateral relations between the EU and the Philippines, as well as the EU's interest in defense and security cooperation with partner countries in the Southeast Asian region.

"Ambassador Véron also shared the EU's political commitment to working with Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and looks forward to receiving the Philippine delegation for the Commemoration of the 45th Asean-EU Anniversary at Brussels, Belgium in December this year," he added.

Andolong also said Faustino welcomed the increasing engagement of the EU in the region and looked forward to working with the EU in the future.

Regarding the South China Sea/West Philippine Sea issue, both officials agreed on the importance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the preservation of freedom of navigation, and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

"Ambassador Véron ensured that these principles remain in line with the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy," Andolong added.

PHYS.ORG

[Greenhouse gas, sea levels at record in 2021: NOAA](#)

By: Shaun Tandon

Earth's concentration of greenhouse gases and sea levels hit new highs in 2021, a US government report said Wednesday, showing that climate change keeps surging ahead despite renewed efforts to curb emissions.

"The data presented in this report are clear—we continue to see more compelling scientific evidence that climate change has global impacts and shows no sign of slowing," said Rick Spinrad, administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"With many communities hit with 1,000-year floods, exceptional drought and historic heat this year, it shows that the climate crisis is not a future threat but something we must address today," he said in a statement.

The rise in greenhouse gas levels comes despite an easing of fossil fuel emissions the previous year as much of the global economy slowed sharply due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The US agency said that the concentration of greenhouse gas in the atmosphere stood at 414.7 parts per million in 2021, 2.3 parts higher than in 2020.

The level is "the highest in at least the last million years based on paleoclimatic records," the annual State of the Climate report found.

The planet's sea levels rose for the 10th straight year, reaching a new record of 3.8 inches (97 millimeters) above the average in 1993 when satellite measurements began.

Last year was among the six warmest on record since the mid-19th century, with the last seven years all the seven hottest on record, it said.

The less headline-grabbing average temperatures were in part due to La Nina, an occasional phenomenon in the Pacific that cools waters, which took place early in the year and contributed to February being the coldest since 2014.

But water temperatures were also at records, with exceptionally high recordings documented in particular in lakes in Tibet, an environmentally crucial region as a water source for many of Asia's major rivers.

Rising disasters and fears

Tropical storms, which are expected to increase as the planet warms, were sharply up in 2021, the report said. They included Typhoon Rai, which killed nearly 400 people in the

Philippines in December, and Ida, which swept the Caribbean before becoming the second strongest hurricane to hit Louisiana after Katrina.

Among other extraordinary events cited in the report, the celebrated cherry trees in Kyoto, Japan, bloomed at their earliest since 1409.

Wildfires, also expected to rise due to climate change, were comparatively low following recent years although devastating blazes were witnessed both in the American West and Siberia.

The 2021 report comes days after a study said Greenland's ice sheet is already set to melt at dangerous levels, even without any future warming, with major effects for low-lying areas around the globe that are home to hundreds of millions of people.

The planet remains far off track from an ambition set by the Paris climate accord in 2015 to aspire to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

In August, the United States under President Joe Biden pushed through the most expansive government package ever to address emissions from the world's largest economy.

The effort will invest heavily in clean energy and comes as California moves to require all cars to be zero-emission by 2035, a decision with far-reaching consequences for the automobile industry.

REUTERS

G20 climate talks in Indonesia fail to agree communique

By Kate Lamb and Yuddy Cahya Budiman

Nusa Dua, Indonesia, Aug 31 (Reuters) - Officials from the Group of 20 major economies meeting on Wednesday for climate talks in Bali have been unable to agree a joint communique, amid objections over language used on climate targets and the war in Ukraine, two sources told Reuters.

Indonesia's Environment Minister Siti Nurbaya Bakar had started the meeting by urging countries to cut emissions and prevent the planet from being pushed to a point "where no future will be sustainable".

