



NEWS ROUNDUP

27 September 2022 [08:10 am]

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CCC IN THE NEWS:

- Calls mount to save Sierra Madre after Karding onslaught
- Speed, Sierra Madre dulled Karding's power: meteorologist
- [Opinion] The urgency of obtaining climate justice now

ABS CBN

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[Typhoon Karding floods Bulacan towns](#)

By: Raffy Santos

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BLOOMBERG

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By: Laura Millan Lombrana, John Ainger, and Jennifer A Dlouhy

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By: Atty. Jose Ferdinand M. Rojas II

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BUSINESS WORLD

[\[Opinion\] 'Let There Be Light'](#)

By: Romeo L. Bernardo

As we approach the first 100 days of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos, Jr.’s term in office, I would like to share my reflections on the priorities of his administration, starting with the country’s energy priorities.

CNN

[Climate change is causing hurricanes to intensify faster than ever](#)

By: Angel Fritz and Rachel Ramirez

Hurricane Ian is strengthening rapidly in the Caribbean as it passes over the ultra-warm waters of the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. The National Hurricane Center had predicted the system would rapidly intensify from a tropical storm to at least a category 4 hurricane in less than 72 hours.

CNN PHILIPPINES

[13 years after 'Ondoy,' 'Karding'-hit Marikina residents seek temporary shelter anew; LGU touts better response](#)

By: Glee Jaela

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 26) — It has been 13 years since Tropical Storm Ondoy devastated parts of the country, including Marikina City in Metro Manila, which serves as a catch basin of rainwater coming from different areas.

[Elected officials show no urgency to protect environment — climate group](#)

By: Faith Yuen Wei Ragasa

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 26) — Elected officials are not showing signs of urgency in protecting the environment, a climate group said on Monday after Typhoon Karding wreaked havoc on local communities.

MANILA BULLETIN

[Car-free days: Giving people a place to walk and breath clean air](#)

Many countries around the world went car-free for a day last week to “inspire motorists” to leave their cars just for a day –to walk, cycle, or take public transportation to go to work, or do errands. The global movement is considered a great opportunity to lower air pollution and boost efforts to protect the environment.

[The long overdue ‘if and when dialogue’ on climate change and water security](#)

By: Griselda Gay Santos

The week of September 19, 2022 has been a week of critical dialogues on a number of key areas of the sustainable development goals. In New York, it was the first time that President Marcos addressed the United Nations General Assembly in its 77th Session. In his speech, he highlighted climate change as the greatest global threat that warrants a global and united effort.

NBN NEWS

[Climate change could wipe \\$108 billion from U.S. property market, study finds](#)

By: Alex Lubben

Sea level rise will flood huge swaths of the country and submerge billions of dollars’ worth of land, according to a new report. An analysis from Climate Central, a nonprofit research group, put a price tag on just how much all that land is worth — and how much local governments stand to lose when it goes underwater.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Karding batters 600,000 people living below poverty line](#)

By: Cristina Eloisa Baclig

Manila, Philippines—Typhoon Karding (international name: Noru) pummeled Luzon on Sunday (Sept. 25), where a little over 600,000 people, based on estimates made by a United Nations (UN) agency, live below the poverty line.

RAPPLER

[\[Opinion\] Where are we, 13 years after Ondoy?](#)

By: John Leo Algo

September 26 marks the 13th year since the Philippines was hit by Ondoy. Four years before the onslaught of Yolanda, this was the storm that first introduced climate change as a threat to the minds of millions of Filipinos. Images of cars flipped over, and celebrities stuck on roofs waiting to be rescued, exemplified the shock that spread throughout the country.

REUTERS

[Swathes of land swamped in Philippines after typhoon](#)

By: Adrian Portugal and Neil Jerome Morales

Bulacan, Philippines, Sept 26 (Reuters) - Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr conducted an aerial survey of damage on Monday brought by typhoon Noru, which left heavy flooding across several northern provinces as authorities rushed to get aid to thousands of evacuees.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Philippines, world leaders urged to ramp up climate action after 'Karding' onslaught](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Manila, Philippines — The onslaught of Super Typhoon Karding (Noru) is a reminder that the Philippine government and the world leaders need to act fast to fight climate change and mitigate its impacts, groups said Monday.

[State of calamity in Nueva Ecija as 'Karding' leaves behind ruined crops, damaged structures](#)

Manila, Philippines — The provincial government of Nueva Ecija has declared a state of calamity due to damage to crops and livelihood caused by Typhoon Karding.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

ABS CBN

[Calls mount to save Sierra Madre after Karding onslaught](#)

Manila -- Calls are mounting to save the Sierra Madre mountains from deforestation a day after typhoon Karding lashed parts of central and southern Luzon on Sunday and left at least six people dead.

[Speed, Sierra Madre dulled Karding's power: meteorologist](#)

The destructive power of super typhoon Karding (international name: Noru) in the Philippines was lessened by 2 factors: its speed and the Sierra Madre, a meteorologist said Monday.

MANILA BULLETIN

[\[Opinion\] The urgency of obtaining climate justice now](#)

As Typhoon Karding battered the country with strong winds and heavy rains, other parts of the world also took a beating — Storm Fiona ravaged Canada's east coast with terrifying winds, a Category 3 hurricane devastated Florida, while 64 percent of Europe experienced drought, something that appeared to be the worst in at least 500 years. These were disparate occurrences, but all have one thing in common — they were “influenced” in one way or another by climate change.

Information Knowledge and Management Division

ABS CBN

[NGCP, Meralco rush to restore power in Karding-hit areas](#)

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As of 8:00 a.m. the following transmission lines are unavailable:

NORTH LUZON:

Cabanatuan-San Luis 69kV Line

Date/Time Out: Sept. 25, 2022 / 9:11 p.m.

Customer affected: NEECO II Area 1, NEECO II Area 2, AURELCO

Cabanatuan-Fatima 69kV Line

Date/Time Out: Sept. 25, 2022 / 9:21 p.m.

Customer affected: NEECO II Area 1, SAJELCO, PAMES

Cabanatuan-San Isidro 69kV Line

Date/Time Out: Sept. 25, 2022 / 8:59 p.m.

Customer affected: NEECO II Area 2

Cabanatuan-Bulualto 69kV Line

Date/Time Out: Sept. 25, 2022 / 9:04 p.m.

Customer affected: NEECO I

Concepcion-Camiling 69kV Line

Date/Time Out: Sept. 25, 2022 / 10:16 p.m.

Customer affected: TARELCO I

Botolan-Castillejos 69kV Line

Date/Time Out: Sept. 26, 2022 / 12:44 a.m.

Customer affected: ZAMECO I, ZAMECO II

Hermosa-Floridablanca 69kV Line

Date/Time out: Sept. 26, 2022 / 2:12 a.m.

Customer affected: PELCO II

Labrador-Bolinao 69kV Line

Date/Time out: Sept. 26, 2022 / 5:55 a.m.

Customer affected: CENPELCO, PANELCO I

SOUTH LUZON

Famy-Comon 69kV Line

Date/Time Out: Sept. 25, 2022 / 7:18 p.m. (partially restored)

Customer affected: QUEZELCO II

Four (4) 230kV lines are unavailable, particularly the Mexico-Hermosa 230kV Line 1, San Rafael-Cabanatuan 230kV Line 1, Pantabangan-Cabanatuan 230kV Line, and Mexico-Concepcion 230kV Line 2.

NGCP clarified that the local distribution concerns should be addressed by utility concessionaires.

Meanwhile, Meralco said there were 51,773 power interruptions in its franchise area as of 6:00 a.m., down from the 1,226,867 total since Sunday.

Majority of households without power are in Bulacan, Rizal and Marikina, the utility distributor said.

"Our crews continue to work round the clock in order to restore power at the soonest possible time," Meralco said.

Typhoon Karding which barreled through central Luzon late Sunday is expected to exit the Philippine Area of Responsibility by Monday.

Typhoon Karding floods Bulacan towns

By: Raffy Santos

Manila — Several areas in the province of Bulacan experienced rising floodwaters as a result of typhoon Karding and the high tide, reports from the Provincial government showed Monday.

In Obando town, residents woke up to waist-deep waters that quickly receded, a result of the rains and high tide, plus the water release of several dams in nearby areas.

By mid morning, only ankle-deep water remained in the town's streets, with residents sweeping away debris and mud from their homes.

