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12 September 2022 [08:00 am]

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AL JAZEERA

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By: Quratulain Rehbar

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MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

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By: Jose Bayani Baylon

THAT’S how it felt like yesterday as I settled down in my BGC “pied-a-terre” in preparation for another week of work. (Actually, my place in BGC isn’t an “occasional place to stay in,” which is what that French term means; I just wanted to use it ha-ha).

MANILA BULLETIN

[Solar panel manufacturer might consider investing in PH](#)

By: Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat

Trina Solar, world’s leading solar panel manufacturer based in China, said that manufacturing is an option they might consider for the Philippines given “favorable conditions” as the company positions to capture a bigger share of the rapidly growing solar panel market in the country.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By: Krixia Subingsubing

Manila, Philippines — The earth is at risk of triggering multiple climate tipping points if global temperatures continue to rise beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, according to a sobering new analysis that underscored the urgent need to decarbonize the planet to limit the risk of crossing dangerous levels.

[La Niña adds to inflation woes](#)

By: Ronnel Domingo

A more-entrenched La Niña climate phenomenon that brings above-normal rainfall to the Philippines could increase the pressure on prices of basic commodities to rise further, especially if heavy rains destroy this year's main crop of rice and other produce.

[Local solutions toward food security](#)

By: Rudy Parel jr.

Two years ago, the COVID-19 pandemic came to the fore, drastically disrupting all sectors of Philippine society. But even before the pandemic, the country has already been experiencing two ongoing crises: hunger and malnutrition.

THE MANILA TIMES

[SM Prime, WWF partner for responsible reporting on climate change solutions](#)

SM Prime Holdings Inc., one of Southeast Asia's leading integrated property developers, and leading conservation organization World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines have entered a collaboration in adopting a more robust reporting framework to address the climate crisis.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Higher financing sought to address climate change](#)

By: Louise Maureen Simeon

Manila, Philippines — Advanced economies should ramp up their climate financing for developing countries like the Philippines amid the worsening impact of climate change globally.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

THE MANILA TIMES

[Experts call for united front against poor air quality](#)

Experts and officials from the Department of Health (DoH), Climate Change Commission, and 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.

PH calls for climate equity, justice at UN

By: Kristina Maralit

There must be immediate action to achieve climate equity and justice en route to pragmatic solutions in addressing the impact of climate change.

This was the call made by the Philippine government at the conclusion of the Third Technical Expert Dialogue (TED3) on Climate Finance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) last September 8.

UN forum seeks adequate funding for climate change

By: Kristina Maralit

The United Nations forum on climate finance co-hosted by the Philippines concluded over the weekend with an urgent challenge to deliver climate finance based on equity and climate justice, with special emphasis on the needs of at-risk developing nations.

Swedish Ambassador met Secretary Robert Borje of the Philippines Climate Change Commission

By by Kanlayakorn Pengrattana

Ambassador Annika Thunborg of the Swedish Embassy in Manila met Secretary Robert Borje, the Vice Chairperson and the Executive Director of the Climate Change Commission earlier this week.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

AL JAZEERA

[Climate change is hurting India's rice crop](#)

By: Quratulain Rehbar

In Haryana's Bithmara, about 200 kilometres (124 miles) northwest of the capital New Delhi, 37-year-old Satish Jangra is distraught after seeing his paddy crops destroyed due to untimely and incessant rainfall in early August.

"I am compelled to leave farming. The cost is much more than the output and I am falling into a debt trap," he said.

Each year, Jangra would till 3 hectares (8 acres) of his neighbour's land in which he cultivated mostly paddy and other grains like wheat and millets. That has now been reduced to 1 hectare (3 acres). He is thinking of either changing the paddy field to another crop variety or stopping tilling the land altogether so that he does not have to worry about the losses each year.

"You spend thousands on different fertilisers, diesel, water etc and when it's time for output for paddy especially, you just get into losses," he told Al Jazeera.

Traders pay according to the quality of the rice, but over time farmers say, the quality has decreased.

He still has to pay a \$600 loan to the bank and for that, he is now looking for an alternative.

"I have started working in a small furniture shop because I cannot be dependent on just farming," he said.

In eastern India's Jamui Bihar village, farmer Rajkumar Yadav's troubles are the opposite of Jangra's as he waits for rainfall so that his paddy crops do not dry up.

Each morning and evening, the 55-year-old's family takes water from their well to sprinkle on the crops. He says his family can no longer rely on the monsoon.

"In our area only 10 percent sowing of crops has happened so far because there is no rainfall. We all are dependent on the Tubewell [used to pump groundwater], which is also drying due to high temperatures," he said.

Researchers say that the production of rice in India is constrained by both droughts and heavy rains which can flood the fields.

About 68 percent of the total cropping area in India is rainfed. Of the roughly 40 million hectares (100 million acres) of the rice-harvested area in India, 60 percent is irrigated leaving the rest dependent upon rainfall, and hence susceptible to drought.

Aditi Mukherjee, principal researcher at International Water Management Institute (IWMI), a nonprofit research organisation, said overall, climate change has increased the probability of extreme events.

While “impacts of droughts can be somewhat mitigated through access to irrigation, parts of India [such as eastern India which is a major rice basket], do not have adequate affordable irrigation, and depend mostly on expensive-to-operate diesel pumps,” she said.

