



NEWS ROUNDUP

17 OCTOBER 2024 [08:00 am]

- Marcos Jr. calls for global collaboration to mitigate impacts of climate change and natural hazards
- Marcos calls for stronger int'l legal frameworks on disaster prevention, response
- Why countries need to fund climate solutions and disaster risk reduction fast
- [Opinion] Christmas Typhoons and the Heat: Harsh Climate Realities
- PH to host Loss and Damage Fund Board meeting in December
- DOJ touts bolstering environmental laws amid worsening climate change
- Philippines eyeing 'nature-based' solutions to climate change, says Marcos
- Marcos: Deeper innovation, closer cooperation vs climate change

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- Legarda highlights women's role as 'agents of change' in disaster risk governance
- Student leaders in Camarines Norte pledge to push for a plastic-free planet

ABS CBN

[Marcos Jr. calls for global collaboration to mitigate impacts of climate change and natural hazards](#)

By: Raphael Bosano

The Philippines is eager to explore collaborative opportunities with various countries to share best practices aimed at mitigating the impacts of natural hazards, as the challenges posed by climate change increasingly affect the global community.

[Marcos calls for stronger int'l legal frameworks on disaster prevention, response](#)

By: Pia Gutierrez

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr on Tuesday called for the establishment of stronger international legal frameworks that would guide disaster prevention and response, particularly in public protection.

[Why countries need to fund climate solutions and disaster risk reduction fast](#)

By: Raphael Bosano

As climate change continues to exacerbate extreme weather in the Philippines and all around the world, the need to fund mitigating measures to reduce risk from natural hazards and ensure resilience becomes even more important.

DAILY GUARDIAN

[\[Opinion\] Christmas Typhoons and the Heat: Harsh Climate Realities](#)

The festive season in the Philippines is becoming synonymous with a stark reminder of the climate crisis. The once calm and cool Christmas months are now marred by increasingly frequent tropical storms, often referred to as “Christmas typhoons.” At the same time, rising temperatures bring an uncharacteristically hot holiday season, leaving Filipinos grappling with a new normal.

GMA NEWS

[PH to host Loss and Damage Fund Board meeting in December](#)

By: Anna Felicia Bajo

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said Wednesday that the Philippines would host a Loss and Damage Fund Board meeting in December.

NEWS5

[DOJ touts bolstering environmental laws amid worsening climate change](#)

By: By Rodolfo Dacleson II

The Department of Justice (DOJ) on Sunday announced the amendment of Department Circular (DC) No. 20 to include the case build-up against violators of environmental laws.

[Philippines eyeing ‘nature-based’ solutions to climate change, says Marcos](#)

By: Gabriel Kim Leal

Pres. Bongbong Marcos Jr. on Friday reaffirmed the Philippines’ commitment to the United Nations (UN) in addressing climate change by promoting “nature-based” solutions.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Marcos: Deeper innovation, closer cooperation vs climate change](#)

By: Zacarian Sarao

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday stressed the need for “deeper innovation” and “closer cooperation” between countries against the impacts of climate change.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

MANILA BULLETIN

[Legarda highlights women's role as 'agents of change' in disaster risk governance](#)

By: Dhel Nazario

Senator Loren Legarda highlighted the significance of gender-responsive disaster risk governance, recognizing the role of women as leaders and agents of change.

[Student leaders in Camarines Norte pledge to push for a plastic-free planet](#)

By: The Climate Reality Project

Hosting its biggest group of students yet, Klima Eskwela capped off a successful 2024 run with a visit to the Camarines Norte State College (CNSC).

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

Marcos Jr. calls for global collaboration to mitigate impacts of climate change and natural hazards

By: Raphael Bosano

The Philippines is eager to explore collaborative opportunities with various countries to share best practices aimed at mitigating the impacts of natural hazards, as the challenges posed by climate change increasingly affect the global community.

At the ministerial dinner of the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) in Malacañan on Monday, President Ferdinand Marcos Junior highlighted the need to “learn from each other, strengthen partnerships and identify innovative ideas.

“All our efforts is climate change—an issue that we have integrated in our national and regional policies. From investment strategies to policy implementation, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation are now central to how we shape our future,” he said.

Minimizing the risk of disasters and losses, Marcos emphasizes, protects lives, livelihoods, and the economic assets that countless communities depend on.

“The increasing frequency and severity of natural hazards call for deeper innovation, for closer cooperation, and for sustained commitment from all of us.”