The head of the local disaster management team said they conducted rescue operations well into Monday morning.

"May mga na trap po sa fishpond na kailangan ilikas, nakuha naman namin sila," MDRRMO head Fabian Sto. Tomas said.

In nearby Bulakan town, overflowing fishpens flooded streets in some areas, making them impassable to light vehicles such as motorcycles.

Neighboring Hagonoy, Bulacan also suffered from ankle-deep floods, exacerbated by high tide conditions.

The Bulacan disaster management office said water releases and spillover from the Bustos and Ipo dams added to the rising floodwaters.

They expect waters to subside in the coming days, while evacuated residents in towns affected by flooding have started going home with all storm warning levels at the minimum.

Karding slightly weakened as it moved further away from the landmass of Luzon on Monday, state weather bureau PAGASA said.

The strongest tropical cyclone to hit the country this year dumped heavy rain and unleashed fierce winds as it swept across Luzon on Sunday, toppling trees and flooding low-lying communities. Karding slightly weakened as it moved further away from the landmass of Luzon on Monday, state weather bureau PAGASA said.

The strongest tropical cyclone to hit the country this year dumped heavy rain and unleashed fierce winds as it swept across Luzon on Sunday, toppling trees and flooding low-lying communities.

BLOOMBERG

[The World Is Too Busy to Do Its Climate Summit Homework](#)

By: Laura Millan Lombrana, John Ainger, and Jennifer A Dlouhy

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has brought the largest war to Europe in decades, sparked global food and energy crises, worsened inflation — and distracted leaders from the big climate promises they made last year at the COP26 meeting in Glasgow.

Only 19 out of the 193 countries that vowed to put forward more ambitious targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions at the UN-sponsored climate talks in Glasgow last November had done so by last Friday, the deadline set by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Of these, only Australia's plan will lead to more emissions cuts, while Indonesia's reflects a slight increase in ambition.

“That's overall very disappointing,” said Tom Evans, a climate diplomacy researcher at Brussels think tank E3G. “But the important thing to remember is that the focus this year is implementation — it's about how we deliver our commitments.”

And there is good news on that front. The US just passed the Inflation Reduction Act, which lays out the way to achieve its climate target of halving greenhouse gas emissions by the end of this decade, compared with 2005 levels. The European Union has so far managed to keep its mammoth package of green legislation on track, despite the war sending energy prices to record levels.

In fact, the bloc's move away from Russian fossil fuels may enable it to boost its headline target in the coming months. The EU's three main institutions — the Commission, Parliament and Council — have all agreed to boost ambition on renewables and energy efficiency by 2030. That could mean increasing by a couple more percentage points the EU's target for a 55% emissions cut by the end of the decade, compared with 1990 levels.

“Seeking commitment on ambition is looking at just one side of the coin,” Evans said. “We can't expect every country every year to come up with new targets — what's the point of setting a target if you can't deliver on it?”

Still, these developments don't mask the fact that world leaders have more urgent worries right now. Nationally Determined Contributions or NDCs, as countries' climate plans are known, are clearly not their top priority.

Under the Glasgow accord, countries that had not updated their climate plans were obligated to do so “as soon as possible” and all nations committed to “revisit and strengthen” their 2030 targets by the end of 2022. That means new documents could still be submitted, but they won't be incorporated in the UNFCCC's synthesis report, a calculation of future emissions and warming set to be published just before COP27.

Taking into account emissions targets set for 2030, the world would warm by 2.4°C by 2100, according to a June analysis by Climate Action Tracker, or CAT, which analyzes and ranks climate plans. Global leaders agreed to keep the level of warming well below 2°C when they signed the Paris Agreement in 2015. The nonprofit is planning to release an updated outlook ahead of COP27 in November.

Here's a look at the countries that did their homework — and the ones that didn't.

Australia

Of the 18 new climate plans submitted after COP26, only Australia's will lead to more emissions cuts. The country updated its climate target in June after the Labor Party and a number of pro-climate action independents won big in last May's elections. The government led by Prime Minister Tony Albanese is now targeting a 43% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by the end of this decade, compared with 2005 levels.

The target still lags behind those set by the US, the EU and the UK, and is rated "insufficient" by CAT. "Australia is still supporting new coal mines and expansions, as well as massive liquified natural gas developments," said Bill Hare, chief executive officer at Climate Analytics, one of the organizations behind CAT.

Brazil

South America's largest nation put forward a target that's actually weaker than the one it presented in 2016. The document has been submitted as deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon reached a record high.

"Under [Brazil president Jair] Bolsonaro, these NDCs have been essentially greenwashing," Evans said. "They've changed baselines and come up with ways to do creative accounting, to weaken targets and, at the same time, not pursue policies at home that could lead to achieving these targets in the first place."

The upcoming presidential election could change it all, with former president and candidate Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva vowing to reverse Bolsonaro's climate-skeptic policies. The latest polls show he's nearing the simple majority needed to win on the first round on Oct. 2.

Egypt

Africa's second-largest natural gas producer, and responsible for a third of the continent's consumption, did not set an overall target to cut emissions and made its goals conditional on international support. CAT ranked it as "highly insufficient," a worrying sign for the country hosting this year's climate talks.

India

India, the world's third-largest emitter, has committed to making renewable power meet 50% of the country's electricity needs by 2030. By the same year, it also sets out to lower its emissions per unit of Gross Domestic Product by 45%, compared with 2005. However, this will not necessarily reduce its overall carbon footprint.

Indonesia

In a last-minute submission on Friday, Indonesia boosted its 2030 target to "unconditionally" reduce emissions below business-as-usual levels from 29% to 31.89%. Although Indonesia's baseline, business-as-usual scenario has been criticized as being inflated, the more ambitious targets reflect modestly greater ambition, according to an informal, early assessment by environmentalists.

The country also said its next target will be in line with its 2060 net-zero goal — language that suggests that this pledge may fall short, but Indonesia is seeking to keep on track.

UK

Britain will keep its headline pledge to cut emissions by 68% by 2030, compared with 1990 levels, unchanged. Its new plan simply added more clarification on how it will get there and broadened the goal to incorporate overseas territories and crown dependencies.

While the UK's climate minister Graham Stuart was keen to tout that its emissions reduction target is the most ambitious of any major economy, there is concern among environmentalists and green investors that the country may backslide under new Prime Minister Liz Truss. She has pushed to boost fossil fuel production to help weather the energy crisis.

"After a summer of heatwaves, droughts and catastrophic floods across the world, the UK's update is little more than an emissions accounting exercise," said Rebecca Newsom, head of politics from Greenpeace UK. "The UK target may be better than many, but still fails to rise to what's needed to head off a climate catastrophe."

MIA

A large number of big emitters with outdated climate plans have not submitted new targets in time for the UNFCCC to include them in this year's estimate of future warming, which will be released just before COP27. Documents by Mexico and Turkey were nowhere to be seen, even if both had indicated earlier this year they would enhance their targets before the summit. Vietnam, Iran, Russia, Turkey, South Africa or South Korea haven't submitted new documents either.

"The gist of what Glasgow said was we're not yet on track," said David Waskow, director of the World Resources Institute's International Climate Initiative. While there's

been “modest movement,” he said, “there were missed opportunities, and clearly we need to galvanize much stronger action.”

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Opinion] Climate change and the heart agenda

By: Atty. Jose Ferdinand M. Rojas II

A few days ago, news about the fast rise—three times faster than the global average—of our sea level circulated around the media channels. Pagasa made this declaration, adding that coastal villages are at risk.

Everyone has known for a long time that climate change is happening, and yet we are still somewhat shocked when faced with information like this. It is what we should expect, actually, based on data from scientific research and studies. And that is why the approach to climate change is two-pronged: adaptation and mitigation. We prepare for disasters as we continue our efforts to mitigate the destructive effects of climate change.

How many COPs (Conference of the Parties) have there been? What are the gains made by each country, and specifically, our very own Philippines? On the climate front, what were the accomplishments of the Duterte administration, and presently, what is President Marcos' plan as far as disaster preparedness and climate mitigation are concerned? I know that recently, there was a coastal cleanup held at Manila Bay in celebration of International Coastal Cleanup Day. Shouldn't we be doing (a lot) more than cleaning up our coastlines? The next super typhoon may be around the corner, but are we—government and individuals—doing all that we can to protect lives in the face of impending climate-related disasters? If you visit the online spaces of climate agencies, you would notice that there are too many pictures of people posing at meetings and conferences and too few proofs of the actual action implementing the agreements in those meetings and conferences. As citizens of the world, we should be alarmed at this picture.

