



NEWS ROUNDUP

27 SEPTEMBER 2023 [07:50 am]

- Dam rehab to aid flood control, agri—MWSS
- Zero Waste PH's mission: A trash-free society becomes reality
- 'Climate Finance vital to energy transition'
- IEA says route to net zero requires more cash and less politics
- Renewable energy-centered WV pushed
- Green group calls for eco-friendly campaign ahead of BSKE
- Countries eye cooperation with China in weather tech to address climate change challenges
- Advocates urge prioritization of active mobility to combat air pollution
- Recycling plastic not enough, warns UN environment chief

MANILA BULLETIN

[Dam rehab to aid flood control, agri—MWSS](#)

By: Gabriell Christel Galang

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) said rehabilitating the dams is one of the many testaments to its initiatives in water management.

[Zero Waste PH's mission: A trash-free society becomes reality](#)

By: Mat. T. Richter

In a startling projection for 2030, the Commission on Audit anticipates an annual solid waste production of a staggering 19.76 million metric tons in the country, posing a grave threat to the environment.

MANILA STANDARD

['Climate Finance vital to energy transition'](#)

By: Lidy Nacpil

Last Sunday, we took part in the historic climate march in New York and added our voices to the urgent call to end fossil fuels.

NIKKEI ASIA

[IEA says route to net zero requires more cash and less politics](#)

Record growth in clean energy technology, including solar panels and electric vehicles, means it is still possible to limit global warming to 1.5 C, the International Energy Agency said on Tuesday.

PANAY

[Renewable energy-centered WV pushed](#)

The Department of Energy (DOE) during the 3rd Quarter Regional Development Council (RDC) 6 meeting revealed that Western Visayas is poised as the Renewable Energy (RE) center of the country with a total of 113 renewable energy service contracts already awarded.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Green group calls for eco-friendly campaign ahead of BSKE](#)

By: Che Palicte

The Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability Inc. (IDIS) urged local candidates on Tuesday to prioritize ecologically-friendly campaign materials and strategies.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Countries eye cooperation with China in weather tech to address climate change challenges](#)

Several countries are looking to cooperate with China on meteorological technology to address the climate change challenges they are facing.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Advocates urge prioritization of active mobility to combat air pollution](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Prioritizing active forms of mobility and improving the public transportation system will help reduce emissions that cause air pollution and contribute to climate change, a coalition of sustainable transport advocates said Tuesday.

[Recycling plastic not enough, warns UN environment chief](#)

By: Amélie Bottolier-Depois

With the production of plastic on the rise worldwide and creating ever more pollution, the UN environment chief warned that humanity cannot just recycle its way out of the mess, and she called for a total rethink about the way we use plastics.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

MANILA BULLETIN

Dam rehab to aid flood control, agri—MWSS

By: Gabriell Christel Galang

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) said rehabilitating the dams is one of the many testaments to its initiatives in water management.

In a forum on Monday, Sept. 25, four Philippine water delegates discussed possible ways and strategies to better manage water with the Danish Ambassador. This is so that water companies would be able to address certain problems with the help of Danish solutions.

With the proactive measures on dam rehabilitation, MWSS Administrator Leonor C. Cleofas explained that this provides a solution to flooding.

“We want to help them rehabilitate the dams so that we can obtain more water when there is flooding, and then we can use it to mitigate the flood, make it potable, and also [aid with] the irrigation,” she said.

In essence, dams act as water storage which also redirects the floodwater to different uses, without going to waste.

Cleofas also noted that managing this would also help with agricultural irrigation.

Danish Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin adds to this thought by advising free water should be given to the agriculture sector.

“Most of agriculture [in different countries] gets water for free. But water [in the Philippines] is not for free. And it does not create sound incentive mechanisms,” he pointed out.

Although Denmark is not big on dam regulation, Mellbin shared that they are more efficient with utilizing groundwater. Groundwater is supplied from springs and deep wells, which are also observed to be operational for areas in Bulacan.

“Here in the Philippines, some of the water districts are relying on groundwater, especially Malolos,” said Cleofas.

When asked if this groundwater system could be applied in Metro Manila, Cleofas replied that this would not be efficient.

Meanwhile, the private utility company Richli Water highlighted the environmentally sustainable measures for the province of Bohol.

Richli Water President Ralph B. Lim explained that Bohol uses rivers and springs, which are used as potable water.

“I’m happy to share that we are using surface water, as compared to groundwater in Denmark. But of course, the groundwater over there [in Denmark] is much cleaner and it’s not as depleted as it is here in the Philippines,” said Lim.

