



NEWS ROUNDUP

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By: Jemy Gatdula

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By: Keisha B. Ta-asan

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ECO BUSINESS

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By: Aime Williams

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By: Dave Llavanos Jr.

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MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

[Climate in\(justice\)](#)

By: Jose Bayani Baylon

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

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[Opinion] Climate change, climate fraud

By: Jemy Gatdula

There was a time when the world was told that the global population was headed for starvation. Thus, in *The Population Bomb*, author Paul Ehrlich claimed that overpopulation and famines would lead to worldwide deaths due to lack of food by the 1970s. Then in 1988, NASA scientist James Hansen testified before the US Congress that the “greenhouse effect” was very prevalent and could lead to dangerous levels in global temperature.

Needless to say, like COVID narcissists that warned of complete human decimation if everyone did not get vaccinated, none of those environmental warnings came true.

And yet the Marcos Administration has chosen to put climate change at the forefront of its foreign policy agenda: committing to expand renewable energy and move away from coal, natural gas expansion, and reliance on fossil fuels.

The Philippines also committed to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 75% in 2030, doubling down on a previous 70% target under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which the Philippines ratified in 2017. The Agreement, incidentally, also allowed the Philippines to have access to the Green Climate Fund, which runs into the billions of dollars, allocated for developing countries as encouragement to adopt climate change policies.

The biggest casualty if such policies push through is our transportation sector, which has been dubbed as “the largest source of air pollution and energy-related Greenhouse gases (GHG) (34% of total GHG emissions) in the Philippines, whereby road transport is the largest contributor (with over 80%). In October 2015, the Philippines submitted their official conditional GHG mitigation target to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC), in which the Government stated an emission reduction target of 70% until 2030 with international support” (see transferproject.org).

The most unfortunate reality about all this climate alarmism is that — even though we are putting a huge portion of our transport sector at risk — as well as possibly undermining our businesses with incredible amounts of additional costs to address so-called climate change, the Philippines simply is not a factor due to its relative size. It currently contributes merely 0.35% share in fossil CO2 emissions (as of 2016) and even if it does meet all its climate change targets, its responsibility is nowhere near that of

China (with 127,05 million tons Carbon dioxide equivalent* or CO₂e), the USA (6,001 million tons CO₂e), India (3,394 million tons CO₂e), the EU (27 countries, with 3,383 million tons CO₂e), Russia (2,476 million tons CO₂e), Japan (1,166 million tons CO₂e), Brazil (1,057 million tons CO₂e), Indonesia (1,002), Iran (893 million tons CO₂e), and Canada (736 million tons CO₂e). Compare that with the Philippines' mere 133 million tons CO₂e (in 2020; see wiki and macro-trends.net).

But ultimately, the climate change hysteria is just that. According to David Siegel in an entry in his blog Shortfall ("Important Peer-Reviewed Papers on Climate Change," November 2021): "Simple statistical analysis shows that the majority of peer-reviewed findings are false or meaningless, and the press will take any paper and blow it up into a headline. But people often ask me for peer-reviewed papers refuting the standard dogma of climate alarm, and there are many. Keep in mind that all atmospheric data before 1980 is suspect, and all ocean measurements before 2005 are worthless. Everyone knows Antarctica is not warming, so I'll focus on trying to figure out man's role in the climate. When I ask people who are sure that humans are having an alarming impact on the earth's climate, I ask them to name one single paper that convinced them. So far, I have never gotten a paper." (For more information on the accuracy of environmentalist papers or studies, see Climatecurious.com).

And yet the ridiculousness of the Philippine stance on climate change is all the more highlighted when one realizes that even if the Paris Agreement targets are met, it still wouldn't mean much in terms of climate effects but humongously so in terms of economics. There is really no point in bankrupting Philippine business when doing so won't even save the planet.

This is because even "if the US delivers for the whole century on the President's very ambitious rhetoric, it would postpone global warming by about eight months at the end of the century. Now let's add in the rest of the world's Paris promises. If we generously assume that the promised carbon cuts for 2030 are not only met (which itself would be a UN first), but sustained, throughout the rest of the century, temperatures in 2100 would drop by 0.3 degrees — the equivalent of postponing warming by less than four years. Again, that's using the UN's own climate prediction model," writes Bjorn Lomborg ("The Paris Climate Agreement Won't Change the Climate," www.lomborg.com, January 2017)

"But here's the biggest problem: These miniscule benefits do not come free; quite the contrary. The cost of the Paris climate pact is likely to run to 1 to 2 trillion dollars every year, based on estimates produced by the Stanford Energy Modeling Forum and the Asia Modeling Exercise. In other words, we will spend at least one hundred trillion

dollars in order to reduce the temperature, by the end of the century, by a grand total of three tenths of one degree,” he writes.