I was listening to a few talks at the Heart Mind Institute Summit held online very recently and one of the speakers, a young Filipina working in the climate change field, mentioned that human transformation is the lacking ingredient. There is really no shortage in strategies and policies—the problem, she said, is that these are not properly implemented mainly because of our limitations as human beings. The change needs to start from the heart. I believe that she is right.

Based on Pagasa's projections, the Philippines' temperature will increase by 4 degrees by the end of the 21st century, while the intensity of typhoons hitting the country will likewise continue to increase. Rosalina de Guzman, chief of Pagasa's climate data section, said that climate change mitigation should be "fully integrated into the planning process" of the government, including earmarking adequate funds to be able to address the impact of climate change and to build resilience among communities in low-lying and coastal areas. On the other hand, the public's role includes undertaking more serious and more meaningful efforts to "practice energy efficiency" and recycling, conserving water, and using mass transport, among others.

Knowing people's all-too-human behavior, we will not act until we are already struggling and our lives are in immediate danger. Faced with facts and warnings from scientists and experts, we continue to live our lives as if everything is fine and will be fine in the years to come. It isn't an issue any more of causing unnecessary panic, it is all about looking at hard facts and really doing concrete action to save our planet and ourselves.

BUSINESS WORLD

[Opinion] 'Let There Be Light'

By: Romeo L. Bernardo

As we approach the first 100 days of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos, Jr.’s term in office, I would like to share my reflections on the priorities of his administration, starting with the country’s energy priorities.

“The availability of cheap, reliable energy” according to President Marcos Jr. is a key component in the administration’s transformation plans for the country. This is essential to fuel an economy that grows at 5-6% per year, and registered 7.8% growth in the first half of 2022.

Getting this right will involve close coordination between the government and the private sector. We must have healthy and capable government institutions led by serious-minded people that will steward energy market improvements, attract new investment, and protect consumers and industry stakeholders.

Thus, in these first 100 days, defining the leadership and the people that will steer the Department of Energy (DoE), the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), and other agencies in the energy family are of utmost importance. This is especially true in our current energy context, including the possibility of an energy crisis ahead.

THE STRUGGLE

We find ourselves in a supply and demand situation that is tight. We see yellow and red alerts raised by National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP) becoming more frequent, with nine alerts so far this year in nine months vs. seven in all of 2021, and just two in 2020. These result from low power reserves and transmission line inadequacies.

We are experiencing the beginning of the end of Malampaya, our only indigenous source of gas. The impact of this may already be felt with the stoppage of dispatch since June of the country’s largest gas plant, the 1200-MW Ilijan Plant, following the contractual termination of a 25-year fuel supply agreement, begun in 1997. A moratorium on coal is also preventing development of new coal power plants; sensible from a climate perspective, challenging for a low-income country trying to promote investment and job creation for its people. We are experiencing renewable and other energy projects curtailed by a lack of transmission capacity. We run the risk of not enough energy supply and transmission capacity to serve the future needs of our country.

As a result of this, customers are experiencing a significant increase in their electric bills, up to 70% in some cases. This is due to an unprecedented rise in the cost of fossil fuels — coal and oil products, which fuel 55% of our power industry. This is driving inflation and creating pressure on the balance sheet of businesses and on the quality of life of people across the country.

Alongside these immediate challenges, the impacts of climate change continue to intensify and affect the Philippines disproportionately. We need to find solutions to decarbonize our energy system, while sustaining the economic prospects of our country. The key challenge facing our new administration is how to balance these two objectives — decarbonizing while promoting economic development — given that renewables today are not yet cheap enough or sufficiently scalable to replace thermal sources.

All in all, our new government has formidable challenges ahead and we must ensure that we have strong government institutions able to tackle them and avert an energy crisis.

NEW HOPE

While I hold these views dear, they are not mine alone. All of us want to see the Philippines on a trajectory that will bring us to upper middle-income status alongside our ASEAN peers.

It is in this context that I would like to highlight a recent declaration from the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), which expresses support for the new energy leaders. They will be at the forefront of this journey to build up their respective institutions and to carry out their formidable responsibilities as stewards of our energy system.

“MAP welcomes, and fully and wholeheartedly supports the appointments of Sec. Raphael Perpetuo Lotilla as the energy secretary and Atty. Monalisa Dimalanta as Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) Chairperson.

“Atty. Lotilla has had a distinguished career as a public servant for 22 years in various capacities — ranging from a professor of law in UP to undersecretary for socioeconomic planning at NEDA (National Economic and Development Authority) under three Presidents, President of PSALM (Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.) and then Secretary of Energy. In the international area, he had served as Regional Program Director of the Partnership in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia under the United Nations and as Philippine consultant on UNCLOS issues, a key nationally strategic concern.

“In the private sector, he has been an independent director in several public-listed conglomerates with diverse interests in power, banking and financial services, food manufacturing and distribution, real estate and infrastructure. More recently, he served as independent director in a power company, representing the interest of minority shareholders and external stakeholders.

“In his long career in public service, it is a matter of record that his performance has been exemplary, and without blemish, marked by objective professionalism, integrity, competence and dedication.

“Atty. Dimalanta has an outstanding career in law practice, primarily in the area of energy and power regulation, culminating in her chairing the National Renewable Energy Board, an institution created by law (Renewable Energy Law) from 2019 to 2021. For three months, until her appointment, she was affiliated with a power company, as head of legal and compliance where her role was primarily to ensure that company is in full conformity with all laws. She has likewise served with utmost distinction in all her work.

“Both Sec. Lotilla and Chairperson Dimalanta graduated from UP for their BA and Law degrees, and from the University of Michigan for their Masters degrees.

“In the less than two months that both Sec. Lotilla and Chairman Dimalanta have been in office, they have demonstrated clear vision and resolute action.”

This message of confidence from the MAP echoes public statements of many other stakeholders of repute including Tony La Viña, dean of the Ateneo School of Government, Jay Layug, president of the Developers of Renewable Energy for Advancement, Inc., and former Energy Undersecretary, ACEN CEO and President Eric Francia, former DoE Secretary Vince Perez, Anne Montelibano of the Philippine Independent Power Producers Association (PIPPA), Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri, and former Senate Committee on Energy Chairman Win Gatchalian, among many others.

I know Sec. Popo personally as we have worked together in various capacities including as counterpart undersecretaries in the Ramos administration and as co-Fellows of the Foundation for Economic Freedom, an advocacy group for good economic governance. And I can personally attest that he is a true public servant and a capable leader, which is what we need to fix the problems of our current system and prepare us for the future.

These two leaders are in keeping with the excellent appointments of professionals in other key economic agencies — notably the Departments of Finance, Trade and Industry, Budget and Management, Transportation, and Public Works and Highways, NEDA, and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Sec. Lotilla and Chairman Dimalanta have earned the trust of many leaders through their track record of service, fairness, and excellence. I certainly think that they deserve our support and full cooperation to help deliver on the transformation plans of the President in the energy sector. It is a difficult task, but by working together, we will find a way forward towards a future where the availability of cheap, reliable energy is real every day, for every Filipino.

CNN

Climate change is causing hurricanes to intensify faster than ever

By: Angel Fritz and Rachel Ramirez

Hurricane Ian is strengthening rapidly in the Caribbean as it passes over the ultra-warm waters of the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. The National Hurricane Center had predicted the system would rapidly intensify from a tropical storm to at least a category 4 hurricane in less than 72 hours.

It is an unprecedented forecast, experts told CNN, but one scientists say is becoming more likely as the climate crisis advances, pushing ocean temperatures higher and laying the groundwork for tropical storms to explode at breakneck pace into deadly major hurricanes.

Rapid intensification is precisely what it sounds like – a hurricane’s winds strengthening rapidly over a short amount of time. Scientists have defined it as a wind speed increase of at least 35 mph in 24 hours or less.

The phenomenon played out with breathtaking speed in the Philippines this weekend. Super Typhoon Noru exploded in strength on its final approach toward the Pacific island nation, going from the equivalent of a category 1 hurricane to a category 5 overnight as residents around Manila slept.

Noru’s rapid intensification right before landfall – which was not predicted – likely meant locals had no time prepare for the much stronger storm.

