



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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### ABS CBN

#### [Panibagong LPA posibleng mabuo sa West Philippine Sea](#)

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### BUSINESS MIRROR

#### [From black to green: PHL doubles down on clean energy ambitions](#)

By: Lenie Lectura

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#### [Climate change can have 'lifelong impacts' on young people's mental health, report says](#)

By: Giri Viswanathan

Climate change can play a major role in affecting young people's mental health, according to a new report from the American Psychological Association.

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### **[Why money matters when taking climate change to court](#)**

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## **MANILA BULLETIN**

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By: Sonny Coloma

If you want to be inspired, take a few moments to appreciate the awesome beauty of God's creation as manifested by Brother Sun, Sister Moon and the stars, Brother Wind and the air, Sister Water and Brother Fire as St. Francis of Assisi does in his poem, Canticle of the Creatures. Pope Francis seeks to uplift and enlighten the faithful in Laudate Deum (Praise God), an apostolic exhortation that builds on the theme of caring for our common home – planet earth – which was the subject of his encyclical Laudato Si (Praised Be) issued in 2015. He issued this letter last week, Oct. 4, on the feast day of Sr. Francis of Assisi.

## **NIKKEI ASIA**

### **[Indonesia seeks to lead island nations at Dubai climate summit](#)**

By: Erwida Maulia

Leaders of Indonesia and several smaller island nations convened Wednesday for a "historic" gathering to unify and amplify their voices ahead of the upcoming United Nations climate change conference in Dubai.

### **[Japan, World Bank diversify renewable energy supply chains](#)**

By: Hana Slevin Ohama

Japan, the World Bank and other partners on Wednesday launched a new project to diversify renewable energy supply chains, as concerns grow over the global reliance on China in critical materials for electric vehicles, solar panels and more.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[Breaking the potential of bamboo open](#)**

By: Cora Llamas

The time of the "lowly" bamboo or kawayan, often associated with the Filipino qualities of resilience and adaptability, just might have come. Bamboo proponents believe this to be long overdue and have been advocating that the government list the use of the grass as a priority industry for development.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **ABS CBN**

### **Panibagong LPA posibleng mabuo sa West Philippine Sea**

Posibleng mabuo ang isang bagong low pressure area sa West Philippine Sea ngayong Huwebes bagamat kikilos ito palayo sa bansa, ayon kay ABS-CBN resident meteorologist Ariel Rojas.

Ayon kay Rojas, magiging makulimlim at maulan sa malaking bahagi ng bansa ngayong Miyerkoles matapos pumasok sa Philippine area of responsibility ang isang low pressure area.

Kaninang alas-onse, ang LPA ay nasa layong 815 km silangan ng Surigao City, Surigao del Norte. Hindi ito inaasahang magiging bagyo dahil mahihigop at sasama ito sa ikot ng hangin ng Typhoon Bolaven na nananalasa sa Mariana Islands.

Ang trough o extension ng LPA ay nagpaulan na mula pa umaga at magpapaulan pa sa Pampanga, Bulacan, Quezon, Bicol, Mimaropa, Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao at Caraga.

Mas malakas ang ulan sa hapon sa Mindoro, Northern Palawan at Panay Island.

May thunderstorms din mamayang hapon sa La Union, Nueva Ecija at Soccsksargen.

Umiiral din at nakakaapekto ang northeasterly winds na paunang hangin mula hilagang silangan bago ang amihan sa Batanes at Babuyan Islands na may mga mahihinang ulan.

Patuloy namang makakaapekto sa Northern Luzon ang northeasterly winds hanggang sa weekend.

Sa Metro Manila, magpapatuloy ang makulimlim na panahon at kalat-kalat na ulan bagamat posibe pang sumilip-silip ang araw.

## **BUSINESS MIRROR**

### **[From black to green: PHL doubles down on clean energy ambitions](#)**

By: Lenie Lectura

TWO years after Manila banned the construction of new coal-run power plants, the government has doubled its efforts to build more sustainable power systems and to ease the entry of new, cleaner and indigenous technological innovations.

Renewable energy (RE) policies and green energy auctions have kept the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) busy to raise the share of RE in the power generation mix to 35 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2040.

“The time for RE in the Philippines is now. The price of RE is competitive and we have enabling policies and government processes that facilitate RE development,” said DOE Undersecretary Rowena Guevara.