Studies indicate that as global temperatures rise, the world can expect more intense and extreme weather events. These phenomena cross borders, necessitating urgent and coordinated action from every nation in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Kamal Kishore, Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction describes the Philippines’ hosting of the APMCDRR and its work on disaster risk reduction as a “lighthouse” which gives inspiration to countries in the Asia Pacific Region and across the world.

Kishore highlights the country’s strong focus on community engagement, collaboration with various agencies and sectors, and partnerships with civil society in addressing climate change and natural hazards. However, he emphasizes that this vital work must continue to evolve.

“We only have five years left in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. We have to increase financing, we have to increase inclusion, we have to make sure that our efforts are localized,” Kishore said.

The plenary sessions of the APMCDRR will run until October 18 and will tackle various topics on climate change and disaster risk reduction.

Marcos calls for stronger int'l legal frameworks on disaster prevention, response

By: Pia Gutierrez

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr on Tuesday called for the establishment of stronger international legal frameworks that would guide disaster prevention and response, particularly in public protection.

Marcos Jr. made the statement as Manila hosts this year's Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) which aims to reduce the risk and impact of disasters in the world's most disaster-prone region.

The Philippines "is proud to lead the initiative toward developing an international legal instrument for the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters," Marcos Jr said at the APMCDRR opening program held at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

"This endeavor aims to fill critical gaps in international disaster response laws, uphold the rights and dignity of affected persons, establish clearer obligations, and enhance humanitarian coordination," the President said.

Marcos Jr. noted that as climate change and disasters are catalysts for human displacement, it is necessary to put in place "forward-thinking policies that create safe pathways for migration and to support those displaced by disasters so that they can rebuild their lives with dignity and security."

"We must ensure that every voice is heard and every person is empowered to contribute to disaster risk reduction and receives the assistance that they need if the time comes," he continued.

As climate champion, the Philippines "also humbly accepts the role as steward of the Board of the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage," Marcos Jr said.

"This reinforces our commitment to improving the Board's operations and to contribute to the success of its institutional architecture. We are hopeful for a Fund that will benefit climate vulnerable countries, many of whom are in our region," he said.

The President reminded Asia-Pacific countries to redouble and to synergize efforts to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which advocates for the substantial reduction of disaster risks and losses.

“We must harmonize our approaches and pursue meaningful actions under these mandates to secure a sustainable and climate-resilient future,” Marcos Jr said.

This includes a significant increase in investments and development of financing mechanisms in disaster risk reduction, as well as “sustained and predictable data and financing” to help better address disaster risks, he said.

“This entails ensuring that developing countries, particularly the least-developed countries, landlocked countries, and small island developing states, are provided greater access to these resources to advance their policies and build disaster resilience,” he said.

[Why countries need to fund climate solutions and disaster risk reduction fast](#)

By: Raphael Bosano

As climate change continues to exacerbate extreme weather in the Philippines and all around the world, the need to fund mitigating measures to reduce risk from natural hazards and ensure resilience becomes even more important.

Representatives of different Asia-Pacific countries and the private sector on Tuesday highlighted their best practices and provided insights at the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024, which they hope other governments can also look into to ensure that their citizens will be able to withstand devastation in the wake of natural calamities.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) President and Board Chair Masatsugu Asakawa says international institutions must step up to help build resilience.

“We can enhance financial resources and knowledge for disaster risk reduction (DRR), promote budgetary processes that respond to risk and strengthen the enabling environment for DRR,” he said.

From 2019 to 2027, Asakawa says the ADB has scaled up its ambition to provide \$100 billion for cumulative climate financing. One third of this amount is for climate change adaptation while it also supports the poorest countries in the form of grants.

In the Philippines, the private sector has also jumpstarted financing for climate solutions.

Ayala Corporation Chairperson Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala enumerated how they have instituted climate financing in their different lines of businesses to achieve resilience and sustainability.

“After Typhoon Haiyan, Globe Telecom, our telecommunications arm, built more resilient cell towers. Ayala Land continues to incorporate disaster related data in their estate planning ensuring properties are resilient, sustainable, and valuable,” he said.

He stressed that company leadership contributes largely towards greater climate awareness.

Further business continuity, according to experts, should also be planned and considered to be part of disaster risk reduction.

Officials also noted how both the public and private sectors can work together. In Japan, for example, cooperation agreements between the government and retail stores and logistics companies are in place to ensure the smooth flow and delivery of relief goods during times of disasters.