When asked about future water management investments, Danish Ambassador Mellbin hoped that prospective investors in the Philippines would be interested in Denmark’s high-technology water solutions.

He also added that other investments they could offer would include energy-efficiency seminars, along with better planning and regulation to pave the way for better water management.

[Zero Waste PH's mission: A trash-free society becomes reality](#)

By: Mat. T. Richter

In a startling projection for 2030, the Commission on Audit anticipates an annual solid waste production of a staggering 19.76 million metric tons in the country, posing a grave threat to the environment.

From plastic waste to hazardous chemicals, the call to reduce, if not eliminate waste creation, has never been more urgent. This is especially true today as our country faces the consequences of excessive garbage production.

Enter Zero Waste PH, an online community dedicated to the cause of waste reduction, offers a sliver of hope to the otherwise depressing issues that our planet has to face.

Building an online community

In 2019, Zero Waste PH launched its Facebook group with a singular goal: to create a trash-free nation. With nearly 60,000 members, this eco-conscious community advocates for "sharing stories and engaging in mindful conversations on low-impact and zero-waste living in the Philippines."

Sahara Lara Casteel, the driving force behind Zero Waste PH, revealed that her inspiration for this movement stemmed from a visit to Sydney, Australia — a city filled with stores selling bulk products and one that implements innovative waste-reduction solutions.

"Seeing like-minded individuals on a similar journey, we set up the group to exchange ideas and encourage others to embark on the same path," said Sahara.

This initiative has helped Sahara create a green community that practices low-carbon and waste-conscious living right here in the Philippines.

What's in it for you

Before you toss your waste into the bin, consider the concept of Zero Waste PH, where trash can turn into treasure. When decluttering, you can visit the Facebook group and post items for donation, reuse, or recycling.

To illustrate, one member posted pictures of busted light bulbs, broken emergency lights, neck fans, charging cables, headsets, and used batteries — all available for donation and recycling.

"Simple changes like using a reusable water bottle, finding unpackaged soap bars, and reducing plastic usage can already make a positive impact," she said.

Toward a circular economy

Transitioning from a high-waste lifestyle to trash-free living can be challenging, but the benefits for the planet are immeasurable.

"Every journey must start somewhere," Sahara said, "and it all begins with the awareness and willingness to make a difference."

In essence, you won't walk this eco-journey alone. You'll be joined by like-minded individuals committed to preserving our planet — our one and only home in this vast universe.

After all, everything we discard onto the planet ultimately returns to us. Through collective action, let's turn waste into wealth, and gradually move toward a truly zero-waste society.

MANILA STANDARD

[‘Climate Finance vital to energy transition’](#)

By: Lidy Nacpil

Last Sunday, we took part in the historic climate march in New York and added our voices to the urgent call to end fossil fuels.

The march capped hundreds of similar actions in Asia last September 15, with thousands of people joining mobilizations in multiple locations in 12 Asian countries, followed by actions in the Pacific, Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and North America.

We call for the release of young climate activists arrested in Uganda in the peaceful protests.

We are here to reiterate our call for all governments to take decisive bold actions for a rapid, equitable transition out of fossil fuels directly to renewable energy systems — with no loopholes, no exceptions, no false unreliable solutions that merely extend the life of fossil fuels and serve as an excuse to continue emitting greenhouse gases.

The current commitments are nowhere near enough — we need new commitments and agreements including an international treaty for the non proliferation of fossil fuels and a global phase out plan with clear timelines and fair sharing of actions to reach real zero by 2050.

As we all know the climate crisis has claimed millions of lives, wreaked devastating impacts on our health, livelihoods, food and water systems, caused trillions of dollars in damages to crops, homes and infrastructure, and triggered horrifying disasters such as super typhoons, unprecedented droughts and raging wildfires.

How much more pain, loss, suffering will it take for governments and corporations to do the necessary?

We urge governments to fulfill their duties and obligations to their people, to all of humanity.

We especially call on the governments of the wealthiest countries, who bear the biggest responsibilities for the climate crisis, whose commitments are the farthest away from their fair share of climate actions, and yet are fond of presenting themselves as climate champions.

The fair shares of these wealthiest countries include meeting their full obligations to deliver Climate Finance.

Climate Finance is so absolutely vital not only for adaptation, building resilience, and covering loss and damage.

It is fundamental for equity and fair sharing of efforts in the energy transition without which this transition will not succeed.

We, the people of the Global South, are not asking for aid or assistance.

Climate Finance is an obligation and part of Reparations for historical and continuing harms and injustices.

We have a right not just to survive but to build a better home and future for our children.