This year paddy sowing has been affected in key rice-producing states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal, resulting in a 13 percent lag in area under paddy.

A ban on rice exports?

IWMI's Mukherjee told Al Jazeera that it is going to be a hard year for farmers.

“Heat waves, followed by drought-like conditions due to late arrival of monsoons, have impacted two main crops, wheat in the previous season, and now rice,” she said, adding that such late sowing of paddy is likely to affect yield, and also delay the next cropping cycle.

And while it is not clear as yet what sort of shortage that will result in when the harvest finally comes, the United States Department of Agriculture has estimated that rice production may reduce by 0.9 per cent, the first decline since 2015. That leads experts to say they need to monitor the situation closely, especially if the government decides to ban or limit its exports as it did in May for wheat.

Tavseef Mairaj Shah, who works in agroecology, warns that while a ban on rice exports would be catastrophic for the global food supply, such a move is not currently expected, although a rise in rice prices is not off the cards.

The threat to India's rice production also comes at a time when countries are already grappling with soaring food costs. The decline in production that farmers foresee could make India's battle against inflation more difficult and lead to export restrictions.

In India, rice is a staple food for more than half the population. Bangladesh, China, Nepal, and certain Middle Eastern nations are among some of its top clients, as India exports rice to more than 100 countries.

“India has to take in consideration the domestic food security aspect. While we currently have grain stocks, we may have to buffer in case the Ukraine war continues,” said Srinath Sridhan, an independent markets commentator.

Reimagine farming

But eventually, to ensure food security, India needs to reimagine its agricultural practices, scientists say.

“The unprecedented change in rainfall patterns, droughts and extreme heat is a stark reminder that India needs to uphold and promote a transition from mono to multi-cropping systems,” said Rohin Kumar, senior agriculture campaigner at Greenpeace India.

Monoculture kills all the nutrients from the earth, weakening the soil, which in turn inhibits healthy plant growth.

With the effects of climate change and the extreme weather expected to aggravate in coming years, India also needs to create adequate demand and supply of many local indigenous grains, vegetables and fruits, with urban communities stepping in to support farmers by directly buying from farmers, Kumar said.

Agroecologist Shah agrees that there is an “urgent need” to transition to sustainable methods of rice cultivation to improve water use efficiency, farmers’ livelihoods, and make them capable of adapting to changing weather patterns and extreme weather events.

While a government push to make any of these suggestions a reality is currently not on the table, farmers like rain-starved Yadav have already switched to cultivating different crops to make a living.

“We have started cultivating coriander, and I think that that helps me a bit to sell it in my village,” he said.

In Jamuai village, where Yadav lives, besides growing paddy and other crops, farmers have been doing organic farming, shunning the use of chemicals. And while they have been at it for half-a-dozen years, they are yet to find people willing to pay the premium prices that this process demands.

“We have been trying to raise awareness about organic products but that is not happening much. When it comes to profit, no one thinks about the farmer,” he said.

BUSINESS MIRROR

Climate Migration: Kenyan woman loses nearly all to lake

By: Brian Inganga and Julie Watson

Kampi ya SAMAKI, Kenya—Winnie Keben had felt blessed to be raising her children in her husband’s childhood home in the community of Kampi ya Samaki—just over a quarter mile (500 meters) from the shoreline of Lake Baringo.

The vast freshwater lake buzzing with birds and aquatic life in the semi-arid volcanic region of Kenya’s Great Rift Valley had long been an oasis. It attracted fishers and international tourists to the community, about a five-hour drive from Nairobi.

But over the past decade Lake Baringo has doubled in size, due primarily to heavy rainfall tied to climate change, according to scientists, and its fast-rising waters are increasingly becoming a menace. The expanding lake has swallowed up homes and hotels and brought in crocodiles and hippos that have turned up on people’s doorsteps and in classrooms.

“It was not like this in the past,” Keben said. “People would move when the water moves, but it would go back soon enough.”

Keben had never imagined leaving.

Then the lake took away almost everything.

In her last moments in Kampi ya Samaki, Keben was washing off garden dirt in Lake Baringo’s refreshing waters. It had been a day of working her maize fields with her husband. Evening was falling. Her mind was on getting back to the house to make dinner.

Then something moved.

“No sooner had I bent down to wash my right leg, than I saw a crocodile pop up from the waters,” she said. “I screamed so loudly but unfortunately, I fell into the lake.”

The crocodile dragged her into deeper water as she tried to fight it off. Her husband ran from the fields toward her screams. But she was struggling to stay above the surface.

She managed to reach her hand above the water and wiggle her fingers, hoping her husband, now at the shore, would see them.

Laban Keben saw, jumped in and grabbed her but the ferocious animal held on. Laban tried again. And again. After his third attempt, his wife and the mother of their children lost consciousness, he said.

“I saw her dying, leaving me behind,” he said.

He thought of their daughter, barely six months old, and their two other children.

Not knowing what else to do, he started screaming for help. Another man ran over with a machete and struck at the crocodile, Laban said, and suddenly, it swam away, leaving Winnie's limp body behind.

Doctors cut her leg

Her leg was nothing but bones with hanging flesh, said Laban, who along with local residents carried Winnie past flooded roads to the nearest paved one where vehicles could get her to medical care. But at the hospital in the next town, doctors said they were not equipped to treat such a severe injury.

