



NEWS ROUNDUP

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- Leaders, advocates at SGS 2024 tackle education, climate change, liveable cities
- ASEAN universities craft food security guidelines, climate change micro-credentials implementation
- APMCDRR 2024: The Philippines Fosters Call for Localized, Inclusive, and Sustainably Financed Disaster Risk Reduction Efforts
- Unprecedented Water Stress
- Green economy blooms with sustainability bonds
- Diamond dust injection may help reduce global warming
- Disaster risk reduction a must in PH school curriculum – Legarda
- Remulla to LGUs: Integrate disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation in local planning
- Pagsama sa usapin ng disaster risk reduction at climate change adaptation sa aralin ng mga estudyante, itinutulak ni Senadora Loren Legarda
- Heherson Alvarez: Patriot, statesman, and outstanding Filipino

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- DTI a role model in plastic pollution control — CCC
- CCC, pinuri ang DTI sa patakaran na pagbabawal sa paggamit ng single-use plastic sa pasilidad ng ahensya
- Single-use plastics ban in govt offices pushed
- Should the CCC be placed under the DENR? CCC wants global cooperation for 'transformative' climate action

Rappler

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By Michelle Abad, Kaycee Valmonte

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The Manila Times

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TDT

The Philippines and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) on October 14 to 18 successfully hosted the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024, bringing together over 4,000 delegates from governments; international, national and civil society organizations; the private sector; and the academe and scientific community, on a common path to resilience.

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Philippine News Agency

[Diamond dust injection may help reduce global warming](#)

Injecting 5 million tons of diamond dust annually into the stratosphere could lower the Earth's temperature by 1.6 degrees, potentially easing global warming, according to Science.org.

Inquirer

[Disaster risk reduction a must in PH school curriculum – Legarda](#)

By Maila Ager

Sen. Loren Legarda had this in mind when she presented the idea during a dinner in Malacañang with UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) head Kamal Kishore, and Education Secretary Sonny Angara, among others.

DILG

[Remulla to LGUs: Integrate disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation in local planning](#)

Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Juanito Victor ‘Jonvic’ Remulla on Thursday called on local government units (LGUs) to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in local planning to help achieve climate and disaster resilience.

Radyo Pilipinas News

[Pagsama sa usapin ng disaster risk reduction at climate change adaptation sa aralin ng mga estudyante, itinutulak ni Senadora Loren Legarda](#)

By Nimfa Asuncion

Minumungkahi ni Senadora Loren Legarda na bumalangkas ng module para sa mga paaralan patungkol sa disaster risk reduction at climate change adaptation.

Manila Bulletin

[Heherson Alvarez: Patriot, statesman, and outstanding Filipino](#)

By Former Speaker of the House Jose C. De Venecia Jr.

Former Senator Heherson “Sonny” Alvarez and this columnist saw each other more than a month ago, when he and his beloved wife, Cecile Guidote-Alvarez, visited us in our office in Makati. Cecile, a multi-awarded theater artist and culture and arts advocate, came to discuss with us an “art festival/forum for peace and climate justice” to be held in Manila, hopefully in September this year, which she is spearheading, with the full support of her husband Sonny and various government and non-government institutions.

CCC in the News

[Single-use plastics ban in govt offices pushed](#)

By Catherine S. Valente

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has pushed for a ban on single-use plastic in government offices to contribute to the government's broader climate change agenda.

Daily Tribune

[DTI a role model in plastic pollution control — CCC](#)

TDT

National agencies should take the cue from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in dealing with plastic pollution, according to the Climate Change Commission (CCC).

Bombo Radyo

[CCC, pinuri ang DTI sa patakaran na pagbabawal sa paggamit ng single-use plastic sa pasilidad ng ahensya](#)

Nilabas ng Department Trade and Industry (DTI) ang bagong Department Order No. 24-172, s. 2024 na naglalayong ipagbawal ang single-use plastic sa buong DTI offices at kanilang mga pasilidad.