And yet, while carbon emission alarmism has gone unabated, another — a more obvious problem — remain under the media’s radar. “The Philippines is considered the third-largest contributor to plastic waste worldwide, contributing to an estimated 0.75 million metric tons of ocean plastic every year. Dubbed as the ‘sachet economy,’ the Philippines is notorious for irresponsible trash haulers and open dump sites that cause the plastic to spill into the seas. Contrary to popular belief, however, this waste is not solely generated by the country alone. The Philippines is only one among the many Southeast Asian countries that receive illegal imports of plastic waste from developed countries. Indeed, the Global North is just as accountable for what is considered a domestic problem” (“The Face of Plastic,” Stanley Guevarra, www.ateneo.edu/news/2022/07/18/face-plastic, July 2022).

Which hasn’t stopped policymakers and even media from continuing to advocate the wearing (and eventual throwing away) of thousands of masks: Thus, in Baguio City alone, “an estimated 417,834 facemasks are disposed daily, generating 3,585 kg/day of additional waste” (“Face mask and medical waste generation in the City of Baguio, Philippines: its current management and GHG footprint,” Lunag, etc., *Journal of Material Cycles and Waste Management* volume 25, January 2023).

Doubling down on the Paris Agreement is the wrong solution to a problem that needs to be identified with better clarity. In the meantime, simply enforcing current Philippine laws — such as RA 8479 (Clean Air Act) and RA 9275 (Clean Water Act) — would certainly go a longer and more effective way.

Finally, perhaps now is also not the time to demonize fossil fuel use in the country.

* According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Carbon dioxide equivalent or CO₂e means the number of metric tons of CO₂ emissions with the same global warming potential as one metric ton of another greenhouse gas.

Philippine market for ‘green’ FDI estimated at \$168 billion — FSF

By: Keisha B. Ta-asan

The Philippine market for foreign investment in sustainable projects has been estimated at \$168 billion until 2030, with the country significantly underperforming its potential after attracting only a fraction of that total between 2017 and 2021.

In a consultation paper, the inter-agency Financial Sector Forum (FSF) noted the Philippines’ performance in attracting “green” foreign direct investment (FDI) and cited the need to ramp up its capacity to generate financing for its climate goals.

“There are an estimated \$168 billion in green investment opportunities between 2020 and 2030, including \$39 billion for greening existing and future energy infrastructure, \$104 billion for climate-smart cities, and \$25 billion for accelerating the green transition in selected sectors,” it said.

“However, the Philippines only attracted \$0.6 billion in green investment from foreign companies between 2017 and 2021, mostly in renewable energy,” it added.

The FSF also noted that climate investment during the period was equivalent to only 1% of all cross-border investment, lagging regional norms.

“The scale of financing needed to meet the Philippines’ climate goals is colossal and it calls for the financial sector to rapidly expand its capacity to support financing the low-carbon and climate-resilient (LCCR) transition, above the government’s own fiscal allocation and spending,” it said.

It said that national government agencies have allocated P1.59 trillion, or about \$28.66 billion, for climate-related spending between 2016 and 2022. This represented about 5.8% of total appropriations during the period.

Of the P1.59 trillion in climate allocations in that time, more than 90% went towards climate adaptation and mitigation projects.

“Whilst seeking greater access to external alternative sources is important, it is also a strategic imperative to expand Philippines’ domestic financial sector’s capacity to support and accelerate the LCCR transition, which will require multiple sources of finance,” the FSF said.

The government should also actively seek avenues to bridge the gaps in financing as commitments are not enough, it said.

“Climate finance calls for the mobilization of funds from public, private, national, and transnational sources to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change,” it added.

The FSF also said that globally, the financing gap for climate adaptation is large and widening. Adaptation costs may rise by up to \$340 billion a year by 2030, and up to \$565 billion by 2050, in developing countries alone.

The gap for mitigation is even wider, the inter-agency body said. It is estimated to rise by \$850 billion per year by 2030 in developing countries.

Meanwhile, the adverse impact of climate change has been increasing in the Philippines, potentially threatening the stability of the financial system.

“Philippine banks are exposed to shocks as the economy adjusts to a low carbon environment through their holdings in polluting and carbon-intensive industries,” it said.