Solar photovoltaic, for example, was more than 80 percent cheaper in 2022 than in 2011, resulting in an increase in solar installations nationwide.

“It was bound to happen. After 12 years since the launch of the National Renewable Energy Program (NREP), the cost of RE technologies has drastically gone down,” said former DOE Undersecretary Jay Layug, who also served as the chairman of the National Renewable Energy Board (NREB).

With the assumption into office of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and the appointment of DOE Secretary Raphael Lotilla and ERC Commissioner Monalisa Dimalanta, the power industry has seen a dramatic shift in government policies towards RE.

#### 100% foreign ownership

Armed with a legal opinion from the Department of Justice, Lotilla adopted a game-changing reform by opening the RE sector to full 100-percent foreign ownership. Another bold move was the issuance of an executive order which establishes a policy solely for a particular energy resource—offshore wind (OSW).

“We have not seen that in the past and that’s a good sign, meaning the government wants offshore wind very, very soon,” added Layug.

The country’s potential OSW resources was estimated at 178 gigawatts (GW). To date, the DOE has awarded 79 OSW contracts with total potential capacity of 61.93 GW, enough to supply the country’s future electricity demand.

Other policies that led to the faster entry of RE investments include the Green Energy Auction (GEA), Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS), and preferential dispatch of RE in the spot market.

More RE projects will be constructed in a few years following two rounds of GEA that led to about 5,300MW of RE capacities committed for delivery between 2023 and 2026. GEA will be done yearly and will include emerging technologies such as OSW.

The DOE will also work on the transmission lines that are necessary in order to bring RE to the markets or where they are needed, as well as the energy storage systems (ESS) to complement the variable RE sources.

Apart from policy enhancements, incentives for RE projects are laid down under the 2022 Philippine Strategic Investment Priority Plan. There are also income-tax holidays, duty-free importation, and tax exemption of carbon credits provided under the Renewable Energy Act.

Through the Board of Investments, the government announced that RE projects have taken center stage, accounting for approximately 80 percent of investments approved for 2023.

These policies and incentives played a big role in charting the RE goals of power firms.

For instance, Alternergy Holdings Corp. has set a goal of up to 1,370 megawatts (MW) of additional wind, solar, run-of-river hydro, and ESS in its portfolio in the next five years.

Alternergy chairman and former energy secretary Vince Pérez recalled the groundwork for renewables started years ago with the crafting of the Renewable Energy Framework in 2003. At that time, prices of renewables were really “off the mark,” RE policies and regulatory mechanisms were absent, and there were no investors ready to venture into clean energy. Back then, he said, the vision was articulated.

“Since then, the RE industry has evolved. Renewable prices are very competitive; policies are in place and investments run in billions. There is great competition, confirming RE’s time has come, and this could only bode well for the electricity consumers and the environment as a whole,” he said.

## Ambitions

ACEN Corp. intends to be the largest listed renewables platform in Southeast Asia, with a goal of reaching 20 GW of renewables capacity by 2030.

ACEN President Eric Francia said renewables have become more competitive amid the scaling and improvement of technology and the structural increase in fossil fuel prices as an offshoot of the global energy crisis.

He agreed that government policies help accelerate the scaling of renewables. As of last year, the RE share in the power generation mix stood at 22 percent.

“The last few decades were dominated by coal plants to help power the country’s growth. The next few decades will mark the renewables era, where RE will help power economic growth, drive electrification, and transition from fossil fuel to clean energy,” added Francia.

With government support and the development of technologies, Aboitiz Power Corp. said the industry will strive to meet the country’s goal. “The Philippines is fortunate to have an abundance of solar, wind, hydro and geothermal potential; making renewable energy an attractive option and an industry poised for growth,” said company president Emmanuel Rubio.

The message is clear. Government wants more renewables and the green shift is in full gear.

While everyone is eager to transition to 100-percent RE sources, some observed that the technology and infrastructure for renewables are still evolving in the country and are not yet at a scale where they can meet the energy demands consistently.

“Its inherent intermittencies hinder the country from scaling its use to much more significant proportions of the national energy mix.... AboitizPower believes that a diversified mix composed of all forms of energy—be it thermal or renewable—are needed in order to meet the supply-demand gap, make prices more competitive, and make the power supply mix more sustainable both now and in the years to come,” added Rubio.