(Editor's Note: Climate Finance refers to local, national or transnational financing – drawn from public, private and alternative sources of financing – that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change. The Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement call for financial assistance from Parties with more financial resources to those that are less endowed and more vulnerable. The Global South broadly comprises Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia without Israel, Japan, and South Korea, and Oceania without Australia and New Zealand, also according to the UNCTAD. The Philippines, considered part of the Global South because it shares many of these characteristics, is a developing country with high poverty rates and a significant informal sector, and it is heavily dependent on remittances from overseas workers and exports of raw materials.)

(Speech delivered at the UN Climate Ambition Summit on September 20 convened by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres in New York by the author, the only Filipino and civil society leader to speak there. A Filipino human rights, environmental, gender and social justice activist, she is the coordinator of the Asian Peoples Movement on Debt and Development, a regional alliance of peoples' movements, community organizations, coalitions, NGOs and networks).

NIKKEI ASIA

[IEA says route to net zero requires more cash and less politics](#)

Record growth in clean energy technology, including solar panels and electric vehicles, means it is still possible to limit global warming to 1.5 C, the International Energy Agency said on Tuesday.

But it also said the world would need to invest nearly \$4.5 trillion per year in the transition to cleaner energy from the start of the next decade, up from spending of \$1.8 trillion expected in 2023.

Temperatures have hit record levels this year and global averages are around 1.1 C higher compared with the preindustrial average.

That compares with the goal set by the 2015 U.N. Paris Agreement to keep global temperature rises well below 2 C, while pursuing efforts to limit them to 1.5 C to prevent the most severe consequences, such as drought, floods and increased wildfires.

In its update to its Net Zero Roadmap, which proposes scenarios to reach net-zero emissions by the middle of the century, the IEA said an increase in solar power capacity and in electric vehicle sales since 2021 were in line with targets, as well as infrastructure plans in both fields.

Much more effort, however, is still required as a tripling of global renewable capacity, a doubling of energy efficient infrastructure, an increase in heat pump sales and a further rise in EV use are needed by 2030, the IEA said.

It also called for a 75% cut in energy sector methane emissions by 2030, which would cost an estimated \$75 billion, just 2% of net income received by the oil and gas industry in 2022.

The IEA pathway to net zero will also require an equitable transition, taking into account national circumstances and requiring advanced economies to reach net zero sooner than developing economies, the report said.

Despite this year's extreme weather, politicians, mindful of the cost-of-living crisis and seeking reelection, have been backsliding on climate pledges.

"Governments need to separate climate from geopolitics, given the scale of the challenge at hand," IEA director Faith Birol said.

PANAY

Renewable energy-centered WV pushed

The Department of Energy (DOE) during the 3rd Quarter Regional Development Council (RDC) 6 meeting revealed that Western Visayas is poised as the Renewable Energy (RE) center of the country with a total of 113 renewable energy service contracts already awarded.

As of June this year, these renewable energy projects progress through different stages of permitting and development with an existing installed capacity of 775.7 megawatts (MW) and a potential capacity of 16,500.7 MW, and DOE awaits its integration into the local communities.

According to DOE, most of these contracts are wind energy sources, with a vast potential capacity of 14,943 MW.

Energy secretary Raphael Perpetuo Lotilla, in his message read by Undersecretary Giovanni Carlo Bacordo during the RDC-6 meeting, said that renewable energy is the way forward and the DOE is amplifying efforts to advocate for greater utilization of renewable energy, aligning with our overarching government objectives.

“Our shared goal is to achieve 35 percent renewable energy (RE) in our power generation mix by 2030, with an ambitious target of 50 percent by 2040. These targets are not arbitrary. They are enshrined in both the Philippine Energy Plan and the National Renewable Energy Plan, reflecting our commitment to combating climate change and transitioning toward a more sustainable and environmentally friendly power generation landscape,” Lotilla added.

DOE urges the local government units (LGUs) in the region to actively participate in the Energy Virtual One-Stop Shop (EVOSS) System by incorporating their permitting processes into the System while also encouraging all permitting agencies to take a proactive role in guiding and facilitating these renewable energy initiatives.

“By doing so, we can expedite the permitting process for these energy projects that will provide livelihood and development opportunities to the host communities sooner, rather than later,” Lotilla said.

DOE also gave updates on the high-impact energy projects mentioned during President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s second State of the Nation Address (SONA) like the Mindanao-Visayas Interconnection Project and the Cebu-Negros-Panay (CNP) Transmission Line Project.

The MVIP with a transfer capacity of 450 MW, will link Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, facilitating power sharing and optimizing energy resources at a current load of 270 MW, the interconnection is targeted to be fully operational by October 2023.