With the threat of climate-induced disasters becoming more imminent, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said integrated and transformative action must be fast tracked by using both local and traditional knowledge as well as data-driven, evidence-based and risk informed planning and financing.

“The commitments we make to science, innovation, and investments can fundamentally transform our risk landscapes and will determine the future of our communities,” said Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga.

On Tuesday, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. led the opening of the biennial conference where he called for the establishment of stronger international frameworks to help countries in the region towards better disaster mitigation and prevention and ensure the protection of lives and livelihood.

[\[Opinion\] Christmas Typhoons and the Heat: Harsh Climate Realities](#)

The festive season in the Philippines is becoming synonymous with a stark reminder of the climate crisis. The once calm and cool Christmas months are now marred by increasingly frequent tropical storms, often referred to as “Christmas typhoons.” At the same time, rising temperatures bring an uncharacteristically hot holiday season, leaving Filipinos grappling with a new normal.

According to the latest Philippine Climate Change Assessment (PhilCCA) report, typhoons during December to February have risen by 210% since 2012. In the southern regions of the country, this figure has surged by a staggering 480%. What used to be a relatively storm-free time of the year is now becoming a dangerous period, with intensified weather events wreaking havoc on communities. This shift in climate patterns is especially concerning given the Philippines’ high vulnerability to natural disasters.

On top of that, the country has experienced a steady increase in annual temperatures, rising by 0.77°C since 1951. The result? Hotter Christmases, urban heat islands, and nighttime temperatures that provide little relief from the sweltering days. While Filipinos are accustomed to humid Decembers, the added strain of climate change is pushing the boundaries of comfort and safety, particularly in densely populated urban centers like Metro Manila.

The rising frequency of Christmas typhoons and hotter holidays is not just a seasonal inconvenience; it’s a clear indicator of how climate change is reshaping the Philippines’ weather patterns. Scientists warn that these extreme events will only get worse, and their impact will be felt across various sectors, particularly agriculture, infrastructure, and public health.

Local governments must act swiftly and decisively to address these growing threats. The PhilCCA report outlines numerous challenges posed by changing weather patterns, but it also points to key strategies that can help mitigate their impact. For instance, strengthening disaster risk reduction efforts is crucial in the face of more destructive storms. Improved infrastructure, particularly in flood-prone urban areas, can protect lives and property.

Equally important is bolstering the country’s research infrastructure to better understand localized climate impacts. More weather stations, especially in remote areas, can

provide vital data to inform policy and response strategies. Without comprehensive and up-to-date climate data, efforts to protect vulnerable communities will be severely hampered.

Adaptation must become the priority for local governments. With rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns, cities need heat-resilient infrastructure, while agricultural regions should adopt water management systems that can cope with both droughts and floods. These investments will not only save lives but also protect the nation's economic backbone from climate-induced damage.

As the PhilCCA warns, climate change is no longer a future problem; it's here now. The hotter Christmas season and increasing number of storms during what should be a time of celebration are signs of the dramatic shifts taking place. It's up to policymakers and local officials to recognize this reality and take proactive steps to safeguard the country from further damage.

In the end, the most effective holiday gift that local governments can offer their constituents is preparedness. Investing in climate-resilient infrastructure, strengthening disaster response systems, and addressing data gaps should be at the top of their Christmas lists. Otherwise, we can expect each holiday season to bring more storms, more heat, and more heartbreak.

The climate crisis doesn't take a holiday break, and neither should our efforts to combat it.

GMA NEWS

PH to host Loss and Damage Fund Board meeting in December

By: Anna Felicia Bajo

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said Wednesday that the Philippines would host a Loss and Damage Fund Board meeting in December.

“In December there will be a meeting here of the Loss and Damage Fund Board—we will be the hosts, and we hope that there will be certain agreements reached, [one of which is] who will be actually funding the Loss and Damage Fund Board,” Loyzaga said at a Palace press briefing.

“The whole idea of the board and the fund is actually so that there can be funding sources from other than countries specifically,” she added.

In August, Marcos signed Republic Act 12019 that granted legal personality and capacity to the board of the climate disaster fund.

The Board, as the governing body of the fund, shall have juridical personality with full legal capacity to contract, acquire, and dispose of immovable and movable property, as well as institute legal proceedings.

The Philippine government in December last year secured a seat on the board of the Loss and Damage Fund, which seeks to help poor nations cope with costly climate disasters.

In July, the Philippines was selected to host the board.