The resiliency of infrastructure to natural calamities, and the country’s exposure to geopolitical conflicts also need to be addressed.

**CNN**

[Climate change can have ‘lifelong impacts’ on young people’s mental health, report says](#)

By: Giri Viswanathan

Climate change can play a major role in affecting young people’s mental health, according to a new report from the American Psychological Association.

Written in collaboration with the climate advocacy organization ecoAmerica, the report documents how environmental events linked to climate change – including weather disasters, extreme heat and poor air quality – can trigger or exacerbate mental health issues for kids and teens.

Natural disasters can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder in these groups, the report says. Longer-term problems like heat, drought and poor air quality can increase the risks of anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, aggression, cognitive impairment and more.

“The report documents psychological harms that are happening right now to the children and youth in our country,” Dr. Dennis P. Stolle, the association’s senior director of applied psychology who reviewed the report, wrote in an email to CNN. “These are not issues that we can wait and resolve later. As a society, we must act now.”

The report, released Wednesday, serves as a follow-up to a 2021 study conducted by the American Psychological Association and ecoAmerica. It’s the latest in a series of studies by the two organizations dating to 2014. The studies don’t involve new experiments; rather, they summarize existing research about climate change, mental health and youth development.

**Problems begin before birth**

According to Dr. Sue Clayton, a professor of psychology at the College of Wooster and the report’s lead author, climate change-related weather events leave kids more vulnerable to mental health consequences because young people might not have the coping strategies that adults do.

If a parent is stressed by hardship associated with an environmental event, like “If your parent is under stress because of worries or these fears, that can affect a child and their mental health,” Clayton said. “Experiencing trauma at an early age can have lifelong impacts on emotional health and well-being.”



Those mental health consequences begin even before a child is born, the report says. Prenatal exposure to weather disasters, high temperatures, air pollution and maternal anxiety can raise a child's risk of a variety of behavioral and developmental issues, including anxiety, depression, ADHD, developmental delays, low self-control and psychiatric disorders.

The consequences can affect the development of the nervous system and are often irreversible, Clayton said.

For infants and young children, weather events linked to climate change – and exposure to news reports about them – could lead to anxiety, sleep troubles, PTSD, disrupted cognitive development and major depressive disorder.

Adolescents are susceptible to mental health effects – like trauma and anxiety – from climate change-related natural disasters, but they can also be indirectly affected, the report says. Weather events, heat and pollution can disrupt a child's life: classes might be canceled, their home might be damaged, or they might experience food insecurity.

'How do you plan for the future?'

Adolescents and young adults, the report says, are particularly anxious about climate change. Compared with their older counterparts, young people are more likely to be alarmed or concerned about the perceived failure of governments or authority figures to act on climate change.

According to the report, climate change-related events and distress about the issue are linked to risks of anxiety, depression, strained social relationships and suicide.

"They're worried about it because they know it's going to affect their future," Clayton said. "How do you plan for the future when you don't know what the future will look like?"

She is also concerned about how climate change could influence young adults who are making decisions about their career and relationships. The report identified that the consequences of extreme weather and climate anxiety affected decision-making, impaired cognition and lower levels of self-control.

"They're making the decisions that will affect the rest of their lives, in terms of their career goals and plans," Clayton added. "Are they going to save money? What about their decisions about having children?"

The researchers note that not all young people experience the mental health impacts of climate change in the same way. People from marginalized or low-income backgrounds

– including indigenous communities, communities of color, women and people with disabilities – are more likely to be exposed to extreme weather.

Compared with people in wealthier areas, they may also have fewer ways to cope with extreme weather. For instance, Clayton said, higher-income communities tend to have more tree cover from heat.

However, the report also stressed ways to limit the impact of climate change on youth mental health. Among its recommendations are that school systems play a greater role, including designing more protective facilities and teaching curricula about climate change.

Health care professionals could also screen early and regularly for climate-related distress among youth. Stolle says a greater number of clinical psychologists are treating people with anxiety about climate change.

“Clinical psychologists are finding themselves on the frontlines of treating the patients who are suffering from these concerns,” he wrote in his email.

But for Clayton, it’s not just an issue for health care professionals.

“This affects all of us,” she added. “Children are effectively the future of society. We wanted to make the information about the problem and potential ways of addressing it available to groups that want to get access to it.”