But some countries, including China, had objected to previously agreed language in the Glasgow climate pact and past G20 agreements on efforts to limit global average temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius, said an official with knowledge of the meeting, declining to be identified because they were not authorised to speak to the media.

China's foreign ministry did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

Another diplomatic source told Reuters there had been disagreements about language around climate and also references to the war in Ukraine.

Siti had earlier said she hoped a joint communique would be signed by the end of the day, but made no mention of it in her press conference later on Wednesday.

A spokesperson for Indonesia's environment ministry was not immediately available for comment on the matter.

The G20 climate meeting, hosted by this year's chair Indonesia, comes as extreme weather events - fires, floods and heat waves - pummel several parts of the world, including unprecedented flooding in Pakistan in recent weeks that has killed at least 1,000 people.

Scientists say most such extreme weather events are attributable to human-caused climate change and will only increase in severity and frequency as the globe edges closer to the warming threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Environment officials from Australia, Brazil, India, Japan, South Korea, and U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry, were among those attending the talks in Bali, with more bilateral meetings expected on Thursday.

Indonesia as current G20 chair invited representatives from the African Union to join the talks for the first time, said Siti, adding that voices from all countries, regardless of their wealth and size, must be heard.

Also in attendance was Alok Sharma, president of last year's 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), who said the war in Ukraine had increased the urgency of a need to shift to renewable sources of energy. The COP27 climate summit will be held in Egypt this November.

"The current energy crisis has demonstrated the vulnerability of countries relying on fossil fuels controlled by hostile actors," he said in a statement on Tuesday.

"Climate security has become synonymous with energy security and the chronic threat of climate change is not going away," he said.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Opinion] [Climate-smart Palawan: Creating climate resilience in the Calamianes group](#)

By: Glenn Banaguas

Starting this quarter, the research and scientific advocacy that my research scientists and I have done will be shared using this amazing platform. This will help to inspire more people to make a difference regardless of their status and background.

The project

Deemed to be the "hotspot" and the country's last ecological frontier, the Calamianes group (Busuanga, Coron and Culion islands) of Palawan is reliant on farming and fishery resources for livelihoods and food security. Climate change and variability, including climate hazards (e.g., tropical cyclones, flooding, sea-level rise and drought), impact the farming and fishery systems and the vulnerability of dependent communities. This project aims to investigate the worst-case scenarios that happened to these islands, which include biophysical and socioeconomic stresses as well as psychological trauma and secular activities. It also contributes to improving community adaptation schemes by characterizing, assessing and predicting the future of food resources using the simplest and uncomplicated approach — the track-risk-impact-policy (TRIP) to resiliency framework. Focusing on adaptation elucidations and strategies for enhancing climate resilience at the local level contributes to capacity development and local empowerment. Integration of natural, social and economic studies identifies a range of options for management and policy reform. These alternatives are delivered as briefing materials to managers and decision-makers in communities and society at large in the islands. The strong partnership with the local government units and other stakeholders (community of farmers, fisherfolk, Indigenous people, NGOs, academe, church, women, youth and private sector), provides strong scientific and political support for the development of effective science-based governance approaches, which are needed to position vulnerable communities for an improved future.

Change created

Under the project, "Climate-smart Palawan: Creating Climate Resilience in Calamianes Group of Islands," the TRIP to resiliency and sustainability framework was used to create a momentum of change not only for the islands of Calamianes but also on the other islands in Palawan. This TRIP framework was used both in the research and capacity building. This provides solutions that reduce the risks and prevent potential damage and losses in the islands. The outcomes are as follows: 1) land-zoning and new building codes have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of the communities; 2) adjustment of the agricultural calendar per island has been executed to address the issue of food security and water sufficiency; 3) climate-proofing or climate-smart approaches for post-production management practices have been integrated into the planning and have been also taught to the communities of farmers, fishermen and Indigenous people; 4) communities have been trained to apply sustainable natural resource management in

order to increase the resilience of food production; 5) renewable energy sources in the off-grid island have been identified; 6) climate-smart rainwater harvesting systems have been recommended to address the issue of water security, especially in the most remote areas; 7) gender equality initiatives and considerations, the use of traditional knowledge and practices on agro-biodiversity, sustainable land management (SLM) and sustainable forest management (SFM) have been strengthened; and 8) gender-responsive measures, the role of women in the development and conservation processes have been enhanced.