Hurricane Ian’s has been in the forecast for days, giving Cuba and Florida the benefit of time. Winds in the storm increased from 45 mph Sunday evening to 80 mph late Monday morning, and more strengthening is in the forecast. Ian could intensify into at least a category 4 before it makes landfall in Florida midweek.

Rapid intensification has historically been a rare phenomenon, according to Allison Wing, an assistant professor of atmospheric science at Florida State University.

It “is really sort of at the extreme end of how quickly storms can intensify,” Wing told CNN. “Only something like 6% or so of all forecast time periods have those types of rapid intensification rates observed associated with them. And so it’s something that’s by definition, a rare event. Sometimes it only happens a few times per season.”

But human-caused climate change is stacking the deck in favor of more intense storms. So not only are they generating more rainfall and larger storm surge – they are also more likely to be stronger and are intensifying faster.

“Climate change is increasing both the maximum intensity that these storms can achieve, and the rate of intensification that can bring them to this maximum,” said Jim Kossin, a senior scientist at the Climate Service. “The intensification rates in Noru and

Ian are good examples of very rapid intensification, and there have been many others recently.”

Two ingredients must come together for rapid intensification to occur, Kossin told CNN. The first is that upper-level winds around the hurricane need to be weak – strong winds can prevent a storm from intensifying or even tear a storm apart.

The second is that warm ocean water must extend well below the surface, going hundreds of feet deep, to provide enough fuel for the hurricane to strengthen.

More than 90% of global warming over the past 50 years has taken place in the oceans, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The past five years have been the warmest on record for the world’s oceans.

Scientists have shown humans are the dominant cause of the relentless warming trend. Planet-warming emissions from fossil fuels trap heat in the atmosphere, creating an energy imbalance. The oceans, in turn, absorb 90% of the excess heat, which has led to an alarming increase in temperature.

And much of that warming has happened in the top levels of the ocean where hurricanes get their energy, said Jeff Masters, a meteorologist at Yale Climate Connections.

“Hurricanes and typhoons are heat engines, which means they take heat energy from the oceans and convert it to the kinetic energy that are winds,” Masters told CNN. “So if you increase the amount of heat energy in the ocean by warming it up, you’re going to increase not only the maximum intensity they can get, but also the rate at which they get to that maximum intensity.”

A 2019 study found that Atlantic hurricanes in particular showed a “highly unusual” increase in rapid intensification from the 1980s to the early 2000s – a trend that could only be explained by human-caused climate change. And, concerningly, scientists found that the most significant changes were happening to the strongest storms, making the most life-threatening hurricanes even more dangerous.

“Climate change increases the odds that you’ll get a rapid intensifier,” Masters said.

Some of the United States’ most devastating recent hurricanes were ones that rapidly intensified right before landfall – something Hurricane Ian is not expected to do. Most recently, Hurricane Ida in 2021 strengthened from a category 1 to a strong category 4 in the 24 hours before it made landfall in Louisiana and left a trail of destruction in its wake from the Gulf Coast to the Northeast.

Forecasters are getting better at seeing the signs of this phenomenon before it happens, though, which gives people along the coast more time to prepare for the worst.

Kossin said there are several reasons for this. One is that meteorologists are becoming more confident in the computer forecast models, which are improving at seemingly light speed. The other is that they have seen more extreme cases of rapid intensification in recent years, which makes it easier to forecast them in the future.

Masters told CNN it all adds up to better forecasts.

“The forecasts are unprecedented primarily because the [National] Hurricane Center is getting better at doing their job,” Masters said. Weather models “have gotten so much better. And our techniques for forecasting are getting better.”

CNN PHILIPPINES

[13 years after 'Ondoy,' 'Karding'-hit Marikina residents seek temporary shelter anew; LGU touts better response](#)

By: Glee Jaela

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 26) — It has been 13 years since Tropical Storm Ondoy devastated parts of the country, including Marikina City in Metro Manila, which serves as a catch basin of rainwater coming from different areas.

Its residents already knew the drill, as the city government noted an unprecedented number of evacuees due to floodwaters brought by Typhoon Karding over the weekend.

Marikina City Mayor Marcy Teodoro said more than 5,000 families underwent preemptive evacuation since Sunday evening, equivalent to around 21,000 residents.

He even had to seek the help of some local parishioners to open their doors to residents needing temporary shelter, after a third alarm was raised at Marikina River when it breached 18 meters around midnight.

Around 2,000 families were still staying in evacuation sites as of Monday. But many of the displaced residents are daily wage earners who had to give up a day's worth of livelihood to protect themselves and their families from Karding's threat, the mayor said.

"Unprecedented ang number of evacuees that we had last night," Teodoro told CNN Philippines' The Source on Monday. "Perhaps, this is part of the culture of discipline and resiliency we have developed — we have evolved since Ondoy."

"Matatandaan natin (If we can recall), this is the 13th anniversary of Ondoy, the same date that we experienced Typhoon Karding," he added. "Secondly, [naging] super typhoon itong Karding kaya ang kamalayan ng mga tao mataas sa pagsisiguro sa kaligtasan nila. It's a collective action of the community to move out from their area to a safer ground."

Karding reached super typhoon category on Sunday morning and first made landfall in Quezon late afternoon. It weakened into a typhoon in the evening when it made its second landfall in Aurora. Classes and work in various parts of the country were suspended for the day.

The alert status at the Marikina River was downgraded to second alarm on Monday morning as floodwater slowly receded. Water level as of 10:30 a.m. was at 16 meters.

According to Teodoro, the impact of Ondoy and Karding are largely different, but disaster management and response also slightly improved with the city government's dredging efforts and drainage improvement projects.

"We were able to deepen and widen the river channel and improve the drainage outfall system of the city. Nilakihan na natin ang (we improved our) outfall drainage natin based on the volume of water we recorded during Ondoy," he said.

"Nakita natin, 'yung mga binaha ngayon 'yung mga laylayan na lang di katulad noong naranasang pagbaha na lampas ng unang palapag ng kabahayan, o 'yung mga bahay, lubog," he said. "Pero hindi natin ito nakita ngayon."

[Translation: Those who were affected by the flood were the ones near the river, unlike in Ondoy when floodwaters reached past the first floor of houses or houses were entirely submerged. We did not see that today.]

Teodoro said the city can definitely feel the impact of climate change, with Marikina's downstream river being a natural catchment of heavy rains.

To those who want to help, Teodoro advised the public to consider bringing cooked meals and clothing, as well as vitamins for the evacuees which can be consumed even after they have returned to their homes. He said the city government is capable of providing to needy residents, but its resources are limited, too. He added that aid may also be delivered directly to the affected communities instead of bringing them to evacuation sites.

The government listed 464 dead, 529 injured and 37 missing when Ondoy devastated the country on September 26, 2009. It wrecked ₱11 billion worth of agriculture and infrastructure, including schools, day care centers and health facilities.

[Elected officials show no urgency to protect environment — climate group](#)

By: Faith Yuen Wei Ragasa

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 26) — Elected officials are not showing signs of urgency in protecting the environment, a climate group said on Monday after Typhoon Karding wreaked havoc on local communities.

Nazrin Castro, manager of the Climate Reality Project Philippines, called for people in power to strictly implement existing policies and laws on climate action.

“Climate change is very urgent but we are not seeing urgency in terms of the way we implement climate change adaptation and climate resilience to our most vulnerable communities,” Castro told CNN Philippines’ The Final Word.

When asked why policies are not implemented properly, Castro said “it’s the will of our elected officials.”

“The laws are there but the will to really implement them, hindi natin nakikita ‘yun sa ating mga (we don’t see it in our) elected officials. We should band together, collectively call out — our government leaders, our decision makers — to implement these laws,” Castro said.

Castro said she was hopeful after hearing Marcos talk about climate change at the 77th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), but she said she became confused after his recent statement on Typhoon Karding.

“When I heard his speech in the United Nations General Assembly, I was really hopeful. He said the right words, calling out developed countries to drastically cut their emissions. But during the emergency meeting earlier, I was confused because he was just seeing climate change as a mere trend,” she said.

Marcos’ statement during a briefing with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) referred to Typhoon Karding’s strength and effects as a “trend,” which caught the attention of several netizens on social media.

“Is that the trend, ‘yan na ‘yung climate change? Wala naman tayong ganyan noon. Matagal na tayo nagbabantay ng bagyo, it’s not that...Hindi ganyan” Marcos said in the NDRRMC briefing.