## ECO BUSINESS

### [Why money matters when taking climate change to court](#)

When Serge de Gheldere decided - along with a dozen other Belgian citizens - to take the government to court in 2014 alleging climate inaction, he didn't imagine he would still be fighting the case in 2023 and with more than 70,000 co-plaintiffs.

"I thought we had a good chance of nailing this (quickly)," he told Context. "In the past, it has worked to use the law to bring about societal advances."

The long-running "Klimaatzaak" or Climate Affair case, in which de Gheldere wants an appeals court to order Belgium to make deeper cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, is part of a rising tide of climate change litigation around the world.

The cumulative number of cases globally has more than doubled since 2015 to nearly 2,200, according to a database collected by the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law at New York's Columbia University.

Many such cases are brought by non-profits or individuals frustrated with a lack of progress from governments in tackling the climate crisis, as the world suffers more severe heatwaves, floods, storms, droughts and wildfires.

Michael Burger, the Sabin Center's director, said people resort to the courts "when other systems fail".

"Rolling the dice on a judge's decision - taking the time and resources that it takes to litigate - is not the most efficient way to get to solutions to this global crisis," he said.

But more and more climate battles are reaching the court-room, pulling in activists young and old, farmers, scientists, fossil fuel firms and even litigation investors looking to make a profit from a cut of climate damages awarded to their clients.

Money matters when it comes to climate lawsuits - from the funding to cover costs in often lengthy legal processes, to potential payouts that could reach into the billions of dollars.

#### Crowdfunding climate justice

Environmental groups are leading the drive for climate justice, with nearly 90 per cent of non-US cases filed since June 2022 coming from NGOs or individuals, according to a report by the Grantham Research Institute at the London School of Economics.

Many arguments are based on human rights, and four such cases have been opened in Europe this year alone - with citizens from Belgium, France, Switzerland and Portugal arguing that states have violated their rights by not doing enough to prevent global warming.

And the NGOs sometimes succeed. The Dutch Supreme Court ruled in 2019 that the government was violating human rights by failing to do enough to fight climate change and should cut emissions by at least 25 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020.

A shift from coal to generate electricity meant the goal was met, with a 25.5 per cent reduction, Statistics Netherlands said.

But testing legal arguments takes time and money. NGO-led human rights cases often have to rely on a combination of donations from philanthropic organisations and individuals, as well as crowdfunding and lawyers working pro bono.

“We had some rich supporters giving us money every month, we did fundraisers, concerts. It was a huge undertaking,” said de Gheldere of the Belgian case which had cost almost 2 million euros (US\$2.11 million) by 2022.

One drawback is that such litigation demands a lot of unpaid work and citizen support, which can lead to some people or cases being excluded.

“Funding is a barrier in the sense that it limits the ability of any group of citizens to do it. You have to be well-connected and you have to be a great communicator,” said Francois de Borchgrave an investment specialist and co-plaintiff in the Belgian climate case.

Climate lawyers told Context that what makes these human-rights based cases stand out is they are seeking to force governments to do more to combat climate change, rather than win damages.

“You’re trying to change policy, so if you get that type of impact it doesn’t matter that you’re not getting financial compensation,” said Joana Setzer, assistant professorial research fellow at the Grantham Research Institute at the LSE.

#### Climate reparations

But if those cases fail to drive greater action to rein in global warming, losses linked to climate change are predicted to surge - and could stimulate climate reparations cases.

Under this relatively new and evolving area of law, individuals or groups seek compensation for climate-change related losses such as from wildfires and floods.

One case to watch, according to legal experts, is that of Saúl Luciano Lliuya, a Peruvian farmer who filed a lawsuit against German utility RWE, which ranks as one of Europe's biggest polluters due to its coal-fired power stations.

Luciano Lliuya says RWE, founded in 1898, has emitted 0.5 per cent of humanity's heat-trapping carbon dioxide. He says it is melting Andean glaciers, swelling a lake above his hometown and threatening him and 50,000 other residents with a deadly flood.

He is seeking about US\$20,000 in damages, 0.5 per cent of a US\$4-million local government scheme to prevent flooding from the lake - a symbolic sum, but potentially a big leap for climate litigation.

RWE says it cannot be blamed for the thaw of the Andes.