On the other hand, the Cebu-Negros-Panay (CNP) Transmission Line Project, designed at 800 MW, will enhance the efficient transfer of energy within the Visayas sub-grid, particularly from Negros Island which is currently operating at 270 MW, the CNP Stage 3 Project is targeted for full operation by National Grid Corporation of the Philippines in October 2023.

Lotilla shared that RDC VI is showing what the energy future will be like and how it will be done, and this must be replicated by other RDCs.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Green group calls for eco-friendly campaign ahead of BSKE

By: Che Palicte

The Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability Inc. (IDIS) urged local candidates on Tuesday to prioritize ecologically-friendly campaign materials and strategies.

In a statement, the green group said it anticipates a notable increase in campaign materials, particularly campaign banners and disposable paraphernalia as the Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections (BSKE) 2023 campaign period kicks off next month.

“This surge in materials has the potential to exacerbate our existing predicaments related to waste management, plastic pollution, and climate change,” the group said.

Instead, IDIS urged candidates to choose environmentally-friendly alternatives to minimize the use of paper and plastic waste via social media platforms to engage with voters.

Candidates may also maximize the use of traditional means of campaigning such as through the use of jingles, visual performances, and other similar methods, it added.

They also called on the Commission on Elections and the local government units to champion policies and practices that would curb environmental degradation due to political campaign activities.

Candidates were also reminded to refrain from directly putting posters on trees or other natural features.

Candidates and voters alike are also enjoined not to leave campaign materials as litter.

THE MANILA TIMES

Countries eye cooperation with China in weather tech to address climate change challenges

Several countries are looking to cooperate with China on meteorological technology to address the climate change challenges they are facing.

"Many countries, including Egypt, Jordan, Mauritania and [the] Gulf countries, [showed] great interest in cooperatively using China's meteorological technological products to jointly reduce disaster risks and improve multihazard early warning services," Xu Xiaofeng, the head of the China Meteorological Service Association (CMSA), told government-run tabloid Global Times on Monday.

Xu said extreme weather disasters were now frequent, with heat waves, rainstorms and hurricanes, droughts and floods sweeping the planet.

From the end of December 2022 to March, California was hit by a strong storm and sustained heavy rainfall that caused heavy losses. In mid-July, a persistent heat wave lingered in Europe, and most Italian cities issued red alerts. Most recently, Middle Eastern countries were gripped by Mediterranean Storm "Daniel," which killed thousands of people in eastern Libya in early September.

China's Central Meteorological Observatory issued a red alert for heavy rain for the second time in 11 years as a record-breaking extreme rainstorm at the end of July triggered severe flooding in northern China, which was plagued by high temperatures and little rain from June to July.

Xu told the Global Times that many Arab countries were showing interest in working with China on meteorology after the Meteorological High-quality Development Cooperation Forum was recently held in the northwestern Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region as part of the China-Arab States Expo.

Meteorological cooperation between Beijing and many Arab countries has great potential as China and the Middle East are on the same page when it comes to pledges to cut carbon emissions and achieve carbon neutrality, Xu said, adding that many Arab countries were also showing interest in using renewable energy sources.

The use of cloud seeding technology from China and the lidar system for meteorological observation has particularly grabbed their attention, Xu said.

The application of new technology and the development of numerical forecasting are particularly critical against the backdrop of frequent extreme weather and climate events, a senior meteorological expert from Gulf Cooperation Council said.

Experts at the meeting also reached a consensus on promoting the use of China's meteorological satellite system Fengyun to jointly carry out disaster prevention and reduction, according to the China Meteorological Administration (CMA).

"The Fengyun meteorological satellites have provided all-weather and all-day remote sensing monitoring services to Arab countries, and play an important role in wildfire monitoring and other aspects," said the head of the ground observation system of the Moroccan Meteorological Service.

In 2018, the FY-2H satellite was moved westward by 7.5 degrees, to 79 degrees East, which is of vital significance to addressing data acquisition and application in geostationary meteorological satellites for countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative.

If countries in Belt and Road territories are hit by disasters such as typhoons, rainstorms, sandstorms, forest blazes or prairie fires, they can apply to activate dedicated observation by Fengyun satellites, the CMA said. The number of countries and regions using Fengyun meteorological satellite data is now 129.

Feng Yirong, director of the South China regional numerical forecasting center of the CMA, said customized numerical forecasting model technology for countries taking part in the Belt and Road Initiative will be strengthened.