It said that the banking system’s loan exposure to power generation is about 10% of the overall loan portfolio.

Transition risks will also impact other financial institutions apart from banks, such as insurance providers, investment firms, pension funds, and reinsurance companies.

“The overall objective of the (FSF) is to advance the financial sector’s understanding and management of climate-related risks, while also growing sustainable finance opportunities,” it added.

The FSF is a voluntary inter-agency body consisting of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Securities and Exchange Commission, Insurance Commission, and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

The FSF released the consultation paper to assess the design of the Philippines Sustainable Finance Taxonomy Guidelines. Consultations are open until Oct. 6.

ECO BUSINESS

[Support for fossil fuel subsidy cuts and immediate coal phase-out gains momentum among Southeast Asians, says survey](#)

By: Ng Wai Mun

At least half of Southeast Asians now want a slash in fossil fuel subsidies in their own countries and there is stronger support for coal production to be phased out immediately, a survey report shows.

The new data from the annual survey could reflect shifting perceptions towards direct interventions to accelerate the green transition in the region, even as respondents worry that such climate solutions could bring about higher energy prices.

In last year's survey results, removing subsidies for dirty fuels was the least popular measure among respondents who were asked what governments can do to reduce carbon emissions domestically. Only 6.7 per cent of respondents opted for such a move.

The Southeast Asia Climate Outlook Survey, conducted by Singapore-based research centre ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute, also found that, one year on, nearly 70 per cent of respondents say they support a national carbon tax, with those from Vietnam, Indonesia and Philippines giving the strongest backing. Carbon pricing policies was the second least popular intervention (12 per cent) in the 2022 survey.

Respondents then had prioritised encouraging businesses to adopt green practices (33.8 per cent) and allocating more public financial support to low-carbon solutions (28.8 per cent).

Climate experts and researchers speaking at the report's launch noted that a long-term predictable carbon pricing policy is beneficial for the region, but Southeast Asians might not have full awareness of the potential short-term pain they need to endure when they indicate that they will back carbon taxes, hence some of the conflicting responses.

Sharon Seah, senior fellow and coordinator of the institute's climate change programme, said: "The dots haven't really been connected for people... Countries in the region, however, do need to start looking at what they can do to remove market distortions that come in the form of (fossil fuel) subsidies and maybe even reform their electricity market. Ultimately, if all of these work, for the long haul, there can actually be greater energy security."

Decades-long deals in Southeast Asia that keep coal plants active are complicating the region's clean energy transition. As much as 15 per cent of the global coal pipeline is located in Asean, noted the report, and new research still highlights how the region could lead on coal expansion in the future – which is bad news for climate action.

Researchers noted that socioeconomic considerations could have shaped perceptions towards subsidies. “Those with more purchasing power are more open to cutting subsidies,” they said in the report. About 31.8 per cent of the respondents said they were unsure about fossil fuel subsidy cuts, and the report recommended greater public engagement to help citizens make more informed decisions.

‘Bread and butter’ issues dominate

Researchers said the “most surprising finding” of this year's survey is that even though Southeast Asians experienced major floods, heatwaves and droughts this year and recognised climate change as the predominant cause, there is a marked decline in the perception of threat urgency. Almost half (49 per cent) of respondents perceived climate change as a “serious and immediate threat” to their wellbeing, compared to 69 per cent in 2021.

Respondents who are “relatively more sanguine” about the impacts of climate change are led by those in Myanmar (56.8 per cent) who are “currently preoccupied” with civil war. This is followed by Malaysia which has also been undergoing major political upheaval over the last year, the report said.

When asked what they are most worried about as Asean countries try to push ahead with the renewables transition, the top concern cited was rising energy prices and cost of living, by about 54.2 per cent of respondents. About a fifth (21.7 per cent) of respondents highlighted energy shortages. Unemployment (6 per cent) and widening social inequality (8.8 per cent) were least on people's minds, reflecting how narratives around climate justice might not have caught on in the region.

“While international organisations and academics have argued that the energy transition can widen inequality and lead to redundancies in some industries, these issues were not seen as major concerns by regional respondents,” said the report.

Southeast Asians displayed stronger support for a coal phase-out, with 34.9 per cent of respondents saying this needs to be done immediately, compared to 30.7 per cent indicating so in 2022. The report cited how these sentiments are reflected in the latest government policies. For example, the Philippines has announced a moratorium on new coal plants.