How resilience was built

One specific climate-related issue was a storm surge event brought by Super Typhoon "Haiyan" ("Yolanda"), which resulted in billions of pesos worth of damage and losses. More than 24,000 people in the Calamianes islands (Busuanga-Coron-Culion) were affected. People were warned, but they did not leave the place. Some thought that it was a normal tropical cyclone. And others said that they did not understand the terminologies that were used. One of the findings of our research was that there is a need to communicate "climate science and policy" to the stakeholders and their communities. There's a need to train and capacitate all the stakeholders to achieve a climate-smart and disaster-resilient Palawan. And that's the essence of the model — the "TRIP to resiliency and sustainability framework" — from research to assessment to collaboration to implementation: 1) the research was conducted on the islands; 2) the results were presented to the decision-makers, administrators and officials for validation; 3) collaboration with the different stakeholders was established; 4) two batches of scientific capacity development and training were done; 5) science-based policies and action plans were formulated; 6) climate change adaptation programs and projects were developed and implemented; 7) climate-smart approaches were established using the "multi-stakeholder" approach; 8) a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system was jointly established; 9) linkages with the development partners were strengthened; and 10) resource mobilization was also introduced.

Demystifying SDG, ESG and DEI [Part 1]

By: Ernie Cecilia

We have read or heard the terms "sustainability" and "sustainable development" used these days by so-called futurists or influencers. Many years ago, sustainability was identified as a megatrend "that is vast in scope, and which reflects the economic, political, cultural, philosophic milieu ...". Sustainability as a concept is gaining more importance as the whole world is trying its best to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by 2030. In this trilogy, I shall attempt to clarify the meaning and implications of Sustainability, as it relates to 1) the UN SDG; 2) ESG (environment, social and governance) goals; and 3) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) issues.

Sustainability

Sustainability is simply defined as a "development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (Brundtland Report, 1987). This implies ensuring a viable balance among economic growth, environmental care, and social well-being.

The world leaders have finally realized that the people's way of life now and their use of resources will have an impact on the future generations. Some of the Earth's resources are finite, while others can be replenished. The ways of consumption by this generation, and perhaps the past ones, have practically depleted the Earth's resources. Experts, however, have realized that if we responsibly employ sustainable practices in the use of our resources, we could extend the life of these resources for the generations after ours. These practices most often concern the environment. Rightly or wrongly, most discussions among business and government leaders are about environmental sustainability and the dire consequences of a wanton disregard of the environment.

Actually, sustainability is not just about the environment. Some experts propound that sustainability is primarily concerned with three Es — environment, economy, ethics (or equity and social issues). Many researchers and experts have observed the interconnectivity of these so-called "sustainability pillars." (Basiago, 1999, Pope, 2004, Gibson, 2006, and Arushanyan, 2017).

Organizations that aspire to create sustainable businesses are now forced to realize the importance of sustainability. Lately, we have seen a strong desire by governments and by the consumers, customers and investors to see more responsible organizations shift to sustainable practices.

According to the 2019 CGS Retail Marketing and Sustainability survey, "both US and UK consumers are factoring sustainability into their retail shopping. In the UK, 61 percent of consumers believe that sustainability is at least somewhat important." In the US (56 percent) and in the UK (59 percent), "customers are willing to pay more for sustainable options ... and 26 percent of women are willing to pay as much as 25 percent more for sustainable goods, compared to 21 percent of men." Surprisingly, the survey revealed that "Gen Z consumers are willing to pay 50-100 percent more compared with other age

groups." These are attractive statistics for businesses, as the Gen Z now number 2.5 billion throughout the world, or almost one of three inhabitants of the planet.