[Translation: Is that the trend, is that climate change? We did not have these before. We have long been keeping watch on typhoons, it’s not that...it’s not like that.]

During his UNGA speech, the chief executive pushed for concrete steps to address climate change, which he described as the “greatest threat” to countries.

“There is no other problem so global in nature that it requires a united effort, one led by the United Nations,” Marcos said.

Castro said Typhoon Karding is not an isolated case of an intensified weather disturbance due to climate change, citing other destructive storms such as Ondoy and Yolanda.

“This will continue to happen because of the warming temperature and the warming planet, because we are so dependent on fossil fuel,” Castro said.

Environmental group Greenpeace Philippines earlier called on Marcos to direct his administration in reflecting his climate change demands to actual policies.

MANILA BULLETIN

Car-free days: Giving people a place to walk and breath clean air

Many countries around the world went car-free for a day last week to “inspire motorists” to leave their cars just for a day –to walk, cycle, or take public transportation to go to work, or do errands. The global movement is considered a great opportunity to lower air pollution and boost efforts to protect the environment.

That day is now known as World Car-Free Day. It became a global movement in 2000 to bring awareness on ways to help the environment. The initiative is promoted by the United Nations Environment Programme in its website. It was launched by a group known as Carbusters, now named the World Carfree Network.

Declaring a car-free day is not new; since the 1990s, carless days were observed in many countries, either covering the whole city or specific areas like heritage sites and market areas. The first car-free Sundays were observed in 1956 throughout Belgium in the Netherlands. A global movement to encourage all countries to observe it set Sept. 22 as World Car-Free Day.

The European Commission has even taken a step further by transforming the day into a complete mobility week.

In the Philippines, carless days are observed in many cities and towns where local government units have closed streets to traffic on Sundays.

In Pasig City, there are “People’s Streets” where weekday busy streets have become venues for fairs, play areas, or simply for pedestrians.

In 2019, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) encouraged carless Sundays in June to observe Environment Month.

Long before global warming came up, many towns had closed streets around their markets on Sundays to transform the streets into mini parks.

The benefits of car-free days have been measured in various ways. The impact differs from location to location, but the impact on this day is clear that the reduction in air pollutants was between 40 percent in Paris to 89 percent on the day of the car-free marathon in London, a report from the World Economic Forum said.

Other benefits have been anecdotal but still considered significant – being pedestrians, people were friendlier and more relaxed, they talked to each other, and children played freely in those public places where cars were not allowed to run.

Car-free zones or car-free days have a place in communities. First, it reduces air pollution and helps efforts in slowing down climate change. Motor vehicles emit carbon

dioxide and other greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming, according to studies.

Second, it focuses attention on creating more pedestrian-friendly city areas.

Third, walking or cycling gives the benefits of exercise, which is good for the body.

In Metro Manila where we don't even need official figures to tell us the heavy volume of motor vehicles on the roads that cause traffic– and serious air pollution – observing car-free days or car-free zones should not be an action declared only every so often. Government leaders should initiate moves to give people a place where they can walk and breathe clean air – at least once a week.

[The long overdue 'if and when dialogue' on climate change and water security](#)

By: Griselda Gay Santos

The week of September 19, 2022 has been a week of critical dialogues on a number of key areas of the sustainable development goals. In New York, it was the first time that President Marcos addressed the United Nations General Assembly in its 77th Session. In his speech, he highlighted climate change as the greatest global threat that warrants a global and united effort.

For instance, the Philippines is the 4th vulnerable country to climate change, net carbon sink. Philippines is among those nations that absorbs more carbon dioxide than it emits. President Marcos reiterates this uneven and historical injustice, where the least responsible suffer most. This is what he refers to as the “if and when” dialogue that has long since passed, a dialogue that needs to happen now.

On the home front, in the same week, five leading organizations came together to lead another critical, long overdue “if and when dialogue”. The Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines, Accra Law, Management Association of the Philippines, and The Manila Times, led by Water.org came together for the first time to tackle and discuss the “if and when” of water security. Like climate change, water security ought to be a dialogue that needs to happen now.

Approximately three hundred participants from public and private sector joined the Sustainable Path to Water Security for the Philippines forum on September 20, 2022. Opening the dialogue was Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno (via pre-recorded video). He highlighted the Philippines’ Water and Sanitation Roadmap that outlined the key reform areas needed, like regulatory and enabling environment and access to finance, to achieve sustainable access to safe water and sanitation. He emphasized the need to mobilize trillions to address the cost of achieving SDG6. There is a need to harmonize and orchestrate investments from private sector, international development partners and local investors, according to Secretary Diokno. In closing, he assured that in the Department of Finance’s capacity as Chair of the Administrator’s Economic Advisers Team, DOF stands ready to support all efforts towards shared goal of achieving universal access to clean water and fighting climate change at the soonest possible time.

The urgency to solve the impact of climate change and its adverse effects on water security was echoed by Mr. Carlos Vasquez, Chief of WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) Unit, UNICEF. According to Mr. Vasquez, the biggest externality affecting water security is climate change. Twenty million people a year are displaced globally by climate related events. Eighty percent of this, live in Asia and more and more, affecting the Philippines in the same proportion. Mr. Vasquez expounded on UNICEF’s Water Security for All Program. This program, among others, recognizes the importance of a climate resilient approach to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene.

Mayor Aristotle Aguirre of Mulanay Quezon. a first-class municipality with approximately 56,000 in population, 42,000 hectares land area (1/3 of Metro Manila), also joined the

forum. Mayor Aguirre is a newly elected mayor faced with the issue of contaminated water, ground water drying up and water from wells penetrated by salt water. Physical infrastructure is also not up to par with uncalibrated water meters. Although potential alternative sources are available like the Mulanay River, access to finance is a major concern with majority of its residents living below the poverty line.

It is hopeful to note though that at the local level, there are existing enabling policies and market-driven solutions to address sustainable access to safe water and sanitation in the Philippines, particularly the situation of Mulanay, which I believe is representative of a number of municipalities across the Philippines. On the enabling policy side, the office of Governor Hermilando Mandanas joined the forum to educate many about the Mandanas ruling. Mandanas ruling provides LGU with administrative autonomy to identify priority programs. More specifically, it provides for a bigger Internal Revenue Allotment based on overall national taxes that can potentially mean more financial resources to address water and sanitation issues.

Through the participation of Water.org in the forum, market-driven solutions were presented. Water.org is an international NGO co-founded by Gary White, an engineer and Hollywood Actor Matt Damon. Among others, Water.org is focused on mobilizing financing to the water and sanitation sector through technical assistance to financial institutions to adapt a loan product dedicated to WASH and to water utilities, especially the small ones, to help increase their efficiencies and as a result enhance their bankability to access finance. In the days immediately following the forum, Water.org and private sector players in water and sanitation sat down to continue the dialogue, identifying specific points of collaboration.

“If and when” dialogues are hard to appreciate. In most cases, it is only until the inevitable happens then the reality of “if and when” dialogues become very relevant. It is truly my hope to see forums that are beyond the showcase of knowledge but rather forums that pave the way for a sustained “if and when” dialogue that lead to concrete collaborations between public and private sector especially on water security and climate change.

NBN NEWS

[Climate change could wipe \\$108 billion from U.S. property market, study finds](#)

By: Alex Lubben

Sea level rise will flood huge swaths of the country and submerge billions of dollars' worth of land, according to a new report. An analysis from Climate Central, a nonprofit research group, put a price tag on just how much all that land is worth — and how much local governments stand to lose when it goes underwater.

The report found that nearly 650,000 privately owned parcels of land over more than 4 million acres will fall below tide lines within the next 30 years. The analysis indicates that sea level rise could reduce the value of that private land by more than \$108 billion by the end of the century.

Because all land below the tide line is, by law, state-owned, the encroachment of the tides could essentially vaporize huge amounts of private, taxable wealth. That, in turn, will decrease property tax revenue substantially in coastal areas, which experts caution could ultimately bankrupt local governments.

For millennia, tide lines haven't really budged. Nor has the notion that any land under water is public, which is an "idea that goes way back to Roman times," said Peter Byrne, the director of the Georgetown Environmental Law and Policy Program. "The tidelands, the sea, they're open to the public because they're navigable. They're inherently public."