There are mixed views on whether natural gas should be seen as a transition fuel. Most respondents (45.8 per cent) say that while natural gas is a temporary replacement for coal, countries must strive towards developing renewable energy generation. A substantial portion of respondents (18.2 per cent) believe that natural gas is an ideal replacement for coal, while 15.6 per cent of respondents say gas should be used alongside coal.

Spotlight on Indonesia's climate leadership

The climate outlook survey, in its fourth edition, also asks Southeast Asians which country has the potential to be the region's climate leader. While Singapore came out top again this year, with 38.7 per cent of respondents supporting its leadership, speakers at the survey launch said Indonesia, one of the world's top 10 greenhouse gas (GHG) emitters, needs to step up more.

Singapore climate scientist Winston Chow, who was recently elected to the United Nations' top climate body to co-lead a working group on climate impacts and adaptation measures, said: "The country in the region which contributes to the highest amount of GHG emissions should be the leader."

Jessica Cheam, founder and managing director of Eco-Business, said she was surprised fewer people cited the lack of political will as the biggest obstacle to decarbonisation. According to the survey, more Southeast Asians viewed the lack of research and development, technology and expertise as the main barrier, which Cheam said differs from current conversations taking place among global and regional circles, including at the meetings and business forums she attends.

"The technology needed for us to drive decarbonisation already exists today, and most are saying that it is execution and deployment that is lacking, and political will is what you need to provide the right legislative frameworks and financing that is needed for the technological transfer," she said. "Everywhere I go, the business community and investors are getting impatient. They are saying there is no time for talk and that we need action from governments."

Malaysia's environment and climate change minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, who delivered a pre-recorded keynote message for the survey launch, said that polls are "snapshots in time", even though the results perhaps reflect how bread and butter issues have been pushed to the fore across Southeast Asia, amid post-pandemic recovery.

“The survey is also a sign that governments, the media and academia must work more to communicate the urgent need for climate action,” he said. “Yes, the facts and science don’t care about our feelings, but public buy-in is still important, even for noble, necessary national and international missions.”

“When it comes to fighting climate change, I’ve always felt that the way to win support is to ensure climate action is just, inclusive and not merely a top-down preoccupation,” he said.

FINANCIAL TIMES

[US climate chief rails at Asian coal as geopolitical tensions shadow UN summit](#)

By: Aime Williams

US climate envoy John Kerry has railed at new coal production in Asia that “wipes out” carbon emissions reductions from Europe and the US, the largest historical polluters, as geopolitical tensions remain high following the UN climate summit in New York.

While country negotiators attempt to hammer out preliminary agreements to be discussed at the UN COP28 climate summit in Dubai in 10 weeks, a visibly frustrated Kerry told ministers at a breakfast meeting that he felt “increasing anger” over “what is going on, and what is not going on”.

“What infuriates me, frankly, and I find myself getting more and more angry about this — but we are not stopping at a broad enough scale the contributions to the problem, and by that I mean emissions are going up,” Kerry told the ministers from assembled nations. “People continue to plan and build and burn unmitigated, unabated fossil fuel.”

Kerry said the scale of coal power expansion planned in Asia would make it “impossible to achieve 1.5 degrees” in global temperature rise since pre-industrial times, set down under the Paris accord as the ideal limit. The world has already warmed by at least 1.1C.

The former US secretary of state also lashed out at “fundamental, basic greed” from companies. “I keep hearing from certain corporations ‘well, shareholders are demanding this’, and despite all of the consequences we are not yet doing what we said we would do.”

Kerry and his Chinese counterpart, Xie Zhenhua, formally reignited bilateral climate talks between the US and China earlier this summer. Chinese leader Xi Jinping pledged in 2020 that China would reach peak emissions by 2030 and be “carbon-neutral” by 2060.

While China is the world’s largest producer of renewable energy capacity and dominates solar and wind technology, it is also consuming record amounts of coal to meet its energy needs. International Energy Agency data shows that China and India set monthly records for coal energy production in March 2023 and burnt 70 per cent of the world’s coal.

In a coinciding speech to diplomats in China on Thursday, Zhenhua said it was “not realistic to phase out all fossil fuels”. However, he added that carbon capture technology

could be used to lower the emissions when fossil fuels are burnt. The technology is not proven at scale, although China is attempting its own development at various oilfields.

China has consistently frustrated discussions at multilateral meetings of major developed economies seeking to achieve consensus on ending the reliance on fossil fuels, including at recent G7 and G20 leader meetings.

At COP28, negotiators from almost 200 countries, including the US and China, will need to co-operate to reach agreements on the so-called global stocktake on emissions, the first since the Paris accord in 2015, and seal arrangements for a fund for loss and damage related to climate change.