Two hospitals later, she feared she would not survive.

"I told my husband to pick up my children and to take them to my mum, as I knew I was not going to make it," she said.

Doctors ended up amputating the leg to save her life. Her mom stayed by her bedside until she was discharged from the hospital.

The family was forced to sell their chickens, and goats to cover her medical costs.

But while she was healing, an incessant rain continued to fall. The lake took still more from the Kebens. It flooded their home and farmland.

The final loss

They left their community, the final loss.

A resident from another village, Meisori, learned of their ordeal and offered to take them in, a gesture of kindness for which she is grateful.

But leaving Kampi ya Samaki, where her husband and children were born, still hurts.

"I loved my place very much, as I could do farming with my husband and raise money for food and school fees," Winnie said.

With only one leg, Winnie said she no longer can farm. Her husband earns a meager living digging pit latrines and working at area farms to support their growing family. She gave birth to her sixth child last month.

"Now we are land beggars," she said.

75,000 households displaced

Baringo is one of 10 lakes in Kenya's Rift Valley that have been expanding over the past decade. The entire Eastern African rift system, which stretches south to Mozambique, and the Western Rift—all the way to Uganda—are also affected. The rainfed waters have submerged villages and islands and brought the fierce Nile crocodiles face-to-face with residents.

The rising lake waters have displaced more than 75,000 households, according to a 2021 report on the expanding lakes by Kenya's Ministry of the Environment and Forestry and the United Nations Development Program.

Flooding around Lake Baringo has been among the most severe, according to the report, with more than 3,000 households destroyed.

Lake Baringo remains an important source of freshwater for villagers, livestock, fisheries, and wildlife. But scientists fear it could someday merge with a large salt lake not far away, the also-expanding Lake Bogoria, contaminating the freshwater.

Keben remembers when the shoreline was a short walk from their home and the hippos and crocodiles stayed deep inside the lake.

"They never attacked people or animals," Keben said. "Today they attack everything."

Keben, 28, is still haunted by her attack a decade ago. She has not returned to her family's village—even for a brief visit—and with good reason. The risks of such attacks have only increased: Since she left, more crocodiles and hippos have turned up in Kampi ya Samaki.

It's not rare now to see village children scarred by sharp teeth marks.

Others, like Keben, have lost limbs, and an unknown number have died.

A 10-year-old boy was recently dragged off by a hippo and has not been found.

Keben said she doesn't plan to ever return to Kampi ya Samaki. Though she longs for the community.

"That is the place I called home," she said, her voice still filled with pain.

Science and the arts synergize for climate action in Eastern Visayas

Baybay City, Leyte—The Visayas State University (VSU), civil society and local governments championed climate change resilience in Eastern Visayas through science and the arts.

Students, teachers, school officials and representatives joined a two-day learning event held inside the university on August 25 and 26.

“Climate change is already happening in different regions around the world, and on multiple levels,” said climate scientist and Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities’ (ICSC) Climate Science Advisor Lourdes Tibig, a main speaker at the event. “We are all affected, whether we come from rich or...developing countries. Everyone has to participate and do [his or her] part.”

The knowledge-exchange session “Klima Eskwela: Climate Science, Adaptation, and the Arts,” was organized by ICSC, The Climate Reality Project Phils. (Climate Reality Phils.), and the VSU-Regional Climate Change Research and Development Center (RCCRDC).

“In the Philippines, there is still a disconnect in government systems in terms of adapting to and mitigating climate change. Local communities sometimes lack access to the needed resources,” Tibig added. “There is no going back regarding the changes happening in the climate system, which is why we have to do whatever we can to contribute to the efforts [addressing] climate change.”

For years the Eastern Visayas region has been at the forefront of climate impacts, both slow in onset: sea-level rise, increasing sea-surface temperatures and ocean acidification; as well as extreme weather events. The region was the first to be hit by Super typhoon Yolanda (international name Haiyan) back in 2013.

Dr. Eduardo Mangaoang, director of the VSU-RCCRDC and member of the National Panel of Technical Experts of the Climate Change Commission, presented their study that aims to bring Climate and Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance or CDRFI to “Yolanda”-affected communities.

Representatives of the local government, civil society, academia and youth from the region signed an agreement to put people first and at the center of climate financing, especially those at great risk. They stated: “We affirm the primacy of the humanitarian imperative: that action should be taken to prevent or alleviate human suffering arising out of disaster or conflict, and that nothing should override this principle.”

Arts and humanities also play an important role in climate action. In this sphere, the youth have been stepping up, according to Climate Reality Phils.’ Branch Manager Nazrin Camille Castro.

On the second day of “Klima...,” Baybay City’s young artists and youth leaders brainstormed ideas for a mural as part of the “Poets for Climate” project of Climate Reality Phils., Africa, and Canada. They will create the mural in the coming weeks.

“We trust that the artists will incorporate what they have learned in the first day of the learning session—including their insights on the latest climate science findings, and the experiences of the most vulnerable sectors in Baybay City—into the mural they will develop and its call to action,” Castro said.