But as the planet heats, the old tide lines are climbing uphill. The study found that an area the size of the state of New Jersey that is now above water will be submerged at high tide in 2050.

"Sea level rise is ultimately going to take land away from people," said Don Bain, a senior adviser with Climate Central, who wrote the report. "That's something we haven't come to grips with."

Losing such a huge amount of private land over a few years could have far-reaching consequences. Insurance companies have already started to pull out of coastal markets or are raising their premiums substantially. Banks and other financial institutions are starting to look at whether it makes sense to lend to homeowners and businesses along the coastline.

All told, places that are currently livable will become increasingly hard to live in. Here's what this might mean for local governments.

Risk isn't evenly distributed

Climate Central found that, unsurprisingly, the effects of sea level rise aren't evenly distributed across the U.S. The Atlantic and Gulf Coasts will feel its effects more than other parts of the country. In many areas along the coast, sea levels will rise significantly faster because land is sinking as sea levels rise.

By 2050, Climate Central estimates that about 75% of Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, will be underwater. In Hudson County, New Jersey, \$2.4 billion worth of taxable property will be submerged. In Galveston County, Texas, more than 4,200 buildings that are currently above sea level will be at least partially underwater.

“Climate impacts are not going to happen far off into the future, but within the life of the mortgage on your house,” said Anna Weber, a policy analyst with the Natural Resources Defense Council.

While sea level rise is one of the major impacts of the climate crisis, it’s not the only one. Supercharged hurricanes and wildfires will also cause displacement and will contribute to the erosion of local tax bases as people move to safer areas. More frequent intense rainstorms are expected to cause more inland flooding in many parts of the U.S. Coastal counties won’t be the only places affected.

“These numbers are relatively conservative,” said Jesse Keenan, a professor of sustainable architecture at Tulane University, who was not involved with the Climate Central study. “That’s what should scare people.”

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Karding batters 600,000 people living below poverty line

By: Cristina Eloisa Baclig

Manila, Philippines—Typhoon Karding (international name: Noru) pummeled Luzon on Sunday (Sept. 25), where a little over 600,000 people, based on estimates made by a United Nations (UN) agency, live below the poverty line.

Hours after Karding morphed into a super typhoon, it made landfall in Burdeos, Quezon province at 5:30 PM. Around 9 PM, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said Karding weakened into a typhoon as it made its second landfall in the vicinity of Dingalan, Aurora.

According to UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA), which monitored the impact of Karding on poor communities in the Philippines, at least 689,000 people living below the poverty line were expected to be further hammered by the strong typhoon.

In its Joint Analysis of Disaster Exposure (JADE) report, UN-OCHA detailed that out of the total vulnerable population on Karding's path, 223,236 were children below age 15, 432,692 were adults aged 15-65 years old, and 33,072 were elderly or those above the age of 65.

The vulnerable population, according to UN-OCHA, was estimated based on pre-existing socio-economic conditions.

The UN agency also reported that 6.8 million people were living in areas worst-hit by Karding, while 12.7 million reside in areas on the typhoon's path.

Areas hit included those that experienced moderate wind damage or worse. Worst-hit areas were those that saw widespread damage or worse.

The UN-OCHA report underscored the number of people living in areas worst-hit and hit by Karding—including those living in utter poverty before the typhoon struck—and cities expected to experience widespread and catastrophic damage.

These cities include:

Angeles City, Pampanga: 340,878 (people living in areas on Karding path), 340,878 (people living in worst-hit areas), 16,703 (vulnerable people in worst-hit areas)
Tarlac City, Tarlac: 322,078 (people living in areas on Karding path), 322,078 (people living in worst-hit areas), 58,296 (vulnerable people in worst-hit areas)
Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija: 297,833 (people living in areas on Karding path), 295,820 (people living in worst-hit areas), 66,855 (vulnerable people in worst-hit areas)

San Fernando City, Pampanga: 295,506 (people living in areas on Karding's path), 295,506 (people living in worst-hit areas), 14,480 (vulnerable people in worst-hit areas)
Malolos City, Bulacan: 252,152 (people living in areas on Karding path), 246,566 (people living in worst-hit areas), 11,095 (vulnerable people in worst-hit areas)
Initial information and data from the Philippines' National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) were inconclusive about whether the UN-OCHA projection came to reality.

However, early information and numbers provided by the disaster-mitigating agency showed Karding's impact to be massive and widespread.

Low-income families hit by Karding

Based on data from the Department of Social Welfare and Development's (DSWD), as of 6 AM on Sept. 26, a total of 2,408 families or 9,765 persons were displaced or on the path of Karding in 154 villages in the regions of Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, MIMAROPA (Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan) and Bicol.

In an earlier report, DSWD said a total of 32,278 low-income families across eight regions—Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Region I (Ilocos Region), Region II, Region III, CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon), MIMAROPA, Region VI (Western Visayas), Region VII (Central Visayas)—were expected to experience accumulated rainfall of at least 100 mm.

Displaced population

At a briefing on Monday (Sept. 26) morning, Social Welfare Secretary Erwin Tulfo reported to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. that the DSWD and Office of Civil Defense evacuated between 10,000 and 13,000 families.

Tulfo added that food packs and other relief items had already been distributed to the displaced families.

The department's latest report showed that 2,238 families or 9,103 persons are taking temporary shelter in 194 evacuation centers in Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, MIMAROPA, and Bicol Region.

At least 132 families or 594 persons are staying with relatives or friends outside evacuation centers.

In total, 2,370 families or 9,697 persons were displaced in Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, MIMAROPA, and Bicol Region.

The DSWD said a total of P21,402,000.20 worth of assistance was provided to the families—P13,601,000.20 from the DSWD and P7,800,000 from local governments.

At the same briefing, Local Government Secretary Benjamin Abalos Jr. said a total of 19,368 families or 74,542 individuals had been evacuated in eight regions.

These include CAR (201 families, 758 persons), Ilocos Region (231 families, 821 persons), Cagayan Valley (123 families, 390 persons), Central Luzon (6,970 families, 25,358 persons), CALABARZON (3,460 families, 13,892 persons), MIMAROPA (148 families, 272 persons), National Capital Region (NCR) (8,233 families, 33,043 persons), and Bicol Region (2 families, 8 persons).

UN-OCHA estimated that at least 1.4 billion calories and 2.1 million liters of water per day, and 2.1 million square feet of shelter are required for those displaced by Karding

Affected rice and corn crops

According to UN-OCHA, as harvest season is approaching for the areas that had been hit, at least 1.5 million hectares of rice farms and 218,000 hectares of corn may have suffered damage or expected to take a hit in production.

These account for 75 percent of all rice farms and 52 percent of all corn farms.

“FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) is closely coordinating with the Department of Agriculture (DA) of storm’s impact on the agriculture sector,” UN-OCHA said.

The figures were similar to those in a bulletin released by the DA on Sunday noon.

The department said it was in coordination with LGUs and continues to issue advisories to other government agencies and farm leaders and communities.

RAPPLER

[\[Opinion\] Where are we, 13 years after Ondoy?](#)

By: John Leo Algo

September 26 marks the 13th year since the Philippines was hit by Ondoy. Four years before the onslaught of Yolanda, this was the storm that first introduced climate change as a threat to the minds of millions of Filipinos. Images of cars flipped over, and celebrities stuck on roofs waiting to be rescued, exemplified the shock that spread throughout the country.

Since this time, the importance of climate action and disaster risk reduction has grown in local and national governance, business operations, and community initiatives. Yet as we are painfully reminded of every time, words are different from action.

Has the Philippines improved its disaster risk reduction management since Ondoy?

Pros and cons

Government data shows that deaths and injuries due to weather disturbances have decreased nationwide since 2013, the year when Yolanda killed more than 6,300 people and injured more than 28,000 others. No storm since then has come close to reaching this death tally, with the most being that of storm Vinta that caused 165 fatalities in 2014.

It can be claimed that this is a good indicator that our nation has learned its lessons from past mistakes. In some ways, this has been the case.

There have been significant improvements in weather forecasting and early warning systems, as evidenced by the stark differences between how PAGASA reports weather updates more than a decade ago and how they do so now. Local government units (LGUs) have also improved their evacuation strategies in times of emergencies, with residents being more cooperative during such processes.

Disaster risk reduction has also been named as a priority in national governance, as seen during the most recent State of the Nation Address. A strong commitment from current and future administrations is key to not only implement effective disaster-related solutions, but also shape public opinion for mobilizing resources and strengthening cooperation to avoid or reduce vulnerabilities and risks.