The Global 100 ranking by Corporate Knights of the world's most sustainable companies shows that the average age of the Global 100 companies is 87 years. Sustainability helps a business make more money and stay in business longer. The share prices of Neste, Finland's energy company, rose 300 percent in five years when it shifted from fossil fuel to green alternatives. (Strauss, 2019).

SDG

"LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND." This call to action was the guiding principle of 193 world leaders in 2015 in a concerted effort to solve the world's most pressing problems. This is also the official motto of the UN SDGs.

Before the SDGs were institutionalized, there were eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which started in 2000 and ended in 2015. The MDGs aimed to lift 1 billion people from extreme poverty and hunger, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, promote gender equality and empower women, combat communicable diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria and others, and achieve universal primary education. They also helped protect the planet by "eliminating global consumption of ozone-depleting substances, planting trees to offset loss of forests, and increasing land and coastal marine areas." The SDGs continued the momentum generated by the MDGs, with development agenda that could cost over \$4 trillion each year. While the MDGs relied on government and nonprofit funding, the SDGs rely more on private business to change its unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

The United Nations reported limited progress with the SDGs. Some goals are not being accomplished at the speed needed to meet the 2030 deadline. In 2017, "9.2 percent of the world's workers made less than \$1.90 per day, an improvement of less than 1 percent over the 2015 figure." The report also noted that "777 million people were undernourished in 2015; over 800 million were undernourished in 2016." On gender equality, no country except Denmark scored close to 90 on a scale of zero to 100, where 100 means that equality has been achieved. The global average score is 65.7.

The 17 SDGs which improved the eight MDGs are: No poverty; zero hunger; good health and well-being; quality education; gender equality; clean water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation and infrastructure; reduced inequalities; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; climate action; life below water; life on land; peace, justice and strong institutions; and partnerships for the goals.

"The MDGs were "halfway" goals, while the SDGs are 'zero' goals." (Alan Pierce, 2019) Sustainability cuts across society's boundaries and is concerned with such certain basic elements as food, energy, water, waste, and ecology. It is about our ability as a nation to embrace diverse communities and their unique voices, while demonstrating resilience and cooperation to address climate change, resource scarcity, and population growth.

To further simplify this, think of sustainability in terms of three pillars — economic viability, environmental protection and social equity. More commitment, participation, and contribution are expected from the business sector. Perhaps, unwittingly, the profit-oriented corporations all over the world contribute tremendously to environmental degradation, as they produce much needed food, services, and other solutions required by the whole world. With all due respect to my friends in Big Business, experts on sustainability constantly remind businesses to be concerned not only with Profits, but more importantly, with People and the Planet. The good news is that, in the Philippines, the business sector is making some headways in helping transform the Earth into a more sustainable planet.

Ban Ki-Moon is a South Korean politician and diplomat. He served as the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations between 2007 and 2016. His pitch for sustainability is a powerful admonition, "We are using resources as if we had two planets, not one. There can be no 'Plan B' because there is no 'Planet B.'"

Demystifying SDG, ESG and DEI [Part 2]

By: Ernie Cecilia

Part 2: Sustainability and ESG

THE way people live today will dramatically impact how future generations will lead their lives. The essence of the concept of "sustainability" is that we should leave the Earth in a better state than when we found it.

In 2015, the world leaders crafted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aimed to improve the leaders' commitment to an earlier covenant, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Over the years, new metrics were developed to ensure global sustainability in terms of three pillars, or the 3Es (environmental, economic and ethical/social). Leaders agree that only a viable equilibrium among these three aspects could lead to sustainable development.

Among the recent metrics for sustainability is the SRI (Socially Responsible Investment). More and more investors want to put their money, based on three major criteria: Environment, Social and Governance or ESG (Beattie, 2021). These metrics (ESG or SRI) help measure a company's sustainable footprint.