"The Silk Road built a bridge for economic and cultural communication, while international cooperation in meteorology is crucial to jointly reduce disaster risks and improve multidisaster early warning services," Feng said.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Advocates urge prioritization of active mobility to combat air pollution

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Prioritizing active forms of mobility and improving the public transportation system will help reduce emissions that cause air pollution and contribute to climate change, a coalition of sustainable transport advocates said Tuesday.

The Move As One Coalition said that the smog that blanketed Metro Manila last week highlights the importance of emissions reduction from vehicles, which it labeled as the “main culprit” responsible for the capital region’s toxic air.

Air quality monitoring data showed heightened alert in some parts of Metro Manila, which the Department of Environment and Natural Resources primarily attributed to emissions from heavy vehicular traffic, especially during rush hour.

The Move As One Coalition stressed that building protected bike lanes and safe pathways and improving the public health system “will help reduce the unacceptable heavy toll that the toxic air in our country has taken on our people and economy.”

According to a study conducted by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air in 2019, air pollution was the cause of 66,230 deaths in the Philippines.

The study found that the economic cost associated with air pollution exposure was P2.3 trillion, or 11.9% of the country’s gross domestic product for that year. Premature deaths accounted for the majority of the economic cost, amounting to P2.2 trillion.

The coalition added that prioritizing cycling and a more efficient public transport system over the use of private motor vehicles “will help our country make the transition to people-centered and climate-friendly mobility solutions.”

Active modes of transport produce minimal to no greenhouse gas emissions and can contribute to sustainable urban planning while promoting personal health benefits through increased physical activity.

‘Prioritize the needs of 94%’

The Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028 declares that “pedestrians and cyclists will be accorded highest priority in the hierarchy of road users.”

However, the Move As One Coalition noted that the proposed budget for active transport infrastructure was reduced to P500 million from a high of P2 billion in 2022.

“We call on the government to prioritize the needs of 94% of Filipinos who do not own four-wheeled motor vehicles and the 87% of Filipinos who believe that ‘the roads in Philippine cities and municipalities will be better off if public transportation, bicycles, and pedestrians are given priority over private vehicles,” the coalition said, referring to a survey of the Social Weather Stations.

“Air pollution is everyone’s concern, and we must all work together to clear the air. But there is only so much that citizens can do,” it added.

[Recycling plastic not enough, warns UN environment chief](#)

By: Amélie Bottolier-Depois

With the production of plastic on the rise worldwide and creating ever more pollution, the UN environment chief warned that humanity cannot just recycle its way out of the mess, and she called for a total rethink about the way we use plastics.

"There are different sort of onramps to the highway to solutions. But I think everybody recognizes that the status quo is just not an option," said Inger Andersen, director of the UN Environment Program, in an interview Thursday with AFP on the sidelines of the General Assembly in New York.

Andersen was talking two weeks after the publication of the first draft of a future international treaty on plastic pollution, which is expected to be finalized by the end of 2024.

It reflects the wide range of ambitions of the 175 countries involved, notably the gap between those who argue for a reduction in the production of raw polymers and those who insist on reuse and recycling.

First, Andersen said the aim was to get rid of as many single-use plastics as possible, "eliminating what's frankly not necessary: that thing that is wrapped in plastic that's completely mindless, that is maybe even wrapped by nature itself," like an orange or a banana.

Then, "there is thinking about the product itself. Does the product need to be liquid? Can we rethink the product... can it be powder, can it be compressed, can it be concentrated?" she said, saying that when entering a supermarket, she goes straight to the soap aisle to see if solid versions are available.

"We also have to reduce the overall supply of new raw polymer," she said, noting that this was one option in the draft text of the treaty.

Oceans a 'collective heritage'

For sure, "we have to recycle as much as we can. But as we look at it now, plastic uses is increasing," Andersen told AFP.

"So what is clear is that we cannot recycle our way out of this mess."

Annual production of plastics has more than doubled in the past 20 years, to reach 460 million tons. It could triple by 2060 if nothing changes.

However, only nine percent is recycled. Plastic waste of all sizes is found today at the bottom of the oceans, in the stomachs of birds and on the tops of mountains, while microplastics have been detected in blood, breast milk and placentas.

"If we continue to pump into the economy all this new raw polymer, there is no way that we will stop the plastic flow into the oceans," she said.

And the health of the oceans is crucial for the future of humanity.

The future treaty on plastic pollution would complement the global arsenal to protect the oceans, including the new historic treaty to protect the high seas signed this week by some 70 countries.

"The fact that we're going to move forward and protect that piece of the ocean that is beyond national boundaries is mind-blowingly important," Andersen said.

"And something that I'm just very, very happy about. And the whole world should be because this is our common heritage."

=END=