"This case is about setting a precedent for holding major emitters responsible," Noah Walker-Crawford, a researcher and advisor on the case, told Context.

This definition of major emitters is becoming increasingly broad, as a larger variety of companies are facing lawsuits including banks, pension funds and agricultural firms.

On the other hand, Sabin's Burger points out that some companies are starting to seek hundreds of millions of dollars from governments for the profits they say they will forgo due to progressive climate policies.

In response to a separate lawsuit brought by RWE, for instance, the Dutch government said last month it would pay the company 331.8 million euros (US\$355 million) in compensation for lost income after capping coal companies' production.

Burger said the money in these cases, known as investor-state dispute settlements, could have a "chilling effect" on governments' climate policies, particularly for developing countries that rely on foreign direct investment.

#### Business opportunity

Meanwhile, as the potential financial payouts from climate lawsuits grow, litigation funders are eyeing an opportunity - whereby a third party pays a claimant's legal fees, such as a community impacted by climate change, in return for a share of any damages awarded by a court.

Proponents of such litigation deals say the practice could democratise funding sources and increase access to climate justice.

Global law firm Pogust Goodhead recently secured 450 million pounds (US\$545.58 million) from investment manager Gramercy to help meet growing demand for class-action lawsuits against corporations.

The boom in climate lawsuits lowers the financial risk for investors as each case sets a precedent to build stronger arguments in future, legal experts say.

Seeking damages from a company may not have a direct impact on climate change, said Ana Carolina Salomão Queiroz, chief investment officer at Pogust Goodhead, but it could have a knock-on effect by heightening corporate awareness of the risks of doing nothing or too little.

“By holding corporations accountable, it is increasing the cost of non-compliance with environmental regulations,” she said.

More litigation funding for climate lawsuits could mean more cases and more momentum for climate justice, said Walker-Crawford. But, he warned, it could also lead to investors cherry-picking the biggest payouts.

“If there’s a profit motive, there might be a financial incentive to look more toward cases brought by wealthy homeowners who are threatened by sea level rise,” he said.

That, in turn, could disadvantage poor communities on low-lying islands where property sells for less, he added.

While it is still early days for landmark climate cases - with most verdicts expected in 2024 - corporations and governments should expect an acceleration fuelled by NGO-led rights-based cases and investors seeking damage payouts.

“I do believe that the speed of change from now on will baffle us,” said Salomão Queiroz.

## MANILA BULLETIN

### [\[Opinion\] Caring for planet earth: Pope Francis' clarion call](#)

By: Sonny Coloma

If you want to be inspired, take a few moments to appreciate the awesome beauty of God's creation as manifested by Brother Sun, Sister Moon and the stars, Brother Wind and the air, Sister Water and Brother Fire as St. Francis of Assisi does in his poem, Canticle of the Creatures. Pope Francis seeks to uplift and enlighten the faithful in Laudate Deum (Praise God), an apostolic exhortation that builds on the theme of caring for our common home – planet earth – which was the subject of his encyclical Laudato Si (Praised Be) issued in 2015. He issued this letter last week, Oct. 4, on the feast day of Sr. Francis of Assisi.

This is a time of purposeful introspection on the fragility of life on our planet. Global warming continues unabated, triggering destructive typhoons and floods in climate vulnerable countries like the Philippines. Pope Francis demonstrates keen insight in appraising the meager progress achieved in moderating the harsh impact of climate change:

“We must move beyond the mentality of appearing to be concerned but not having the courage needed to produce substantial changes. We know that at this pace in just a few years we will surpass the maximum recommended limit of 1.5° C and shortly thereafter even reach 3° C, with a high risk of arriving at a critical point. Even if we do not reach this point of no return, it is certain that the consequences would be disastrous and precipitous measures would have to be taken, at enormous cost and with grave and intolerable economic and social effects. Although the measures that we can take now are costly, the cost will be all the more burdensome the longer we wait.”

He notes that the next Conference of Parties concerned with climate change (COP 28) will be held in the United Arab Emirates, “a great exporter of fossil fuels...(that) has made significant investments in renewable energy sources,” yet hosts gas and oil companies that continue to increase production. Still, Pope Francis writes: “To say that there is nothing to hope for would be suicidal, for it would mean exposing all humanity, especially the poorest, to the worst impacts of climate change.”