The 'E' in ESG

To simplify, the Environmental criteria measure how an enterprise cares for the environment. The Social criteria examine how the firm manages relationships with employees, vendors, customers, and the communities where it operates. The Governance criteria deal with leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls and shareholder rights. In short, ESG is a set of criteria that investors use to search for companies that are worth investing in. This has now led to the wider use of ESG as part of Big Businesses' vision, strategy and values.

In an Institute for Sustainable Investing report, Morgan Stanley said, "Increasingly proactive, the individual investors seek products and solutions across asset classes tailored to their interests. They also want to measure the environmental and social impact of their investments."

European companies used to lead in ESG, but in the Global Sustainable Investment review of 2020, Canada led other countries with the highest proportion of sustainable investment assets at 62 percent. Europe (42 percent), Australasia (38 percent), the United States (33 percent) and Japan (24 percent) round up the top five leaders in ESG.

The ESG standards on the Environment, like the GHG Protocol, "are more science-based and standardized." The GHG Protocol established "comprehensive global standardized frameworks to measure and manage greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from private and public sector operations, value chains and mitigation actions." In the US, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed a Mandatory Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule that would cover more than 13,000 facilities that emit 85 percent of

greenhouse gas in the US. The EPA created a nationwide database of greenhouse gas emissions that will facilitate regulation of these facilities that emit 25,000 metric tons or more of greenhouse gases annually.

The 'S' in ESG

The Social pillar of ESG is about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This component of ESG has generated significant attention in the media, among institutional investors, and in large companies that consider ESG as part and parcel of their vision, mission, values and operations.

The 'S' in ESG simply refers to the ability of an organization to "embrace diverse communities and the unique voices they support." This social component is on top of addressing challenges related to population growth, resource scarcity and climate change. Addressing these DE&I issues as organizations work for "profit, people and planet" helps ensure a more resilient and sustainable world for this and the next generations.

Diversity is about accepting differences in any setting. It can mean that you have different races, creed, ethnicities, gender identities, ages, or other aspects in the workplace. It focuses on the makeup of the workforce.

Equity is about providing equal access. Equity is the organization's ability to provide employees with equitable opportunities for pay, promotion, training, and other aspects of employment, regardless of their race, creed, color, sexual orientation or age.

Inclusion is about fostering a sense of value and empowerment in employees. Inclusion also entails "assuring intergenerational equity in access to resources (Frazier, 1997). Inclusion is a measure of the culture that makes diversity thrive.

More and more investors want to see how organizations discharge the latter's responsibility toward other people — employees, contractors, customers, vendors and investors. ESG tends to quantify everything to measure its effectiveness to attract, nurture and retain all stakeholders.

The 'G' in ESG

Even before the fuss about ESG, the members of corporate boards already have "fiduciary obligations to stockholders, and those obligations may not be delegated to others. These obligations are the duty to care and the duty of loyalty."

ESG is actually based on standards set by "lawmakers, investors, and ESG reporting organizations such as the GRI, TCFD and MSCI," particularly as they refer to governance.

There are a few notable "guidance and reporting frameworks" that play an important role in promoting governance and transparency between organizations and their various

stakeholders. They are better known by three- or four-letter acronyms, which made them more popular as the "alphabet soup" of ESG.

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) framework is "probably the most well-recognized sustainability reporting standard." Every year, more than 70 percent of the world's 250 largest companies submit sustainability reports in accordance with the GRI. The GRI is allegedly "owned by MSX International, a portfolio company of funds managed by Bain Capital Europe that provides technology-enabled business process outsourcing. GRI offers customized MSP (multi-stakeholder partnerships) solutions to over 150 global clients..." The GRI Standards focus on helping organizations communicate about their impact related to climate change, and other sustainability topics.

The TCFD (Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures) is chaired by Michael Bloomberg and has 31 members, including some of the world's largest financial institutions across the G20. Its framework was created in December 2015 by the Financial Stability Board (FSB), due to risks brought about by climate change to the global financial sector, estimated at \$5 trillion in potential losses. TCFD helps companies disclose climate-related financial risks to investors, lenders and insurers. Its recommendations focus on governance, strategy and risk management.