“We could use the recent extreme weather events to put a spotlight on climate-change impacts plaguing vulnerable countries, like the Philippines, for many years now,” she added. “There is no better way to showcase the similarities, diversity, and connectedness of these lived experiences than through the arts. When we act collectively, we will definitely have a bigger impact.”

BUSINESS WORLD

[PHL urged to decentralize power generation with more solar plants](#)

By: Ashley Erika O. Jose

The Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC) said the Philippines needs to move towards more “distributed” power generation, which would involve the construction of more solar generation facilities while abandoning the current model of centralized baseload power, currently dominated by coal-fired plants.

In an e-mail interview on Sept. 9, Pedro H. Maniego, senior policy advisor of ICSC, a climate and energy policy group, said that the dependence on coal renders the Philippines vulnerable to volatile international energy prices, and put forward solar as an alternative.

“We lack sufficient power to support our developing economy and increasing population. We need to augment our power supply now,” Mr. Maniego added.

He called solar power the best technology for distributed generation in the context of the Philippines’ archipelagic geography, which results in many remote areas unserved by the grid.

“Given the country’s geography and minimal domestic fossil fuel sources, the country really has no option but to tap technological innovation to meet its twin goals of low carbon and reliable energy,” Mr. Maniego said.

Last week, Energy Secretary Raphael P.M. Lotilla said that the government will review the power outlook for next year because of the volatility of the gas market.

“Fossil fuel prices tend to go up over the long term, and to spike whenever there are international crises,” Mr. Maniego said.

Mr. Maniego added that the Philippines has sufficient RE potential to meet its energy needs, noting that “solar and wind have much lower levelized cost of electricity compared to fossil fuel power plants. Prices are expected to further decrease.”

Renato Redentor Constantino, ICSC’s executive director, said in a statement last week that government and banks should provide more financing for RE.

“The banks and Department of Finance should (abandon) the ‘pawnshop mentality’ and step up to provide more lending opportunities for RE investment,” Mr. Constantino said.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

Summer in September

By: Jose Bayani Baylon

THAT'S how it felt like yesterday as I settled down in my BGC "pied-a-terre" in preparation for another week of work. (Actually, my place in BGC isn't an "occasional place to stay in," which is what that French term means; I just wanted to use it ha-ha).

But because my unit faces west it absorbs the impact of the setting sun. And yesterday, that was some impact. It felt like summer in September.

Just as there are COVID deniers – and a dear friend was one of them who succumbed to the virus she didn't take seriously – there are climate change deniers in every country in every continent. This despite the evidence all around us – flash floods in Pakistan, severe drought in many parts of Europe, untamed weather throughout North America, and in our part of the world more frequent typhoons of severe intensity.

It may be just because I am almost of dual citizen status, but I only seem to remember Typhoon Yoling of my childhood, the typhoon that cut off central and northern Luzon from Manila and the south due to heavy flooding in the Candaba swamp area. (The experience is what led to the construction of the Candaba viaduct, at that time the longest elevated span of road anywhere in Southeast Asia.)

But of late? The names Ondoy, Yolanda and Odette are just the most recent ones.

And that's the typhoons. How about the severe localized thunderstorms that get to cause airport operations to stop and offices to declare an early dismissal?

The change is real, and the question is, can anything be done about it?

That's where all the ado about lowering greenhouse gas emissions in order to keep global warming below two degrees Celsius comes in, necessitating national as well as corporate commitments from every nation on Earth. This is why many auto companies, for example, have pledged to do away with vehicles using internal combustion engines that run on fossil fuels and will only be producing EV vehicles by a set date. This is why the global fossil fuel giants are moving into the renewable energy space, why countries like the Philippines are mandating that by 2040 a big percentage of the power distributed by our power utilities should be from renewable energy, and it is also the reason why a mining and metals corporation like Nickel Asia is not only going full blast into the renewable energy industry but is also embracing ESG commitments, which include reducing its GHG emissions by fixed percentages beginning in 2025 towards a target of net zero by 2050.

Is this going to be easy, for countries as well as corporations? Of course not. It will require, at the very least, leaving behind old habits and foregoing old practices and processes; at the most extreme it will require a course change for many industries that

have been so reliant on fossil fuels and on “how we do things” that can no longer be justified by the need to address the critical nature of climate change. I suspect though that while things at the moment may appear to be a pessimist’s dream, human creativity spurred by necessity will result in new ways of seeing things and of doing things, maybe even turning today’s problems on their head.

Creativity – that’s what will be needed most as we grapple with climate change and its consequences. We cannot look at the problem with the lenses that got us into this problem.

Or, as the late US Senator Robert Kennedy loved to say, we must “dream things that never were and ask why not?”

MANILA BULLETIN

Solar panel manufacturer might consider investing in PH

By: Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat

Trina Solar, world's leading solar panel manufacturer based in China, said that manufacturing is an option they might consider for the Philippines given "favorable conditions" as the company positions to capture a bigger share of the rapidly growing solar panel market in the country.

Lim Cheong Boon, Trina Solar head product and marketing Asia Pacific, said in an interview that they are monitoring developments in the Philippines, but noted that solar panel manufacturing could be an option given "favorable conditions" for the top management to decide.

These favorable conditions could mean market demand, incentives, and how they can supply the Philippines and other countries, he said. Aside from China, Trina Solar has production facilities in Vietnam and Thailand.