If there is a will, there is a way. Pope Francis cites “significant results” that have been obtained in terms of protecting the ozone layer. But he laments the extremely slow pace of transitioning to clean energy sources such as wind and solar energy, and the abandonment of fossil fuels — commitments that were made at COP21 in Paris to stem the tide of global warming. According to experts, greenhouse gas emissions must peak

by 2025 at the latest and a decline of 43 percent needs to be achieved by 2030. Both of these targets seem unlikely to be achieved.

Demonstrating his prescience and wisdom as a global leader, Pope Francis' declaration on what needs to be done is unmistakably clear:

“If there is sincere interest in making COP28 a historic event that honors and ennobles us as human beings, then one can only hope for binding forms of energy transition that meet three conditions: that they be efficient, obligatory and readily monitored. This, in order to achieve the beginning of a new process marked by three requirements: that it be drastic, intense and count on the commitment of all.” That is not what has happened so far, and only a process of this sort can enable international politics to recover its credibility, since only in this concrete manner will it be possible to reduce significantly carbon dioxide levels and to prevent even greater evils over time.”

Mossy Earth, an inter-disciplinary collective composed of environment advocates, has drawn up an action program that responds to Pope Francis' call. In their website may be found a six-point program to reduce carbon footprint. First: Avoid mass market, throw-away fashion. Second: Reduce meat and dairy consumption. Third: Refuse single-use plastic. Fourth: Reduce and rethink your transportation. Fifth: Switch to green energy. Sixth: Fight climate change through rewilding.

Mossy Earth points out that over 70 million trees are cut each year to produce cheaper fabrics such as rayon, viscose, modal and lyocell. Moreover water pollution results from the use of plastic microfibers, pesticides for cotton crops and toxic coloring dyes. Hence, “the clothing sector generates 10 percent of all global carbon emissions and remains the second biggest industrial polluter, following the oil industry.” It deplors the popularization of fast fashion by mass market retailers who promote inexpensive, throwaway clothing produced by using polyester fiber that consumes approximately 70 million barrels of oil annually.

On the macro-level, the United States' performance bears watching as it is the second-largest emitter of carbon dioxide with 5.981 billion metric tons in 2020, next only to China whose total emissions exceed the 11 billion mark. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports a seven percent decrease from 1990 to 2020, or about 0.5 percent annually. If reckoned from 2005, however, the decrease is 20 percent; this is because of a nine percent decline within the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic. Sectorally, electricity generation and transportation account for the largest share of historical emissions, at 31 percent and 26 percent, respectively. Transportation has been the largest sector since 2017. The production of hybrid and electric cars and public transport vehicles presents the best opportunity for achieving significant reductions.



Pope Francis' latest communication assails what he regards as an "irresponsible misrepresentation" of massive global concern over climate change as something purely ecological, 'green', romantic, frequently subject to ridicule by economic interests." He joins cause with pro-environment advocates, noting that "they are filling a space left empty by society as a whole, which ought to exercise a healthy 'pressure', since every family ought to realize that the future of their children is at stake."

## NIKKEI ASIA

### [Indonesia seeks to lead island nations at Dubai climate summit](#)

By: Erwida Maulia

Leaders of Indonesia and several smaller island nations convened Wednesday for a "historic" gathering to unify and amplify their voices ahead of the upcoming United Nations climate change conference in Dubai.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo and his counterparts from East Timor, Tuvalu, Niue, Sao Tome and Principe and the Federated States of Micronesia joined "the first high-level meeting" of the Archipelagic and Island States (AIS) Forum on the Indonesian island of Bali. The deputy prime ministers of Fiji and Tonga also attended.

"I've said this many times: The world is not well," Widodo told a news conference after the meeting. "Threats from climate change are very real. Impacts from rising sea levels and marine pollution due to garbage and waste will be felt more."

"These are threatening not just the sea ... but also the sovereignty and the unity" of nations' territories.

A total of 32 countries sent delegates to the AIS-related meetings in Bali this week, including big and small island nations across the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans, such as Britain, Japan and New Zealand. Older, similar groups such as the Pacific Islands Forum also sent representatives.

The talks came ahead of the U.N.'s COP28 meetings set to take place in Dubai from Nov. 30 through Dec. 12.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi called Wednesday's discussions "both timely and historical." She said the AIS Forum, initiated by Indonesia in 2018, is the first to convene big and small island states from around the world rather than from a specific region.