The MSCI World ESG Leaders Index, also known as the MSCI ESG Rating, aims to measure a company's management of financially relevant ESG risks and opportunities relative to their sector peers. This framework was developed by Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI), an investment research firm that provides stock indices, portfolio risk and performance analytics, and governance tools to institutional investors and hedge funds. The ratings identify industry leaders and laggards according to their exposure to ESG risks and how well they manage those risks, in comparison with their peers.

By and large, businesses that have established Environmental, Social and Governance initiatives attract and retain better talents, customers, vendors and investors.

Suquamish and Duwamish Chief Seattle once said, "We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."

THE PHILIPPINE STAR GLOBAL

[UN appeals for \\$160M to help worst hit in Pakistan floods](#)

Agence France-Presse

GENEVA, Switzerland — The United Nations and the Pakistani government launched an emergency appeal for \$160 million on Tuesday to help those hardest hit by the devastating floods in the country.

The funds will provide 5.2 million people with food, water, sanitation, emergency education, protection and health support, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a video statement, calling the flooding a "colossal crisis".

'Third' of Pakistan under water as flood aid efforts gather pace

The aid, covering the initial six months of the crisis response, will also help to avoid outbreaks of cholera, and to provide food aid to mothers and their young children.

It will also provide assistance to refugees, the disabled and the elderly and facilitate schemes to reunite families separated by the disaster.

Tens of millions of people have been affected by relentless monsoon rains that have submerged a third of Pakistan and claimed more than 1,100 lives.

The rains that began in June have unleashed the worst flooding in more than a decade, washing away swathes of vital crops and damaging or destroying more than a million homes.

"Pakistan is awash in suffering. The Pakistani people are facing a monsoon on steroids - - the relentless impact of epochal levels of rain and flooding," Guterres said.

He branded the floods a "climate catastrophe", saying South Asia was one of the world's climate crisis hotspots.

"People living in these hotspots are 15 times more likely to die from climate impacts," he said.

"As we continue to see more and more extreme weather events around the world, it is outrageous that climate action is being put on the back burner as global emissions of greenhouse gases are still rising, putting all of us — everywhere — in growing danger."

Guterres's spokesman Stephane Dujarric told a press briefing on Monday that the UN had already mobilized about \$7 million through redirecting existing programmes and resources, while an additional \$3 million has been released by the UN emergency response fund.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

JOURNAL ONLINE

[Experts call for united front against poor air quality and its impact on lung health](#)

Experts and officials from the Department of Health (DOH), Climate Change Commission, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), called for concerted efforts to improve air quality in the Philippines and mitigate its effects on lung health.

In a webinar organized by non-profit human development organization FHI 360, Climate Change Commissioner Atty. Rachel Anne Herrera pointed out the impact of poor air quality on Filipinos and the country's economy. She also discussed the need to talk the same language among concerned agencies and "break down silos" towards developing green technologies necessary for climate-resilient communities and health facilities, with the help of the private sector.

"An estimated 66,000 Filipinos die every year due to poor air quality and the economic cost of ambient air pollution is 4.5 trillion pesos, roughly equivalent to 87 billion US dollars. And this is 23 percent of the country's GDP (gross domestic product) in 2019," she said, citing a study by the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities and the Center for Research on Energy and Clean Air.

Dr Kendra Chittenden, senior infectious disease advisor of USAID Bureau for Asia, echoed her data and research. "Countries, like the Philippines across Asia, have the capability of such strong research organizations as the academic sector is working really closely with the ministries of health and you have this sort of multisectoral approach working with climate change and environmental experts. So it's a really great opportunity for the Philippines to continue to contribute to this."

To address this problem, Atty. Herrera said that legislators are eyeing to update the Clean Air Act of 1999, and that several national agencies are also working on a framework to strengthen the health sector.