NEWS5

[DOJ touts bolstering environmental laws amid worsening climate change](#)

By: By Rodolfo Dacleson II

The Department of Justice (DOJ) on Sunday announced the amendment of Department Circular (DC) No. 20 to include the case build-up against violators of environmental laws.

DOJ secretary Boying Remulla said the move was a demonstration of their resolve to penalize environmental crimes, which severely affect the country's "balanced and healthful ecology."

"It is our collective responsibility to preserve our existing ecosystems through a proactive stance that will advance environmental justice and the rule of law," said Remulla in a media release.

DC 20-B will be implemented to mandate prosecutors to assist law enforcement agencies during the case build-up for environmental crimes before they are filed in court.

"We need to turn the tide if we want to reach our common goal of achieving meaningful environmental justice within our lifetime," added Remulla. "This requires action from all fronts, including prosecutors and law enforcement alike, by becoming vanguards of environmental protection and conservation for our future generations."

The Philippines has been facing various environmental issues, including deforestation, plastic pollution, reclamation projects, illegal mining, and illegal fishing.

During his State of the Nation Address last July, Pres. Bongbong Marcos Jr. asserted the Philippines' proactive stance on climate responsibility.

According to the World Risk Index, the Philippines has remained the most at-risk nation to natural disasters for the third straight year.

A report by non-government organization Global Witness also revealed that the Philippines has remained the most dangerous country in Asia for environmental defenders for the 10th straight year.

Under Marcos, 10 environmental defenders have been killed, while seven others have been forcibly disappeared.

Marcos has been criticized by environmental groups for merely providing “lip service” instead of concrete solutions to mitigate the troubling climate change.

[Philippines eyeing 'nature-based' solutions to climate change, says Marcos](#)

By: Gabriel Kim Leal

Pres. Bongbong Marcos Jr. on Friday reaffirmed the Philippines' commitment to the United Nations (UN) in addressing climate change by promoting "nature-based" solutions.

peaking at the 14th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-UN Summit in Laos, Marcos noted the importance of "promoting biodiversity" as a key strategy to mitigate climate change.

"Please be assured that the Philippines will advance our regional agenda within the wider UN framework," said Marcos. "We look forward to our officials' discussion of policies and actions to accelerate risk reduction in the face of climate change and other uncertainties."

The Philippines will be holding the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction next week in Manila.

The Philippines was selected last July to host the Loss and Damage Fund Board, a global finance mechanism aimed at helping vulnerable nations cope with climate change.

In August, Marcos signed Republic Act No. 12019 or the Loss and Damage Fund Board Act.

Marcos said hosting the said board "will provide critical assistance to nations most vulnerable to climate change impacts."

Environmental groups, however, have voiced criticisms against Marcos for offering "lip service" rather than implementing concrete measures to combat environmental issues.

According to the World Risk Index, the Philippines remained the most at-risk nation to natural disasters for the third straight year.

During his State of the Nation Address in July, Marco touted the government's flood control projects worth billions of pesos, only to get slammed when Super Typhoon Carina and the southwest monsoon submerged Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Scientists said this was made significantly worse by human-induced climate change.

“With global temperatures rising, we are already witnessing an increase in these ocean temperatures, and as a result, more powerful fuel is being made available for these tropical cyclones, increasing their intensity,” said Nadia Bloemendaal of the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Marcos: Deeper innovation, closer cooperation vs climate change](#)

By: Zacarian Sarao

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday stressed the need for “deeper innovation” and “closer cooperation” between countries against the impacts of climate change.

Marcos made the pronouncement during a ministerial dinner for the 2024 Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) in Malacañang.

According to Marcos, the conference paves the way for a vital opportunity that would allow different participating countries and international bodies to share knowledge, build stronger partnerships, and implement innovative strategies against the effects of climate change.

“The increasing frequency and severity of natural hazards call for deeper innovation, for closer cooperation, and for sustained commitment from all of us,” said Marcos in a speech, noting how the Philippines remains to be among the countries most exposed to disasters such as typhoons, earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions.

“Through this conference, we are presented with the opportunity to explore new avenues for collaboration, especially in leveraging science and technology to alleviate the impact of climate change and ensuring that disaster risk reduction financing is accessible to all,” he added.

The President also noted how the APMCDRR will be conducted at a time when the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction “has never been more critical.”

Article continues after this advertisement

The Sendai Framework refers to the global blueprint for disaster risk reduction, which outlines how countries can work together to identify and reduce risks before turning into disasters.