Small island nations are particularly vulnerable to climate change, facing rising sea levels and more frequent and more severe storms in recent years.

Widodo said Indonesia is committed to growing the AIS Forum as a means to "keep voicing developing countries' needs."

Indonesia has been positioning itself as a leader of the so-called Global South, especially since it chaired the Group of 20 economies in 2022, before passing the baton

to India. Southeast Asia's largest economy has similarly been approaching African countries through the Indonesia-Africa Forum launched in 2018.

One of Indonesia's priorities for the climate talks is demanding that developed nations acknowledge the growth needs of developing and poor countries, amid rising calls for climate action and increasing pressure to decarbonize.

Widodo repeated this issue on Wednesday. "Developing nations and islands nations have equal rights to prosper ... to do developments."

Marsudi said AIS member countries agreed to strengthen the organization and on Wednesday signed a document to boost cooperation in key areas -- including climate change mitigation and adaptation, blue economy and ecotourism, and tackling marine and coastal plastic debris.

Indonesian Environment Minister Siti Nurbaya told Nikkei Asia on the sidelines of the Bali meeting that she hopes the AIS Forum will amplify member countries' voices during COP28. These include a demand for implementation of the Loss and Damage Fund established during COP27 in Egypt last year, with an aim to provide financial assistance to nations most vulnerable and impacted by climate change.

"Because can you imagine, from 2015 to date, there have only been discussions [and more] discussions, but near zero implementation," Nurbaya said, referring to the U.N. climate meeting in Paris, during which developed nations reiterated their pledge to mobilize \$100 billion per year for climate solutions in developing countries.

"The heads of states this morning asked, 'What are the concrete efforts?' she said. "They have a lot of hopes on Indonesia."

## [Japan, World Bank diversify renewable energy supply chains](#)

By: Hana Slevin Ohama

Japan, the World Bank and other partners on Wednesday launched a new project to diversify renewable energy supply chains, as concerns grow over the global reliance on China in critical materials for electric vehicles, solar panels and more.

The partnership for Resilient and Inclusive Supply-chain Enhancement (RISE) will financially and technologically assist emerging countries, which now primarily produce the raw materials used in these supply chains, to build up their capacity to process those materials and assemble the final products. The goal is to ensure a stable global supply of key materials to curb economic security risks.

Other partners in the scheme are the U.K., South Korea, Canada and Italy. The five countries have pledged total initial contributions of over \$40 million, including \$25 million from Japan.

RISE targets primarily emerging and developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America that make up the Global South. Chile and India attended the launch event Wednesday as representatives of prospective recipients of the assistance.

"We will steadfastly advance this initiative in close cooperation with a diverse set of stakeholders," Japanese Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki said Wednesday.

G7 finance ministers and central bankers had agreed on creating the framework at their meeting in May.

Global supply chains now heavily rely on China for rare earths, lithium and other minerals used in EVs, fueling concerns that export restrictions or natural disasters could cause major disruptions.

China is also increasing its footprint in EVs themselves and in solar panels. With industrialized economies investing more in decarbonization, the G7 sees reliance on any specific country for key materials as a security risk.

Despite a relatively diverse supply for raw materials used in EV batteries, China holds a significant share in processing those materials and assembling the batteries. China is responsible for 10% of the world's lithium output, but 55% of its processing, according to Japan's Finance Ministry. It holds a 75% share in battery production.

At least 90% of substrates used in solar panels are also made in China.

But advanced economies cannot build alternative supply chains on their own. By working with the World Bank, they hope to tap its expertise in providing medium- to long-term development assistance to emerging and developing countries.

At a May summit in Hiroshima, G7 leaders issued a communique calling for a derisking, not decoupling, of supply chains. The idea is to maintain economic ties with China even as they reduce dependencies in critical materials.

The approach is meant to appease the many countries in the Global South that are reluctant to take political sides. The U.S. and other Western nations seek Chinese cooperation in certain fields as well, like fighting climate change.

## THE MANILA TIMES

### [Breaking the potential of bamboo open](#)

By: Cora Llamas

The time of the "lowly" bamboo or kawayan, often associated with the Filipino qualities of resilience and adaptability, just might have come. Bamboo proponents believe this to be long overdue and have been advocating that the government list the use of the grass as a priority industry for development.