Manila Times

Should the CCC be placed under the DENR?

By Ludwig Federigan

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) is vital to the country's efforts in addressing climate change through the formulation and implementation of national policies and programs. In a recent budget hearing, a senator suggested that the CCC could just be placed under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The question of whether the CCC should be situated within the DENR warrants careful consideration, as this decision could significantly impact governance, policy execution and overall climate action strategies.

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Rappler

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By Michelle Abad, Kaycee Valmonte

MANILA, Philippines – In creating change in the Philippines, it is possible to envision a country with no one left behind, various advocates highlighted in Rappler’s 12th Social Good Summit on Saturday, October 19.

On Saturday, Rappler hosted its annual Social Good Summit themed “Be The Change: How Storytelling and Technology Empower Changemakers” at De La Salle University Manila. The jam-packed day featured discussions with government officials, analysts, influencers, and advocates, on how to harness technology to fix perennial problems that plague a wealth of areas: education, the information ecosystem, Philippine elections, climate change, and making cities liveable.

Storytelling in fixing the education crisis

The keynote speech by Education Secretary Sonny Angara set the tone for the summit, as he described his first 100 days since President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. appointed him to the position. In around three months, Angara said the department was “sober” enough to admit that the new leadership was still navigating the vast landscape of the Department of Education (DepEd).

“I just want to make the trains run on time,” he said, fully aware that this may even be seen as “unambitious or unvisionary.” But it is still nonetheless a goal, he said, especially when the majority of Philippine learners have yet to hold a school book, or use the internet.

“Data is the means. The end, as the President emphasizes, is to better Filipino lives. The goal is for students, teachers, and parents to tell better stories, to have better stories, to have their own stories. And stories start with dreams,” he said.

The nitty-gritty of making this work was discussed in the panel on the role of technology in addressing the education crisis. Rappler CEO and Nobel Peace Prize winner Maria Ressa moderated the panel featuring Angara, Maria Mercedes Rodrigo, who heads the Ateneo Laboratory for the Learning Sciences, and Save the Children CEO Alberto Muiot.

But embracing new technologies comes with a reminder to make sure our young learners still “touch grass,” Rodrigo said.

“If you go to any public space, any restaurant with families in it, you’ll see that [parents] hand their kids the cellphone to keep them quiet and to placate them... How do we encourage our students or children to... touch grass? How do we encourage them to get out and actually be out in the sun?” she said.

Tech platforms as a tool

Tech platforms can also be an avenue for people to build safe spaces. On Tiktok — where false narratives and misinformation thrive — some were able to use the platform for good by sharing their knowledge and expertise, building their own communities in the process.

In the “Content Creation for A Cause” panel hosted by Rappler Senior Producer JC Gotinga, creators Arshie Larga, Lyqa Maravilla, Jo Sebastian, and Buji Babiera fleshed out how they were able to tap the platform to share their respective advocacies through bite-sized content.

Larga started out by creating content on his interests, although things did not initially work out for him so he went back to focus on being a pharmacist. It was during the onset of the pandemic, after noticing how people in his community started self-medicating and hoarding medicine, when he found an unmet niche: “I think I have the credibility to speak about these certain issues.”

He noted that part of why his videos are doing well is because of how he explains pharmaceutical and medical terms, which can be intimidating for the ordinary Filipinos.

Most creators thriving on the platform look like they just filmed their content on the fly, using their phone, and only did minimal edits on it, giving a more “authentic” feel. Nutritionist-dietitian Sebastian pointed out that this is TikTok’s magic — the videos make you feel as if you’re “just talking to a friend.”

The platform’s algorithm, however, is unpredictable. Babiera said that it pays to be consistent so that audiences would eventually recognize what kind of content you make, while Larga reminds creators that it helps to create what is not only entertaining but also educational.

Creating content can be lucrative. However, since their content is tied to their personal advocacies, Maravilla shares that they “say no more times than [they] say yes” to partnerships.