For now, Lim said they will focus on expanding its presence in the country with the potential appointment of additional distributors from the current three to five.

From a slowdown in the past two years, Lim noted of a rapid take up this year from developers/utility firms, commercial and retail sectors. Trina Solar started its presence in the Philippines since 2013.

"We have a rapid take up now," said Lim.

He cited that demand is also buoyed with the emphasis of the Department of Energy, which has raised a higher renewable energy share in the country's fuel mix.

So far, the Shanghai Stock Exchange-listed company estimated that its solar panel supply in the country could have easily exceeded one gigawatt. Most of their projects though are focused on supply to utilities firms, including two huge projects with the Aboitiz Power.

There are also commercial establishments they supply with solar panels for installation on the rooftops of their factory buildings. For instance, Lim said they have a partnership with the Ramcar Group for rooftop solar panel supply for their buildings.

The company is focusing on the supply of solar panels for the Philippines they can also serve as one stop shop solutions provider to include battery, inverters and trackers.

Lim said that as one of pioneers in solar panel production, they do not compete on price alone, but they have advanced technology, quality and standards.

Trina Solar is banking on its 25 years of experience in the solar panel industry confident that its strong brand reputation along with a strong track record of reliability is another reason why it is the choice for solar farm developers.

For the last six consecutive years, they have been rated annual by Bloomberg New Energy Finance survey as the most bankable solar module manufacturer.

Top solar farm developers in the Philippines are already using Trina Solar modules. Another example is PAVI Green Renewable Energy which is developing a 22MW solar farm in Bataan province, Central Luzon. This project is due to be completed in the fourth quarter of this year.

Trina Solar has supplied 40,665 of its Vertex DE19 modules to PAVI Green Renewable Energy. Vertex DE19 is the most popular Trina Solar module, suitable for both ground-mounted and rooftop solar installation. The DE19 Vertex module has a maximum efficiency of 21.2 percent and maximum power output of up to 555W.

Ramcar Food Group – the Philippines’ master franchise holder for KFC and Mister Donut – has been installing Trina Solar’s Vertex DE19 550W modules on the rooftops of its outlets.

Another well-known Filipino business installing rooftop solar is Pampanga’s Best, a processed meat producer.

Vertex DE19 modules chosen by Ramcar Food Group and Pampanga’s Best are the first modules in the Philippines that incorporate 210mm silicon wafers, a larger wafer size than earlier generation modules.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Climate tipping points threaten earth – study

By: Krixia Subingsubing

Manila, Philippines — The earth is at risk of triggering multiple climate tipping points if global temperatures continue to rise beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, according to a sobering new analysis that underscored the urgent need to decarbonize the planet to limit the risk of crossing dangerous levels.

Even at current levels of global heating, the planet already risks facing five climate tipping points—and the risks increase with each tenth of a degree of further warming, according to the study published in the journal *Science* last week.

A team of researchers from the University of Exeter, Stockholm Resilience Center, Future Earth, and Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research has identified at least 16 critical tipping points, of which five may already be triggered at today's temperatures.

Abrupt thawing

These include the collapse of Greenland's ice cap and of a key current in the north Atlantic; abrupt thawing of the boreal permafrost, or the frozen land in the Arctic; the collapse of a convection in the Labrador Sea, which is between Greenland and the Labrador Peninsula, and the massive die-off of tropical coral reefs.

Even worse, five more tipping points become possible at 1.5 C, including changes to northern forests and the loss of almost all mountain glaciers, leading to unprecedented sea level rise.

"We can see signs of destabilization already in parts of the West Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets, in permafrost regions, the Amazon rainforest, and potentially the Atlantic overturning circulation as well," study lead author David Armstrong McKay said in a statement.

'Disastrous'

Scientists have been on the lookout for climate tipping elements, which are critical, large-scale components of the earth that remain stable at certain global temperatures but can change once a particular threshold is breached.

Even just very small additional disturbances can tip them over, causing severe impacts on the environment and even a chain reaction on multiple systems.

This was, in part, why the Paris Agreement, a legally binding international treaty on climate change, and other efforts to limit global warming have set a cap of 1.5 C, because the risk of more tipping points escalates beyond this level.

Among others, the latest study argued that the planet may have already left a “safe” climate state when global temperatures exceeded 1 C warming.

Given the current numbers, the world is actually headed toward 2-3 C of global warming, it warned.

“This sets earth on course to cross multiple dangerous tipping points that will be disastrous for people across the world. To maintain liveable conditions on earth, protect people from rising extremes, and enable stable societies, we must do everything possible to prevent crossing tipping points,” said coauthor Johan Rockström, cochair of the Earth Commission and director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research.

To have a 50 percent chance of achieving 1.5 C and thus limiting tipping point risks, the study said, global greenhouse gas emissions must be cut by half by 2030, reaching net-zero by 2050.

Clean energy

“To achieve that we now need to trigger positive social tipping points that accelerate the transformation to a clean energy future,” said coauthor Tim Lenton, director of the Global Systems Institute at the University of Exeter. “We may also have to adapt to cope with climate tipping points that we fail to avoid, and support those who could suffer uninsurable losses and damages.”

The study, which was based on paleoclimate data, current observations, and the outputs from climate models, hoped to underscore that many tipping elements were actually interlinked, making cascading a serious concern.