When it comes to climate change and environmental protection, bamboo, in comparison to trees, has a higher capacity to absorb and sequester carbon dioxide and give off oxygen. It also has a high capacity for rainwater infiltration.

Just recently, an "Amazing Bamboo" documentary, produced by Agriculture Undersecretary Deogracias Victor Savellano and Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council (PBIDC) council member Florentino Tesoro, chronicled how its raw material could produce at least 10,000 different kinds of products.

A PBIDC study enumerates some: construction for housing, school desks and chairs, furniture and handicrafts, architectural structures, chips for power generation, barbecue sticks, fish pens, textile production, charcoal briquettes and banana props, among others. To realize this potential, the country will need 402,886 hectares where the estimated current demand for 202.7 million bamboo poles can be sourced.

To compete in the international market, however, Tesoro says about a million hectares will be needed.

Yet even at a very conservative figure of 200,000 hectares a year – lower than the one given by the PBIDC study – the economy can still stand to benefit just from the sale of the poles coming from these areas.

Tesoro gives the math: "Multiply 1000 poles per hectare by 200,000 hectares and you get 200 million poles. Assuming that you can sell all of those 200 million poles at P100 each, that's P20 billion a year. These are just poles, not yet processed into products." He recommends setting aside another 200,000 hectares as bamboo areas for carbon credit. "One hectare of bamboo plantation, depending on spacing, can absorb 12 tons of carbon dioxide a year," he says.

The goals of bamboo organizations like the PBIDC and Kilusan 5K (of which Tesoro is president) are aligned with the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Road Map, a

strategic plan aimed at promoting the sustainable development of the bamboo industry in the Philippines.

The government formed the roadmap to harness the potential of bamboo as a key driver of economic growth, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability.

Fulfillment of the bamboo industry's potential, however, lies in finding those hectares – from 200,000 to 1 million – where bamboo can be planted and cultivated. Tesoro also stresses that these areas must be accessible and developed for commercial production and not located in remote areas that are hard to reach.

The PBIDC study estimates that there are at least 188,000 hectares in the Philippines that are being used for bamboo development. It obtained the data from sources like the National Forest Assessment, National Greening Program and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Still, Tesoro believes that there are a lot more areas that remain undocumented.

"We don't have records," he maintains. "We don't have a database of where the bamboos are – not the complete data. The report from the regions comes from the harvest of bamboo, for example, but the farmers who cut the kawayan are not recorded. The ones in the plantations may not be recorded [although their] materials get into the market."

Based on their research, the PBIDC names a list of plantation sites that collectively can reach the ideal 1 million hectares needed to grow the bamboo industry: ancestral domain lands (350,000 hectares), community-based forest management areas (200,000 hectares), mined out areas and non mineralized areas (140,000 hectares), nontenured NGP areas (100,000 hectares), nontenured forest lands (90,000 hectares), private lands (80,000 hectares), and military and naval reservations (40,000 hectares).

These areas are under the administration of either private owners or organizations like the DENR, Armed Forces of the Philippines and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. Tapping their areas for bamboo cultivation and development will need their agreement and collaboration.

Aside from a centralized database that can track and record the needed hectares, Tesoro's wish list includes the establishment of Village Bamboo Enterprises (VBEs) where "groups of families with adequate bamboo resources can be bundled into an economic enterprise in the processing of saleable bamboo products. By processing their poles, they can benefit from the added value that comes with processing rather than just being producers of raw materials."

Finally, to compete in the international market, he envisions the establishment of Bamboo Export Processing Zones (BEPZs). "The producers of poles would have a ready market," he says. "The village bamboo enterprises can be linked with the BEPZ bamboo manufacturers and supply their needs."

For example, a furniture manufacturer can at first process part of the product before shipping it to the locators who will assemble it into its final form. The usual waste in raw material will be lessened, and instead, the extra bamboo material can remain in the VBE where it can be turned into other products such as charcoal and barbecue sticks.

The fulfillment of those objectives will take time and for now, Tesoro and his colleagues have their eye on the immediate challenges: "The DENR should identify the forest lands where we can plant bamboo. We need investors to invest in bamboo plantations. We have to develop the plantations first - otherwise, we cannot move or compete."

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