Why? Their credibility and their work will be on the line.

Meanwhile, Ressa also discussed in a separate panel the possible harm that tech brings with Signal Foundation president Meredith Whittaker.

The emergence of tech advances has also increased concerns on data privacy as well as the possibility of the loss of jobs, for instance, as AI does make certain tasks easier. (READ: Will IT-BPM workers and students survive without AI skills?)

“Things like a self-driving car or what is advertised as AI actually is a worker somewhere in the world, behind the screen, steering that car, or the Tesla robot... actually had humans somewhere around the world, behind the screen, directing the robot how to act because these systems aren’t actually capable of doing that themselves,” Whittaker said.

Safeguarding the elections

This year’s Social Good Summit also came months before the 2025 midterm elections, which may still be at risk of online disinformation that plagued the last elections in 2022.

With emerging technologies like generative AI, the chances are more daunting than ever.

The panel on protecting information integrity and truth tellers amid elections, moderated by Rappler managing editor Miriam Grace Go featured Commission on Elections chairperson George Garcia, Information and Communications Technology Undersecretary Jeffrey Ian Dy, Rico Domingo of the Movement Against Disinformation (MAD), and TV5 news anchor Ruth Cabal.

People, Person, Crowd

Cabal was victimized by a deepfake scam in December 2023, where her likeness was used to create a “report” on an investment platform announced by “Robin Padilla.” When she first watched it, she had honestly thought it was her voice, until the pronunciation of “pesos” convinced her it was fake.

After reporting it to Facebook, it took almost two weeks before it was taken down. “It’s just scary – what if a family invests their savings in it?” she said in a mix of Filipino and English.

Go noted how broadcasters were increasingly being used in deepfake videos. These may carry dire consequences if used for malicious political agenda.

But even without a law, advocates like MAD continue to do whatever work is possible to protect targets of disinformation. Dy also said that when a government’s data is compromised, they must not stop communicating with the public. (READ: AI misuse feared to impact integrity of 2025 elections. Here’s what concerned groups can do.)

Garcia reminded the public that despite the challenges in disinformation and compromised information ecosystems, the public still had the power to practice critical thinking, help fellow voters who need guidance, and hold candidates accountable for their commitments.

“Eleksyon pa rin ang magandang simula ng lahat. Eleksyon din ang katapusan ng lahat (The election is still the fresh start of everything. The election, too, is what is at the end of everything),” he said.

Building climate-resilient, livable cities

As the public becomes more aware of how climate change can impact their day-to-day, there have also been more demands for public open spaces and infrastructure for active transportation.

The discussion on how the Philippines can create climate-resilient cities was moderated by Rappler environment reporter Iya Gozum, and had Office of Civil Defense (OCD) Deputy Administrator Daffy Alejandro, UP Resilience Institute and Project NOAH director Dr. Mahar Lagmay, Quezon City Assistant Administrator for Operations Alberto Kimpo, and Placemaking Pilipinas co-founder Elijah Go Tian.

Kimpo pointed out that among the challenges is that some local governments do not know what the national targets are to build climate-resilient cities, therefore the absence of a program or projects related to this. The OCD noted that they are “trying to come up with a better structure” in terms of coordination with local government units (LGUs) for disaster mitigation, planning, and response.

The problem, however, is that regions such as Metro Manila would need a “holistic” plan to address different problems of each city.

In a separate panel led by Pia Ranada, head of Community at Rappler, with Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, Muntinlupa Mayor Ruffy Biazon, and Isabela City Mayor Sitti Hataman, it was noted that the ensuring the consistency and streamlining of local projects — such as flood mitigation and creating transportation plans — can be done through agencies with cross-border authority such as the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

Lagmay emphasized that research done and intended for the local communities around the country is also key to making these plans happen. The UP Resilience Institute (UPRI) has worked with 30 to 40 cities and municipalities that plan for certain climate change scenarios.