Michelle Lang-Alli, director of USAID Philippines' Office of Health, also pushed for "very strong and sustained collaborative partnership towards addressing environmental issues" that would support the elimination of tuberculosis or TB in the Philippines. "Through our decades of partnership, we have [made] significant strides in TB control and improving the health of Filipinos nationwide. However, Filipinos would continue to suffer and [be] more susceptible to TB if we allow the continued deterioration of the quality of the air that we breathe," she said.

To learn more about the climate and its impact on health, like and follow FHI 360 on Facebook and Twitter. Explore the organization's efforts in improving lives and how to become a partner at its website fhi360.org.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[Address inequalities and inequities by promoting social justice to accelerate the country's post-pandemic recovery](#)

Quezon City -- The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing socioeconomic inequalities and cultural inequities, which greatly affected the vulnerable and marginalized sectors of society. It is crucial to address these disparities to build their resilience to future shocks and accelerate the country's post-pandemic recovery.

The Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) and its partners echo this message in this year's Development Policy Research Month (DPRM) celebration, which carries the theme “#CloseTheGap: Accelerate Post-pandemic Recovery through Social Justice”, or in Filipino, “#AlisinAngAgwat: Pabilisin ang Pag-ahon Mula sa Pandemya sa Pamamagitan ng Katarungang Panlipunan”.

The DPRM is celebrated every September to promote nationwide awareness of the importance of policy research in crafting evidence-based policies, plans, and programs, pursuant to Malacanang Proclamation 247 signed in 2002. The same proclamation designates the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) as the lead coordinator of the yearly DPRM celebration.

The theme underscores the importance of reducing and removing the socioeconomic and political inequalities and cultural inequities that divide society. This can be achieved by making social justice a guiding principle of the country's post-pandemic recovery plan, particularly in the areas of human capital development and social protection, public health services and infrastructure, and environmental resilience.

To formally launch the DPRM, a virtual forum will be held on September 1, where key government officials will provide insights on how to make social justice the front and center of the post-pandemic recovery plan. Panelists include Undersecretary Rosemarie Edillon of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Assistant Secretary Romeo Balanquit of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Officer-in-Charge Patrick Patriwirawan Jr. of the Department of Labor and Employment-Bureau of Local Employment, and members of the PIDS 2022 Annual Public Policy Conference Scientific Committee (namely, Drs. Valerie Gilbert Ulep, Sonny Domingo, and Ma. Christina Epetia). President Aniceto Orbeta Jr. of PIDS and Deputy Secretary General Romulo Miral Jr. of the Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD) will give the opening and closing remarks, respectively.

The virtual kick-off forum will be followed by the APPC and the Mindanao Policy Research Forum (MPRF).

The APPC was launched in 2015 to serve as a platform for convening policy experts and researchers to analyze critical development issues and provide actionable recommendations. It is the highlight of the yearly DPRM celebration. This year's APPC,

which is supported by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Research Academy, will be conducted through a four-part webinar series on September 13, 15, 20, and 22, featuring presentations from foreign and local experts on the theory and application of social justice.

Meanwhile, the MPRF is an annual forum organized by PIDS and the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) in partnership with a local university in Mindanao. This year, the 8th MPRF will be jointly organized by PIDS and MinDA in collaboration with the Mindanao State University - Iligan Institute of Technology. It will be held virtually on September 28.

Government agencies, local government units, and the general public are also urged to participate in the DPRM celebration by displaying the DPRM banner, posting and sharing DPRM infographics, videos, and other related announcements on their respective websites and social media accounts, and organizing activities related to the DPRM theme or policy research.

Chaired by PIDS, the DPRM Steering Committee consists of various government agencies, with the NEDA, Civil Service Commission, BSP, Philippine Information Agency, Presidential Management Staff, Department of the Interior and Local Government, DBM, Senate Economic Planning Office, and CPBRD as permanent members. This year's additional members include the Department of Health, Department of Education, and Climate Change Commission.

Details of this year's theme and activities are available on the DPRM website at <http://dprm.pids.gov.ph>. The public may also check the Institute's social media accounts at <https://www.facebook.com/PIDS.PH/> and https://twitter.com/PIDS_PH and the PIDS website at <https://www.pids.gov.ph> for more information and updates.