Some negotiators are hoping to include wording and a timeline for the end of fossil fuels, and upgraded targets for beyond 2030 in the final COP28 agreement, despite the significant pushback from petrostates and fossil fuel producers.

GMA

Philippines inks historic deal to protect world's oceans

By: Dave Llavanes Jr.

In a significant step towards the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, the Philippines has signed the historic agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction.

This reaffirms the country's commitment to protect the world's oceans for present and future generations.

The agreement aims to establish a legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas of the ocean that lie beyond the jurisdiction of any one nation.

Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Enrique Manalo said the country is proud to take the important step.

"The Philippines is honored to sign this historic Agreement under UNCLOS. Our commitment to the protection of our oceans is unwavering, and we understand that this is a global responsibility," he said.

"By joining hands with the international community, we are ensuring that the world's oceans remain a source of life, sustenance, and wonder for all," Manalo added.

As an archipelagic nation with an extensive coastline and a rich marine biodiversity, the Philippines has long been aware of the importance of ocean health.

The country is home to some of the most diverse marine ecosystems on the planet, including the Coral Triangle, known as the "Amazon of the Seas" due to its incredible marine diversity.

The agreement under UNCLOS, often referred to as the "BBNJ Agreement" (Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction), addresses key issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity.

It includes provisions for the establishment of marine protected areas, the sharing of benefits from marine genetic resources, and capacity building for developing countries to participate fully in these efforts.

The signing ceremony was attended by diplomats, environmentalists, and representatives of various international organizations. It marked a critical moment in the global effort to address the challenges faced by the world's oceans, including overfishing, habitat destruction, and the impacts of climate change.

The DFA said the Philippines' participation in this agreement reflects a broader global commitment to protect the oceans. As countries continue to grapple with environmental crises and the urgent need for sustainability, international cooperation becomes increasingly vital.

The signing of the BBNJ Agreement is not only a symbol of hope but also a promise to future generations, it added.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

Climate in(justice)

By: Jose Bayani Baylon

I admire activists. Many of them passionately advocate a cause (diversity, climate change, racial inequality, women's rights, even animal rights) at their own personal and physical expense. Some of them, in the process of their advocacy, get hurt, even killed. Some of them get disillusioned. But many of them remain committed to varying degrees to the idea and value of activism, to their dying day.

I've met so many of these kinds of people throughout my life, which is not surprising given that I grew up and was schooled at UP where every second an activist is born (and every minute one turns into a trap!). So, I've seen them all – the real ones, the fake ones, the ideologues, the “nakikisakay lang sa uso.”

You know who to admire even if you don't necessarily agree with them in full, and you know who to dismiss, even at least privately.

Now comes climate Justice advocates who again are admirable for their commitment to the cause of healing our planet. They're at the forefront of the focus on global warming and climate change, real reasons for concern. But again, like most advocacies, you have climate Justice advocates who just – at least in my book – go way off the rails, justifying their positions by their passion and zeal for their cause.

As someone who works in the mining industry (which I think is more pejoratively described as the “extractive” industry), I've seen the gamut of climate Justice activism, and have to say that a lot of objectivity needs to be plugged into the cause.

Like those advocating that mining in the Philippines has to stop because it contributes to the climate change problem that in turn results in Yolandas and Odettes and other super typhoons in whose path our islands lie.

Huh?

In my simple understanding, climate change is a result of the greenhouse gas emissions that human existence has been producing for decades now. Hence the struggle to get to Net Zero by 2050.

GHG global production is centered around China (about 25%), the US (an additional 15%) which together with the EU and India add up to over 50% of global GHG

production. The Philippines contributes 0.05% or one-half of one percent to total global annual GHG production.

If you totally stop GHG production from the Philippines, will the Yolandas stop coming?

But okay, let's say let's stop GHG production in the Philippines anyway. Who produces it?

Well, power plants contribute 50%. Transport, another 25%. Industry and agriculture, another 15-20%. You want to shut down GHG emissions in the Philippines? Let's close down all power plants and mothball all ICE vehicles.

The point is, climate Justice advocates should focus their targets on China, the US, India, and the EU if they want the Yolandas and Odettes of this world to stop lashing the Philippines. And if they still insist on drastically reducing our 0.05% contribution, they should lobby for an ICE-free country (bye-bye jeepneys and tricycles, among others, that the common man uses!) and shut down 80% of our power supply. But do they do this?

No. Instead, they harp on mining... their favorite whipping boy.