“Our vision is clear: to reduce disaster risks and losses, protecting lives, livelihoods, and the social and economic pillars of our societies,” Marcos said.

Article continues after this advertisement

The APMCDRR will be held from Oct. 14 to Oct. 18 at the Philippine International Convention Center or PICC in Pasay City.
More than 4,000 delegates from 69 countries are expected to participate in the event.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

MANILA BULLETIN

[Legarda highlights women's role as 'agents of change' in disaster risk governance](#)

By: Dhel Nazario

Senator Loren Legarda highlighted the significance of gender-responsive disaster risk governance, recognizing the role of women as leaders and agents of change.

"These girls already have a vision for a future where they can thrive. Our role is to ensure they have the resources, education, and leadership opportunities to turn that vision into reality," Legarda said during her speech at the 2024 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR).

"Beyond inclusion, women and girls—and all marginalized groups—must harness their creativity and ingenuity to lead sustainable solutions to our most pressing development challenges," she added.

Legarda lamented that disasters disproportionately affect women, girls, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and marginalized communities, especially in areas such as the Asia-Pacific region.

Citing data from the World Health Organization, PWDs are up to four times more likely to die during disasters.

The four-term senator also told the attendees that their respective countries must ensure that early warning systems, evacuation procedures, and recovery plans must be accessible to everybody, removing barriers that prevent full participation.

Local communities, that are on the frontlines of disaster response, must be empowered through education, resources, and capacity-building.

"Building resilience is about amplifying the voices of those often unheard—women, girls, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities," remarked the lawmaker.

"Let us commit to inclusive governance, where every voice is heard, and no one is left behind."

In her years of public service, Legarda has made sure to pass laws that enshrine gender equality.

Among them are the Magna Carta for Women and the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, which ensure the protection and empowerment of women in the context of disasters.

Gender representation at the highest level of decision-making in the Climate Change Commission—the lead policymaking body on climate change—is ensured as it is required to have at least one woman commissioner.

[Student leaders in Camarines Norte pledge to push for a plastic-free planet](#)

By: The Climate Reality Project

Hosting its biggest group of students yet, Klima Eskwela capped off a successful 2024 run with a visit to the Camarines Norte State College (CNSC).

Klima Eskwela aims to make advocates out of the youth. Its lectures were designed to leverage students' experience with global warming and, in turn, stir them into action.

More than 80 student leaders from CNSC and neighboring schools joined the two-day event, where they were taught to craft campaigns against plastic dependence. Senior high school students were also among the attendees.

This Klima Eskwela leg was made possible by The Climate Reality Project Philippines' partnership with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and CNSC's Union of Supreme Student Government (USSG).

Speakers included CCC Development Management Officer Jean Kyle Wernher Dela Cruz, Climate Reality Leaders Joey Totanes of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office and Vincer Quibrall of Glorious Land Ecofarm, and teacher Sarah Kimberly Cacho from the Vinzons Pilot High School.

Also in attendance were Matt Jenno Balce from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Camarines Norte and Engr. Victor Zabala, head of the Labo Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office.

CNSC sits beside a busy highway in the provincial capital. On a normal school day, its red-roofed buildings are abuzz with chatter. With students rushing to class or relaxing under the shade of trees, laughter is never out of earshot.

Not all days at CNSC are normal, however. There are times when campus grounds are empty, silenced by class suspensions due to extreme weather events.

Located right beside the Pacific Ocean, Bicol Region (of which Camarines Norte is part) is especially prone to typhoons. Camarines Norte is also vulnerable to high temperatures, reaching a heat index of 42 degrees Celsius last summer.

“Yung papa ko po is a rice farmer. ‘Yung sakahan namin ay tuyong-tuyo na, tapos wala pang water source dahil sa bundok siya. [...] Minsan lang, ang ginagawa niya ‘di na siya nagtatanim ‘pag ganitong sobrang init. Kasi sa sobrang init, wala kaming makukuhanan ng tubig na malapit, kaya naghihintay na lang siya ng tag-ulan. Kaya naapektuhan kami

kasi ‘yun lang ang source ng income ng papa ko. Ang hirap,” said Danica Yet, a student from CNSC’s Labo Campus.

(My father is a rice farmer. Our rice field is so dry, and because it’s up in the mountains, we don’t have a water source for it. Sometimes, when it gets this hot, my father no longer plants rice because there is no water source. So he waits for the rain. It affects us because that’s my father’s only source of income. It’s difficult.)