“In fact, interactions can lower the critical temperature thresholds beyond which individual tipping elements begin destabilizing in the long-run,” said coauthor Ricarda Winkelmann.

La Niña adds to inflation woes

By: Ronnel Domingo

A more-entrenched La Niña climate phenomenon that brings above-normal rainfall to the Philippines could increase the pressure on prices of basic commodities to rise further, especially if heavy rains destroy this year's main crop of rice and other produce.

This likelihood is growing especially after recent heavy rains and a magnitude 7 earthquake ravaged the summer rice crop, as well as P1 billion worth of corn and P253 million worth of irrigation facilities—mostly in Northern Luzon.

If La Niña takes an additional toll on agricultural production, the Philippines may have to depend on importation, especially with several commodities such as onions reported to be experiencing a shortage.

Chances that the La Niña climate phenomenon will continue to prevail in the next three months rose to 91 percent from the 86 percent forecast in August.

According to the latest bulletin from the Climate Prediction Center (CPC), which is part of the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, indicators of an active La Niña system intensified further over the previous weeks.

Cooler-than-average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) across the equatorial region of the Pacific Ocean were recorded at as much as 1.1 degree Celsius below normal.

Meanwhile, temperatures that were colder than normal below the sea surface persisted.

Further, abnormal wind behavior continued to be observed at the low and upper levels of the atmosphere above the equatorial Pacific Ocean.

“La Niña is favored to continue through [the] Northern Hemisphere winter 2022-23, with a 91-percent chance in September-November, decreasing to a 54-percent chance in January-March 2023,” the CPC said.

The American agency also said there was still uncertainty over how long La Niña would last and when it will transition to “neutral,” meaning there is neither La Niña nor El Niño.

In recent months, supply issues related to meat such as pork as well as fish had helped boost inflation. The rate of increase in prices of basic goods and services was recorded at 6.3 percent in August.

Government economists expect inflation to reach a peak later this year, although the impact of inflation on the cost of living is likely to be exacerbated by the weakness of the Philippine peso against the US dollar.

The peso sank to all-time weakest levels in five consecutive trading days earlier this month to as weak as 57.18:\$1, but has since recovered to 56.82:\$1 on Sept. 9.

Local solutions toward food security

By: Rudy Parel jr.

Two years ago, the COVID-19 pandemic came to the fore, drastically disrupting all sectors of Philippine society. But even before the pandemic, the country has already been experiencing two ongoing crises: hunger and malnutrition.

It may seem like a good sign that the Philippines was not identified as among the countries with “the likelihood of further deterioration in acute food insecurity,” based on the Hunger Hot spots Outlook for June to September 2022 of the World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This, however, does not necessarily mean the absence of food insecurity in the country.

Data from the Department of Science and Technology-Food and Nutrition Research Institute showed that the number of food-insecure Filipino households grew to 64.1 percent in 2019 from 53.9 percent in 2018. Filipinos who could not afford a healthy diet also increased to 75.2 million in 2020 from 74.2 million in 2019 according to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022.

Among the significant contributors to food insecurity in the country include inflation, the Russia-Ukraine War, climate change-induced catastrophes, and of course the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Agriculture, food and nutrition security will be among the defining issues of the Philippines this decade and therefore systemic changes are needed to enable effective food systems transformation,” Carlie Labaria, Environment and Natural Resources Sustainable Management Subgroup Leader of the FAO in the Philippines, said during the recent Inquirer Project Rebound webinar.

More effective food supply chain management

The agriculture sector has been hailed as the “backbone of the Philippine economy” yet its fullest potential has not been maximized due to some food system inefficiencies.

According to Ma. Elena Van Tooren, managing director of East-West Seed Foundation, the food supply chain is too long as it takes food products days and weeks to reach consumers, affecting their freshness, accessibility, availability and affordability.

It was noted by Labaria that reforms toward more effective food supply chain management should be implemented, including “investments to modernize transportation and logistical infrastructure.” Shorter food miles with more dispersed distribution points should also be looked into.

Realizing the importance of market linkages, Pamela Castro, program manager and head of nutrition and food security programs of the Pilipinas Shell Foundation, Inc. (PSFI), shared that they initiated the “Ani Para sa Suki” to connect farmers to potential

buyers and even the company's supply chain. During the pandemic, vegetables produced by farmers were sold at selected Shell stations or stores.

This is where urban agriculture comes into play.

According to Simon Villalon, president of Good Greens + Co, supply chains broke during the pandemic, making it difficult for food to reach metropolitan areas. He said that high-producing vertical farms within urban areas will be vital, especially because a large portion of the population is now moving into such places.

Through its urban gardening programs, PLDT-Smart is also encouraging Filipinos to grow their own food.

Technologies and farmer education

Similar to other sectors, the pandemic has compelled the agricultural sector to accelerate its digital transformation, posing adaptive challenges for farmers and fisherfolk.

This prompted PLDT-Smart to launch its capacity-building initiative called Digital Farmers Program, which aims to enhance farmers' digital knowledge and skills to improve their livelihoods.

"Technology plays an important role in improving production, linking producers with buyers, and just overall improving the lives of our farmers," said Stephanie Arlino, head of stakeholder management team, corporate communications of PLDT and Smart.