Which makes you wonder – how honest is their advocacy for climate Justice?

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[PH Backs Move To Interpret UNCLOS For Climate Protection](#)

The Philippine government backed on Tuesday a move urging a United Nations court to provide an advisory opinion to interpret the world's oceans treaty in the context of curbing climate change.

The statement of support was delivered before the Hamburg-based International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) which has recently begun legal proceedings for a closely watched oceans climate justice case.

The case, brought by the Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law (COSIS) last December 2022, asks the UN court to determine the specific duties of states parties to the UN on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in preventing the pollution of the marine environment caused by climate change through the accumulation of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

“As an archipelagic state comprised mostly of small islands, and one of the most vulnerable to and most affected by climate change, the Philippines stands in solidarity with COSIS and all the small island states that comprise it and outside of its membership, and support their initiative to request the tribunal's advisory opinion,” said Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva Carlos Sorreta in co-delivering Manila's statement.

“Fundamental to our position is that while UNCLOS was not designed as a mechanism for regulating climate change, its mandate is broad enough to consider the connection between climate and the oceans,” he added.

Sorreta argued that the 40-year-old treaty must be interpreted “in light of changing global circumstances and changing laws”.

“It is, among others a strong, innovative and comprehensive global environmental treaty governing over two-thirds of the planet. It must be interpreted and applied with subsequent developments in international law and policy in mind,” he said.

In the Philippines alone, Sorreta pointed out that coastal erosion, the bleaching of coral reefs, loss of seagrass have severely affected the resources and livelihoods of Filipino coastal communities.

Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary for Maritime and Ocean Affairs Maria Angela Ponce added that by its nature, greenhouse gas emissions qualify as “pollution of the marine environment”.

“The science behind climate change and the effects of greenhouse gas emissions on the marine environment is unassailable,” she said, reiterating ocean warming, ocean acidification, and sea-level rise as examples.

In a July 2023 piece published in *The Conversation*, Ellyscia Harrould-Kolieb and Margaret Young of the University of Melbourne explained that advisory opinions are not legally binding but they provide guidance to states and international organizations about the interpretation of international law.

In their oral and written statements, the European Union and New Zealand cited the 2016 Arbitral Ruling on the South China Sea and suggested adopting its general interpretation of a state’s obligation under UNCLOS.

China, meanwhile, argued that ITLOS lacks jurisdiction to issue the requested opinion and pointed out that there are other international laws — the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Kyoto Protocol, and Paris Agreement — that are appropriate in dealing with climate change and its adverse effects.

Manila, on the other hand, believes ITLOS has “advisory jurisdiction” given that COSIS is empowered to request the UN court advisory opinions “on any legal question within the scope” of UNCLOS.

“The Philippines does not see any compelling reason for the Tribunal to refuse its advisory jurisdiction. Rather, what exists are compelling reasons for the Tribunal to exercise its jurisdiction and carry on with its advisory competence,” Assistant Solicitor General Gilbert Medrano said.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

24 N. Samar towns lauded for solid waste management

By: Roel Amazona

The provincial government of Northern Samar recognized all its 24 local government units for their exemplary performance in ecological solid waste management.

The 24 towns were recognized during the Environmental Dayaw Awards 2023 on Thursday.

Solid waste management is one of the climate change mitigation efforts pushed by the provincial government through reducing plastic waste consumption and enhancing segregation at source in the village and municipal level, Northern Samar Governor Edwin Ongchuan said in his message.

He said these efforts would help protect and conserve the environment while creating self-sufficient and climate change-resilient communities.

“We thank local officials in the 24 towns under the province and to all municipal environment and natural resources officers for ensuring that the solid waste management programs are properly implemented in their respective areas and in the province,” Ongchuan added.

Dayaw award is a collaboration of the provincial government with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources provincial office, and the League of Environment and Natural Resources officers.

All the 24 towns received environmental stewardship awards.

Aside from stewardship awards, the towns of Gamay, Laoang, Palapag, San Antonio and Victoria were awarded under the replicable and regenerative residual waste processing categories.

Recognized for their responsive composting facility were the towns of Palapag, Catarman, San Roque, Laoang, and Victoria.

For the productive materials recovery facility, awardees were San Roque, bobon, Victoria, Allen, Laoang, and Catarman towns.

Gamay, Catarman, San Roque, Allen, Laoang and San Antonio were recognized for the most improved municipality in ecological solid waste management.

Special awards were also presented to individuals for their contribution and work in the implementation of solid waste management programs.

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