“We cannot have knowledge coming from Israel or coming from Europe about corn that’s adaptive to climate change, we need to have research that is local that can be used by the local government for the community,” Lagmay said.

While the road to building climate-resilient and livable cities involves a whole-of society approach, all projects would still need the commitment of local leaders. But these faces change, however, every election cycle.

“We are asking LGUs to institutionalize their local disaster risk management office,” Alejandro said.

“We have long-term plans, we have a lot of plans that we need to implement but our challenge really is about continuity.” – Rappler.com

The Manila Times

[ASEAN universities craft food security guidelines, climate change micro-credentials implementation](#)

By Leander Domingo

SOME 29 delegates from various Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) universities converged in a workshop to craft guidelines for food security and climate change micro-credentials implementation in Chon Buri Province, Thailand on Oct. 15, 2024.

These universities include the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), Central Luzon State University (CLSU), and Visayas State University (VSU) in the Philippines; Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), and Universitas Brawijaya (UB) in Indonesia; Maejo University (MJU) and Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand; and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS).

The workshop "Developing Guidelines for the Monitoring, Review, and Evaluation of Micro-Credentials," jointly led by UPM and UMS, is part of the Postgraduate Micro-Credentials in Food Security and Climate Change (PMC FSCC) project, which runs until 2026 and started in 2023.

With KU handling the logistics as the project leader, the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (Searca), the secretariat of the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC), actively participated in the workshop.

The project is funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) program. Erasmus+ CBHE provides short-term courses through micro-credentials to address food security and climate change challenges.

Leveraging technological innovations, the project will deliver online learning modules tailored to these pressing issues, according to Searca.

During the workshop, Assoc. Prof. Wan Marzuki Bin Wan Jaafar, PhD, dean of the UPM Faculty of Educational Studies, welcomed the participants and facilitated the proceedings. Assoc. Prof. Buncha Chinnasri, PhD, PMC FSCC project leader, presented updates on recent activities and milestones.

The deputy director of the UPM Center for Academic Development and Leadership Excellence, Assoc. Prof. Masnida Binti Hussin, PhD, shared the survey results among participating universities, offering insights into current micro-credential practices.

Prakash Murgappa Bhuyar, PhD, assistant dean of the MJU International College, commended UPM and UMS for their preparatory work, which helped streamline the workshop's collaborative efforts.

Also during the workshop, Searca said participants were divided into working groups for more efficient discussion and feedback on the draft guidelines and other concerns while

UPM and UMS responded to the participants' feedback, refining the draft guidelines further.

Lim Thien Sang, PhD, UMS Flexible Education Center director, also led a session on the proposed implementation strategy.

Searca noted that after incorporating outcomes from two upcoming activities, the Workshop on Quality Assurance Guidelines from October 20 to 29 in Bali, Indonesia, and Micro-Credential Module Development, the developed guidelines for monitoring, review, and evaluation of micro-credentials will undergo final adjustments.

On behalf of Searca and the UC, Nur Azura Binti Adam, PhD, Searca deputy director for programs, thanked project partners for their active engagement.

Emphasizing Searca's support for the project's sustainability, Adam reaffirmed the center's commitment to advancing the goals of the PMC FSCC.

Meanwhile, meeting separately to discuss the upcoming International Conference on Micro-credentials for Food Security and Climate Change on Feb. 11 and 12, 2025, in Thailand were project members from CLSU, IPB, KU, and Searca.

SBS PH showcases eco-innovation at PlasTIK expo

SBS Philippines Corp. participated at the 2024 PlasTIK (Plastic Technology, Innovation, and Knowledge) Expo and Forum on Oct. 10 and 11, 2024 at the SM Megamall Trade Hall.

Organized by the Department of Science and Technology (DoST) and SM Investments Corp., the event gathered industry stakeholders to discuss environmental challenges and explore pathways to a circular economy.

As the world increasingly faces resource depletion, waste management, and climate change, the need for sustainable practices has become urgent. Consequently, the 2024 PlasTIK Expo served as a platform for experts to share insights and develop strategies for promoting sustainability.