Meanwhile, PSFI's Integrated Farming Bio-Systems, a program "intended to train farmers and community members on appropriate farming technologies," was also set in motion.

As one of its major programs, PSFI also established the Shell Training Farms to help increase food production and farmers' agricultural yield through the demonstration of the latest agricultural technologies and sustainable practices in agriculture.

The role of local governments

Despite being the producers of the food that we eat, farmers are among the hungriest due to their lack of economic capacity to access food.

Arsenio Go Barcelona, president of Harbest Agribusiness Corp., pointed out that food security is a responsibility of local government executives and that they should be more accountable for the state of their constituents.

It is also essential that local governments work together with other public and private organizations to further solve agricultural issues.

Van Tooren has urged each local government to prepare their own food security map by asking these questions: What do they have? What do their neighbors have? What can be done to augment the gaps?

Doing our part

As Barcelona said, the effects of external factors such as the pandemic and the Ukraine-Russia War cannot be controlled and thus there is a need to start consuming local products.

He also encouraged young Filipinos to seize opportunities in the sector by participating more in agricultural activities such as learning how to raise animals for food.

Echoing this concept is Dr. Rogelio Concepcion from the Philippine Association of Agriculturists, Inc. who said that the young generation should start immersing themselves in gardening.

When asked about what corporations and organizations can contribute, Villalon mentioned that everyone should work together and be open to sharing information with each other.

Dr. Concepcion also encouraged corporations to work with small farmers by providing them with services, access to technology, and information.

Dr. Glenn Gregorio, center director of the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture disclosed that the organization formulated the National Agriculture and Fishery Modernization and Industrialization Plan. This aims to improve farm productivity and increase the livable income of farmers and fisherfolks in the next 10 years.

But if there's one thing that agricultural experts can agree on, it's this: food security is a "now" issue. It is important now, more than ever, to address problems surrounding agriculture, including the plight of our farmers and fisherfolk.

"The heartbeat of the country is measured by the condition of our farmers, so a happy farmer creates a happy and food-secure nation," Dr. Gregorio said.

THE MANILA TIMES

[SM Prime, WWF partner for responsible reporting on climate change solutions](#)

SM Prime Holdings Inc., one of Southeast Asia's leading integrated property developers, and leading conservation organization World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines have entered a collaboration in adopting a more robust reporting framework to address the climate crisis.

This is a major partnership of WWF with a Philippine company for the development of a bespoke program toward decarbonization.

With sustainability at the core of its corporate identity, SM Prime is at the forefront of spearheading sustainable practices as well as setting records in pioneering programs to consciously protect the environment and strongly focus on resilience in its developments.

Under the partnership, SM Prime will adopt the Corporates for a Better Planet Initiative (CBPI), WWF-Philippines' flagship program that provides an actionable framework for organizations to operate sustainably within the paradigm of the climate crisis.

"We are delighted to work with WWF Philippines on this sustainable journey. We need to be one with the worldwide community to achieve this and we need to work with global experts to get this right," SM Prime President Jeffrey Lim said.

With this, SM Prime will be able to enhance and determine climate change solutions that will be reflected through responsible and transparent reporting. This partnership forms part of group-wide efforts under the SM Green Movement that aims to improve the quality of life of communities through sustainable solutions to promote a green planet, green living and a green culture.

The partnership dates back to 2007 under Hamilo Coast, SM Prime's leisure resort development in Nasugbu, Batangas.

WWF closely monitors the health and viability of the Hamilo Coast area including three of its coves designated as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) – the Pico de Loro, Etayo and Santelmo.

In recognition of its conservation efforts, Hamilo Coast was cited by WWF-Philippines as its longest standing Sustainability Partner in 2020.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Higher financing sought to address climate change

By: Louise Maureen Simeon

Manila, Philippines — Advanced economies should ramp up their climate financing for developing countries like the Philippines amid the worsening impact of climate change globally.

The Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD), a regional alliance of peoples' movements, is calling on rich countries to immediately increase their financing of climate actions in less developed ones.

This came following a dialogue on the new collective quantified goal (NCQG) on climate finance under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in line with the 2015 Paris Agreement.

The Paris Agreement stipulates setting a new NCQG prior to 2025 and is built on the foundation of the pledge of \$100 billion per year by 2020 by rich nations as climate finance for developing countries.

APMDD coordinator Lidy Nacpil maintained that it is crucial to ensure climate justice for developing countries through the urgent delivery of scaled up climate finance.

"Trillions of dollars are needed annually by developing countries to adapt to and build resilience in the face of climate change impacts, recover from the loss of lives and damage to property, infrastructure, ecosystems and economies, and ensure a just and equitable transition," Nacpil said.

Nacpil said funds being mobilized are nowhere near the scale of the needs of developing countries.

President Marcos earlier said addressing climate change was one of the priorities of his administration, particularly on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Last month, the US government committed to boost its funding support to address the climate change problem in the Philippines following a meeting between Department of Finance chief Benjamin Diokno and US Ambassador to the Philippines Marykay Carlson.

Carlson said the US is willing to scale up climate financing support to the Philippines amid the threat of climate change, especially as the country is one of the most vulnerable to climate crisis.

APMDD said there is a need to step up climate adaptation finance but the alliance noted that rich industrialized countries continue to spend billions of dollars on the fossil fuel industry.