However, other data indicate that relying on this interpretation alone is misleading when determining overall progress in this field. For instance, there is an average of 167 deaths per year due to storms from 2014 to 2020.

The concept of zero casualty is integral to any effective disaster risk reduction management. Any loss of life only means that there were failures in the local disaster management strategies that need to be addressed immediately.

What is not given as much attention to when highlighting their impacts in narratives are the millions of Filipinos affected by these typhoons (and thousands injured) that lead to economic and social loss and damage, which in some cases are irreversible.

Billions of pesos lost in infrastructure and agricultural assets are not easily recovered, either. For all of the claims of the government lacking resources for one reason or another, failure to manage risks diverts key resources that could have been used to push our nation to sustainable development.

The 10 most destructive storms in Philippine history in terms of damage to property have all occurred after Ondoy. Aside from Yolanda, which left P95.5 billion in loss and damage, these occurred as early as Pepeng in 2009 (P27.3 billion) and as recent as Odette last year (P51.8 billion).

For a nation that has always been on the path of an average of 20 storms every year, the fact that the loss and damage from typhoons seem to keep increasing suggests two possibilities. Either climate change impacts are intensifying to the point that current resources and capacities are simply not enough, or there is a lack of sufficient focus and political will to address gaps in governance and program implementation.

The truth is a combination of both of these statements, yet the impact is what matters more.

Closing the gaps

Any harm done to individuals due to climate-related disasters may now be viewed as human rights violations to which LGUs, national government agencies, and corporations causing climate change can be held legally liable. This is reinforced by the United Nations' recent declaration of the universal right to a healthy environment, and the findings of the Commission on Human Rights' inquiry on fossil fuel corporations.

The Philippine government must also shift away from its emphasis on response and rehabilitation and instead prioritize the stages of disaster prevention and preparedness, as is recommended by scientists. The successful work of civil society groups in blocking the creation of a Department of Disaster Resilience, which would have centralized powers related to disaster management and focused too much on response, is a vital step forward in this potential shift.

While we recognize that there has been progress in these stages, there is still more work to be done to increase disaster resilience in the country. Among these is enhancing the capacity of poorer LGUs to implement disaster risk reduction plans, monitor the progress of enforcement, improve data collection from said activities, and recognize how dangerous the climate crisis can truly be.

Another step forward involves improving the utilization of Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Funds and giving LGUs more awareness and access to other sources of financing. Among these is the People's Survival Fund, intended to enhance the ability of

communities to adapt to climate change impacts like more intense typhoons that can cause catastrophes.

The onslaught of Ondoy first opened our eyes to the reality of the climate crisis. While the Philippines has made progress in resolving some of the issues on disaster risk reduction, we still have a long way to go to become the right kind of resilient.

Being resilient does not mean simply reacting to and smiling through every disaster; it means initiating actions to avoid or minimize risks. It is long overdue for us to learn from our mistakes.

REUTERS

Swathes of land swamped in Philippines after typhoon

By: Adrian Portugal and Neil Jerome Morales

Bulacan, Philippines, Sept 26 (Reuters) - Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr conducted an aerial survey of damage on Monday brought by typhoon Noru, which left heavy flooding across several northern provinces as authorities rushed to get aid to thousands of evacuees.

Five rescue workers were killed in Bulacan province, its Governor Daniel Fernando told DZMM radio, while residents there were seen wading through waist-deep waters and other stranded on rooftops.

Floods submerged swathes of farmland and communities in the north, video and images shared by the president's office showed, after the category 3 typhoon dumped heavy rains and brought strong winds after making landfall at the weekend.

"This is the worst flooding that happened here," resident Elpidio dela Cruz told Reuters in Bulacan, standing in a knee-deep water outside his house.

"The water reached the second floor," he added.

Another Bulacan resident, Teody Simbulan, appealed for aid. "People here need help like food, water and medicine," he added.

The Philippines, an archipelago of more than 7,600 islands, sees an average of 20 tropical storms yearly. In 2013, Typhoon Haiyan, one of the most powerful tropical cyclones ever recorded, killed 6,300 people.

Marcos ordered supplies to be airlifted and equipment be provided to help the cleanup in worst-affected communities. He also directed officials to provide emergency power to cut-off areas.

Typhoon Noru weakened after passing through the Philippines on Sunday night and was headed out over the South China Sea towards Vietnam, where authorities were racing to prepare for its arrival late on Tuesday.

The government has warned of the threat of Noru, anticipating what it said was one of the biggest typhoons to hit Vietnam in 20 years.

Photos from state media showed people rushing to fortify homes, anchor boats and stock up on food.

Schools have been closed and boat owners ordered to stay ashore in central provinces, while the government said it was ready to evacuate about a million people if necessary.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Philippines, world leaders urged to ramp up climate action after 'Karding' onslaught](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

MANILA, Philippines — The onslaught of Super Typhoon Karding (Noru) is a reminder that the Philippine government and the world leaders need to act fast to fight climate change and mitigate its impacts, groups said Monday.

Karding, the strongest tropical cyclone to hit the country this year, ravaged the agricultural region of Central Luzon as it toppled trees and power lines and flooded low-lying communities.

The Philippines, one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change, is affected by an average of 20 cyclones a year. Scientists warn that storms are becoming more intense as the planet continues to heat up because of human-induced climate change.

“Super Typhoon Karding is another grim reminder that the climate crisis is here and now, and that national and world leaders need to step up in terms of proactive action to mitigate and prepare for its impacts,” said Jon Bonifacio, national coordinator of Kalikasan People’s Network for the Environment.

He also stressed the need to rehabilitate and conserve natural barriers such as the Sierra Madre mountain range. Sierra Madre, the longest mountain range in the Philippines and the site of nearly half of the country’s surviving old-growth forest, historically serves as a buffer against storms that develop in the Pacific Ocean.

Sierra Madre remains under heavy threat of illegal logging, mining activities, and development projects.

“In this light, destructive projects such as the Kaliwa-Kanan Dam and attacks on conservation areas like Masungi Georeserve are direct threats to the lives of millions of Filipinos, and the Marcos administration, if it is sincere in its promise of climate action, should put a stop to this,” Bonifacio said.

Climate emergency, loss and damage

Aksyon Klima Pilipinas, a civil society network for climate action, called on the national and local governments to declare a climate emergency, and mobilize more resources and support to scale up adaptation and mitigation programs nationwide.

The climate emergency declaration, according to the group, should reduce the country’s reliance on planet-warming fossil fuels, uphold climate justice, and ramp up actions to avoid and minimize loss and damage.

Loss and damage refers to the costs that nations are already facing because of a warming world. According to the Department of Finance, climate-related hazards have caused P506.1 billion in losses and damage to the country from 2010 to 2020.

AKP stressed that loss and damage should be part of the agenda in COP27 climate talks in Egypt this November. Developed nations blocked the establishment of a funding facility that will help vulnerable countries like the Philippines and instead opted to initiate a dialogue on the topic in future talks.

“With every super typhoon or another extreme weather event striking the nation comes more loss and damage, some of which can never be recovered, and the cries of the earth and the poor that grow louder and louder,” it said.

RE-powered future

The Power for People Coalition reiterated its call for the Philippines to be fully powered by renewable energy as the country reels from the impacts of Karding.

“We know the climate emergency is happening because the world continues to use fossil fuels like coal and natural gas, despite warnings aired for decades that it would lead the world to disaster,” said Gerry Arances, convenor of P4P.

“Yet despite our country being a punching bag for supertyphoons, successive governments, including the current Marcos administration, continue to expand the use of fossil fuels for our country. How many more supertyphoons must hit us before our government wakes up to facts? It’s time to act, and act quickly,” he added.

The Philippines generates 76.1% of its power from coal and natural gas. While the Marcos administration has made a shift to RE sources a priority, his government is pushing for the development of natural gas — or fossil gas — that groups said may hamper a genuine transition to clean energy.

Greenpeace Philippine Lea Guerrero also said the Philippines should lead the call to hold the world’s biggest climate polluting business accountable and prioritize long-term, coherent plans for climate action.

“If the climate crisis is our new normal, it’s time to ask ourselves if this is something we want to merely accept and endure year in and year out—or if we want to call for accountability from those most responsible for carbon emissions, particularly fossil fuel companies,” she said.