Hence, when Climate Reality Philippines’ Klima Eskwela came to CNSC, the students in attendance needed no introduction to global warming. Their familiarity with climate change has impacted more than their home and school life—it has also marred their plans for the future.

“Matagal na po kasi akong concerned sa climate change, and it has been impacting my mindset recently kasi minsan napapaisip ako if worth it pang magpatuloy mag-aral. [...] Minsan nade-depress ako kasi paano ‘pag nag-graduate ako tapos biglang [nagkaroon ng calamity] tapos nawala ‘yung pinaghirapan ko,” shared Ivan Lamadrid, a student from CNSC.

(I’ve been concerned with climate change for a long time, and it has been impacting my mindset recently because I keep thinking if studying is still worth it. [...] Sometimes I get depressed because what if after I graduate, a calamity comes and renders my hard work useless?)

The students were given a sensory mapping task to help stem these anxious thoughts. Using various art materials, participants created astounding illustrations of what a bright future looks like to them. Their works incorporated concepts of renewable energy, disaster resilience, and sustainable community development.

Sowing the seeds of a plastic-free reality

A huge chunk of Klima Eskwela’s sessions also shed light on a crucial aspect of global warming: the plastic crisis. The discussion on plastics was led by Aimee Oliveros, the head and deputy branch manager of Climate Reality Philippines’ Plastic-Free Reality Program.

“We want to focus Klima Eskwela on plastics because we see that it’s very apparent [in our communities]. And you, the youth, have the power to look for solutions and be part of the solution,” said Oliveros.

The Plastic-Free Reality Program, Klima Eskwela's mother project, aims to raise awareness on how the plastic industry is a leading driver of climate change. Commonly attributed to pollution, plastics actually contribute to making our planet hotter in every stage of its life cycle.

Pollution is incidentally another issue close to the participants' hearts, with their school so close to a huge landfill teeming with plastic waste. Combine that with their experience with global warming, it was not difficult to convince them of the link between plastics and climate change.

Anecdotes and questions poured from the crowd following the eye-opening lectures, especially after CCC's discussion on eco-friendly solutions to the plastic crisis.

The enthusiasm from the students was channeled right into a series of campaigning workshops, led by AktivAsia Philippines. These sessions taught students how to prioritize a plastic issue in their school and formulate plans to address it.

Young as they were, the students proved to be very perceptive on how their schools should eliminate plastic usage. With guidance from CCC and AktivAsia, they succeeded in crafting draft campaigns. Most of their ideas focused on revising existing policies to reflect stricter measures on plastic consumption and waste management.

Climate action taking root

Among the crowd were leaders from the USSG, whose efforts brought Klima Eskwela to their school. The USSG officers are also actively working toward making their campus greener by proposing a revamp of their school's environment policy.

"The environmental policy [na pino-propose namin], malawak siya eh. We're urging CNSC as a community to declare climate action. And in declaring so, pinakauna naming priority dito ay magkaroon ng green procurement policy ang CNSC, by this itutulak talaga niya 'yung projects and procurements [that are good for the environment]. Part nito 'yung solarization [ng energy sources] and 'yung hindi na paggamit ng plastics [sa campus]," said USSG Chair Adonis "Undo" Salen II.

(The environmental policy [that we're proposing] is expansive. We're urging CNSC as a community to declare climate action. And in declaring so, our first priority here is for CNSC to have a green procurement policy, and by this, it will push for projects that are good for the environment. These include the [solarization of energy resources] and eliminating the use of plastics [in the campus].)

The USSG is optimistic that even after Klima Eskwela, the students will continue learning new ways to campaign against plastics. Taking pride in the event's success, Salen shared how eager the participants were to share their learnings with their classmates.

“Naniniwala kami na hindi lang learnings o knowledge ang dala sa amin ng [Klima Eskwela] kundi ang pag-asa rin na hindi ‘yung mga problema o climate impacts ang end. Mayroon pang espasyo para gumalaw tayo. [...] I think this is a step to igniting the passion of the youth in climate action,” said Salen.

(We believe that Klima Eskwela brings to us not only knowledge but also hope that the adverse effects of climate change are not the end. We have the space to take action.)

This was ultimately showcased in Klima Eskwela's last activity, wherein the students were asked what kind of leaders they wanted to be. Many pledged to be an inspiration to their fellow youth, while a number wanted to start advocating at home.

After each answer, the students passed a ball of yarn around to form a huge web, linking one to the others. From this connection, the organizers hope there springs a lifelong commitment to climate action.

=END=