Prior to the pandemic, data showed that rich nations contributed \$80 billion in climate finance but most of the fund came from public grants or loans, transferred either from one country to another directly, or through funds from multilateral development banks.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

THE MANILA TIMES

[Experts call for united front against poor air quality](#)

Experts and officials from the Department of Health (DoH), Climate Change Commission, and 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 nonprofit human development organization FHI 360, Climate Change Commissioner 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, Herrera, also a lawyer, 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.

PH calls for climate equity, justice at UN

By: Kristina Maralit

There must be immediate action to achieve climate equity and justice en route to pragmatic solutions in addressing the impact of climate change.

This was the call made by the Philippine government at the conclusion of the Third Technical Expert Dialogue (TED3) on Climate Finance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) last September 8.

According to Robert Borje, Climate Change Commission (CCC) vice chairman and executive director (VCED), vulnerable countries like the Philippines bear the brunt of the effects of climate change. It is high time for nations around the world to seize the "opportunity to advance inclusive climate finance" driven by a process that ensures "balanced geographical participation, particularly of developing states in the Asia-Pacific region."

Borje likewise assured that the Philippines, as directed by President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., will continue to help mitigate the effects of climate change.

The Marcos administration, he noted, has increased the national budget allocation for climate change-related programs, projects and activities.

The Philippines will also pursue stronger collaboration with partners and stakeholders "to implement more climate actions with results."

"But we, the at-risk developing nations, cannot do it alone. And even if any of us can, we should not do it alone. We should work together for our One World, for One Humanity," Borje stressed.

The third TED, as a gathering of global climate finance experts, was described as an important venue to call on the NCQGCF to look beyond what specific countries can afford.

According to the Germanwatch Index, the Philippines ranked fourth most vulnerable country to climate change.

The country faces an average of 20 typhoons a year, with losses and damage in the past decade amounting to a 0.5 percent loss of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

VCED Borje pointed out that the NCQGFC should focus on providing financial assistance to more vulnerable and less endowed countries, in fulfillment of the Paris Agreement.

Borje concluded by challenging participating climate finance experts to focus on a paradigm shift for climate finance and investment.

"This is what we mean by Build Right at First Sight: to build justly and efficiently at first sight, with a long-term horizon in mind. Our discussions will go beyond dollars and cents," he said.

"It will be recommendations for actions that will affect the lives and livelihood of nations. Today is an opportunity to get things right, to secure climate equity and justice for all," he added.

The Ad Hoc Work Programme on New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQGCF) created under the Paris Agreement is tasked to conduct four TEDs annually until 2024. The first and second TEDs were hosted by South Africa and Germany, respectively.

As the UNFCCC National Focal Point for the Philippines, the CCC is co-hosting the TED3, in partnership with the UNFCCC Secretariat and the Asian Development Bank.

In the lead-up to the 27th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP27) to the UNFCCC in Egypt this November, the four-day TED3 is expected to identify the needs and priorities of developing countries, including their scope, and quantitative and qualitative aspects of equitable and resilient climate action.

TED3 is also seen to advance discussion on the roles of public and private sectors toward efficient delivery and mobilization of climate finance, for low carbon and climate-resilient development.

UN forum seeks adequate funding for climate change

By: Kristina Maralit

The United Nations forum on climate finance co-hosted by the Philippines concluded over the weekend with an urgent challenge to deliver climate finance based on equity and climate justice, with special emphasis on the needs of at-risk developing nations.

The Third Technical Expert Dialogue (TED3) on the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQGCF) organized by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UN Climate Change), in partnership with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) PH, focused on addressing the needs and priorities of developing countries toward a low-greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.

"Without global transformation and adequate financial resources dedicated to solving the climate change problem, which has reached emergency status, any agreement will be meaningless," Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said.

This was echoed by Robert E.A. Borje, CCC vice chairman and executive director, who urged all stakeholders to ensure that discussions "will go beyond dollars and cents" and outline "recommendations for actions that will affect the lives and livelihood of nations."

"Urgent delivery of needs-based climate finance on loss and damage is crucial to transformative climate actions by at-risk developing nations. Gone are the days of empty commitments — now is the time to implement, to deliver actions with results," he said.

The summit, which also served as a lead up to the 27th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP27) in November, also focused on the Philippines expressing hope that the TEDs will be reflective of all views of the concerned parties toward an efficient delivery of climate finance for at-risk developing nations, including finance for loss and damage.

Citing President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.'s commitment to prioritize measures to address climate change, Borje reiterated the Philippines' principled support for the "creation of an enabling global environment for urgent and accessible climate finance."

"If we cannot mitigate climate change, all our plans for the economy, for our future, will be for naught," he said.

Swedish Ambassador met Secretary Robert Borje of the Philippines Climate Change Commission

By by Kanlayakorn Pengrattana

Ambassador Annika Thunborg of the Swedish Embassy in Manila met Secretary Robert Borje, the Vice Chairperson and the Executive Director of the Climate Change Commission earlier this week.

Both discussed areas of potential collaboration on climate action for the Philippines.

Secretary Borje is also a part of Stockholm+50. He joined the conference in June 2022.

Stockholm+50 was a high-level conference that tackled the triple planetary crisis concerning climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss.

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