State of calamity in Nueva Ecija as 'Karding' leaves behind ruined crops, damaged structures

Manila, Philippines — The provincial government of Nueva Ecija has declared a state of calamity due to damage to crops and livelihood caused by Typhoon Karding.

A declaration allows the use of calamity funds and imposes a price freeze on basic goods.

"Prayoridad ng Pamahalaang Panlalawigan ang mga nasalanta sa sektor ng agrikultura, mga nawasak na tahanan, at ang agarang pagbabalik ng supply ng kuryente," Gov. Aurelio Umali said in a Facebook post announcing the declaration by the provincial government.

(The priority of the provincial government is addressing the damage to the agricultural sector, the destroyed homes and the immediate restoration of power.)

In its resolution declaring the state of calamity, the provincial board noted that Nueva Ecija — which has five cities and 27 towns — is among the provinces "severely hit" by the typhoon.

It also said, citing data from local government offices, that typhoon caused "huge damages on the crops and livelihoods of Novo Ecijanans" as well as to infrastructure in the province.

Initial Department of Agriculture estimates put damage to agriculture at P141.38 million, with rice, corn and other high-value crops across 16,200 hectares of farmland left unusable in the wake of the typhoon. The DA based the estimate on reports from the Cordillera Administrative Region, Ilocos Region, Central Luzon and Calabarzon.

The Office of Civil Defense, citing initial reports, said the number of Filipinos affected by the typhoon is "very small" and attributed this to preparations by local governments and by individual residents as 'Karding' approached Luzon.

"Patuloy po tayong magdasal para sa mabilis na pagbangon ng Nueva Ecija (Let us continue to pray for the quick recovery of Nueva Ecija)," Umali said.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

ABS CBN

[Calls mount to save Sierra Madre after Karding onslaught](#)

Manila -- Calls are mounting to save the Sierra Madre mountains from deforestation a day after typhoon Karding lashed parts of central and southern Luzon on Sunday and left at least six people dead.

As the country marked Save Sierra Madre Day on Monday, netizens took to social media to call on government as well as every Filipino to take steps to protect the Philippines' longest mountain range.

In 2012, then President Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino proclaimed every Sept. 26th of the year as Save Sierra Madre Day.

Some enjoined the public to sign a petition against the Kaliwa Dam project, which some groups say will affect the lives of people residing near the Kaliwa River.

Environmental advocacy groups encouraged the public to take part in efforts to save the Sierra Madre from deforestation.

"The Climate Change Commission (CCC) encourages everyone to participate in activities geared toward the conservation of the Sierra Madre, which include reforestation activities and campaigning against unsustainable projects that threaten the mountain range," Philippine Parks and Biodiversity said in a Facebook post.

ABS-CBN resident meteorologist Ariel Rojas said that the Sierra Madre helped lessen the destructive power of Karding.

"When the storm passed the Sierra Madre in the Nueva Ecija area, parang lumiit yung blob - kung san naka-concentrate yung malakas na pag-ulan (the blob--the area where strong rains are concentrated--seemed to have shrunk)," he said in a TeleRadyo interview.

The Sierra Madre was a trending topic on Twitter over the weekend, with many social media users pointing out how the mountain range had again served as a natural shield against typhoons and floods.

Speed, Sierra Madre dulled Karding's power: meteorologist

The destructive power of super typhoon Karding (international name: Noru) in the Philippines was lessened by 2 factors: its speed and the Sierra Madre, a meteorologist said Monday.

ABS-CBN News resident meteorologist Ariel Rojas said Karding showed explosive intensification while at sea Saturday night, turning it into a super typhoon before it hit land.

Rojas said the typhoon's rainband decreased once it hit the Sierra Madre, the longest mountain range in the Philippines.

"When the storm passed the Sierra Madre in the Nueva Ecija area, parang lumiit yung blob - kung san naka-concentrate yung malakas na pag-ulan," he said in a TeleRadyo interview.

(When the storm passed the Sierra Madre in the Nueva Ecija area, the blob where the heavy rains are concentrated shrank.)

He added that the typhoon's interaction with land has a weakening effect due to disruption of wind circulation.

The Sierra Madre was a trending topic on Twitter over the weekend, with many social media users pointing out how the mountain range had again served as a natural shield against typhoons and floods coming from the Pacific Ocean.

Rojas said Karding also moved at 20 kilometers across Central Luzon, which was relatively fast for a typhoon.

"Ang Central Luzon mabilis siyang tawirin kasi walang bundok. Pagkatawid ng Sierra Madre, dere-derecho na siya. Mas bumilis pa siya nung nasa dagat, 30 kph," he said.

(Central Luzon is easy to cross because it has no mountains. After passing through Sierra Madre, it went straight and further accelerated once it reached the sea, at around 30 kph.)

On Sept. 26, after Karding ripped through parts of Luzon, environmental advocacy groups encouraged the public to take part in efforts to save the Sierra Madre from deforestation.

In 2012, then-President Benigno S. Aquino III declared Sept. 26 the Save Sierra Madre Day, to remember the flood from Typhoon Ondoy in 2009, which was attributed to the deforestation and destruction of the Sierra Madre.

"The Climate Change Commission (CCC) encourages everyone to participate in activities geared toward the conservation of the Sierra Madre, which include

reforestation activities and campaigning against unsustainable projects that threaten the mountain range," Philippine Parks and Biodiversity said in a Facebook post.

Rojas said 2 or 3 storms could enter the Philippine area of responsibility in October with another 1 or 2 each in November and December.

He said authorities must prepare for storms in the last quarter of the year since these usually hit land and pass through Central or Southern Luzon, the Visayas, and Northern Mindanao.

MANILA BULLETIN

[\[Opinion\] The urgency of obtaining climate justice now](#)

As Typhoon Karding battered the country with strong winds and heavy rains, other parts of the world also took a beating — Storm Fiona ravaged Canada’s east coast with terrifying winds, a Category 3 hurricane devastated Florida, while 64 percent of Europe experienced drought, something that appeared to be the worst in at least 500 years. These were disparate occurrences, but all have one thing in common — they were “influenced” in one way or another by climate change.

Because of man’s economic activity, fueled largely by the burning of fossil fuel and cutting down large swaths of forests, the world is warmer than it has ever been. A warming world increases the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events. Case in point is Typhoon Karding, as it suddenly gained strength upon entering the country with its “explosive intensification.” Weather scientists have suggested that in order for explosive intensification to occur, several conditions take place, and among them — water temperatures must be warm.

Typhoon Karding is not an isolated event, and sadly, will not be the last of its kind to enter the country. Climate change jumpstarts a chain of events including a rise in the sea level, rising temperatures, and heavy rainfall. Our country’s location also makes us more vulnerable and our defenseless coastlines make them prone to flooding. Storm surges affect informal sector members who rely on agriculture and fishing. Extreme rainfall, meanwhile, causes not only floods but also landslides, destroying houses, roads, and infrastructure.

It is therefore not only timely, but also appropriate, that the Philippines demands climate justice at the rostrum of the United Nations (UN). During last week’s UN General Assembly, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. called for climate justice and unlocking of climate finance for vulnerable and at-risk nations. He said, “Climate change is the greatest threat affecting our nations and peoples. There is no other problem so global in nature that it requires a united effort, one led by the UN. The effects of climate change are uneven and reflect an historical injustice: Those who are least responsible suffer the most.”

The President noted that the country is a “net carbon sink,” which means we absorb more carbon dioxide than we emit. “Yet, the country is the fourth most vulnerable to climate change.”

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) lauded the President’s call and hoped that it “sets the groundwork for principled global climate action.” “We have a strong and resonant voice for climate justice to make sure that the global community urgently responds to the needs of the times,” according to the CCC. “The Philippines is working with other nations to ensure allocation for adaptation is doubled, and that climate change-related losses and damages are funded by developed nations based on commitments under the Paris Agreement.”

In the upcoming Conference of Parties (COP 27) that will be held in Egypt in November, the Philippines will “continue to push for the delivery of climate finance that is needs-based, anchored on the principles of climate justice and equity.”

As stressed by the President, calling for climate justice is not just about financial compensation or sharing of technology, as “injustice must be corrected, and those who need to do more must act now.” As Typhoon Karding exits the country, we should not be complacent. Let’s start to raise our voices and call for climate justice. This is one that all of us, 110 million Filipinos, can stand behind as we only have one planet to call home.

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