THE MANILA TIMES

[\[Opinion\] The future is bright for clean energy and transportation in the country](#)

By: Jeremiah Belgica

With all the local and international push and support for the institutionalization of "sustainable growth" using renewable energy sources, the Philippines is now on an upward motion towards a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

Through the leadership of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the entire bureaucracy is now being led toward a more climate-care-sensitive and energy-efficient direction. The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is the lead policymaking body of the government tasked to coordinate, monitor and evaluate government programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local and sectoral development plans toward a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines. The Climate Change Commission has now found itself playing a major role in one of the priority thrusts of the administration of President Marcos. It is only fitting that the chairman of the CCC is none other than the President himself. He is also joined by a well-balanced group of expert diplomats, lawyers and environmental planners. One of its commissioners is well known to me, Commissioner Albert de la Cruz, who has been one of the foremost expert environmental planners and renewable energy advocates in our country for many years now. I have known him to be a principled and effective government servant. With the President at the helm and with a competent team behind him, the prospects of the climate change campaign of the country are surely very promising.

One important development toward sustainability on which the country is now gaining a lot of ground is on the transition of vehicles into electric. This holds true for both the public and private sector.

The electric vehicle (EV) is nothing new in the Philippines although its popularity has been limited because in the past the cost was simply too high. But this is no longer the case today. One can strongly argue now that it is worth buying an electric car especially with the sky rocketing prices of fuel. On the other hand, purchasing an EV will absolutely save you more money.

Notwithstanding the initial up-front cost, the EV owner will eventually recover and even save more during the EV's useful life.

More and more people today have been bitten by the EV bug as many have already replaced their gas- or diesel- consuming vehicles with EVs. It is a certainty that as technology improves, the cost of owning one will also be much less as the supply will also increase. It would not be far-fetched to say that the EV's popularity among the working class would be expected to increase as access and affordability become more prevalent. Needless to say, electric vehicles will continue to look more attractive when juxtaposed against the rising oil prices.

According to studies, the global market for EVs has been growing at a compounded annualized growth rate (CAGR) of 21.7 percent, and by 2030 it is projected to balloon from 8.1 million units to 39.21 million.

One of the most important developments in the Philippines when it comes to electric vehicles are the recent legislations. On April 15, 2022, Republic Act 11697, or what is commonly known as the "Electric Vehicle Industry Development Act" (Evida), became effective. The Evida Law outlines the regulatory framework and creates a comprehensive road map for the operation of EVs in the Philippines.

To ensure that the objective of developing the electric vehicle industry is achieved, the Evida Law also mandated the creation of a Comprehensive Roadmap for the Electric Vehicle Industry, or Crevi, which will be the national road map and development plan for the EV industry to accelerate the development, commercialization and utilization of EVs in the country. It was also stated that the "Crevi shall be incorporated in the Philippine Energy Plan and the National Transport Policy."

According to the law, the Crevi shall include four important aspects and components: 1) EVs and charging stations; 2) manufacturing; 3) research and development; and 4) human resource development.

It also tasked the Department of Energy (DoE) to come up with uniform and streamlined rules and regulations on the use and maintenance of charging stations and related equipment. The DoE and the other government offices and stakeholders are now hard at work to come up with the IRR of this important legislation.

Related to the implementation of the Evida Law, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) recently reminded the public that electric vehicle registration is a requirement and that it covers all electric-powered vehicles. Accordingly, even e-bikes now require LTO registration.

But one of the best parts of the Evida Law is the offer of several key tax incentives to businesses in the EV industry. These innovations in the law are expected to create more opportunities for the manufacturers of EVs and support the creation of the necessary infrastructure for EVs in the Philippines.

Businessmen and investors must really be encouraged to join the government's push towards sustainability and clean energy source development.

Indeed, the future is bright for clean energy and transportation because of EVs in the country.

=END=