As one of the exhibitors, SBS Philippines showcased its innovative product, solutum. This biodegradable polymer aims to eliminate single-use plastic waste. Moreover, solutum breaks down naturally, thereby reducing the environmental impact of traditional plastics.

By offering such sustainable materials, SBS is committed to helping industries transition away from single-use plastics.

"Our participation in the 2024 PlasTIK Expo clearly demonstrates our dedication to sustainable solutions. With Solutum, we aim to lead the way in eliminating single-use plastics and promoting a healthier planet," SBS Philippines Corp. President and CEO Gerry Tan stated.

SBS Philippines Corp. is a leading provider of strategic chemical supply solutions. It delivers innovative and environmentally responsible products.

DAILY TRIBUNE

APMCDRR 2024: The Philippines Fosters Call for Localized, Inclusive, and Sustainably Financed Disaster Risk Reduction Efforts TDT

The Philippines and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) on October 14 to 18 successfully hosted the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024, bringing together over 4,000 delegates from governments; international, national and civil society organizations; the private sector; and the academe and scientific community, on a common path to resilience.

The conference focused on disaster risk financing, inclusivity, gender, risk governance, and localization. These pillars are aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which outlines targets and priorities designed to prevent new disaster risks and reduce existing ones.

Leading the opening of APMCDRR 2024 were President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Disaster Risk

Reduction Kamal Kishore, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga, and Department of National Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro.

“This conference presents us with a grand opportunity to send a powerful message to the world: The Asia-Pacific is not only prepared to overcome the trials of tomorrow — we are also ready to lead in disaster risk reduction and climate action,” President Marcos said.

The President’s pronouncement set the tone for the APMCDRR, which produced significant discussions from the 140 plenary and working sessions and partner events that were led by over 500 moderators and speakers. Underscored in these sessions were the urgent need for countries in the Asia-Pacific — considered the most disaster-prone in the world — to intensify DRR and climate change adaptation efforts through partnerships, synergies, and innovations.

“The APMCDRR has been rich with ideas, insights, and commitments. The wealth of knowledge and innovations that exist across Asia-Pacific is a reminder of why this region leads the world in shaping the global DRR agenda,” Secretary Yulo Loyzaga said.

Throughout the conference, several sessions underscored the key priorities for DRR, emphasizing their alignment with the Sendai Framework’s goals of fostering resilient and inclusive communities.

Localization

Underscored in these sessions was the urgent need for localization, focusing on the importance of community-driven solutions in building resilience. Leaders and experts from across the region highlighted the crucial role that local leaders and communities play in DRR.

Secretary Yulo Loyzaga emphasized that while progress has been made, localization remains “one of the key challenges” in the Philippines. She stressed the importance of not only collecting accurate data but also understanding the local context in which that data is applied. “We need to not only learn how to collect good data, but also understand

context,” she stated, pointing out that valuable insights are often lost when data and analytics are not contextualized at the local level.

This underscores the ongoing need to align local knowledge with cutting-edge tools.

Secretary Teodoro emphasized the importance of empowering local government units (LGUs), which are, “in many ways, in a better position to address the needs of their communities.” He added that enhanced cooperation between government agencies has strengthened disaster preparedness and recovery efforts by leveraging their specialized expertise.

President Marcos echoed the importance of community involvement in his opening speech, reinforcing the Philippines’ commitment to “empowering our local authorities and working closely with our youth to implement nature-based and ecosystem-centered solutions that honor their local traditions.”

This collaborative approach is central to DRR efforts, fostering a sense of ownership among residents, as Shaminoden M. Sambitory of the Lanao del Sur Provincial DRR Office explained: “We have to convince and help our communities participate... This collaborative approach ensures the programs reflect the community’s needs and foster ownership.”

Across the Asia-Pacific, international cooperation and traditional knowledge are strengthening localized efforts. Maria Socorro Abalahin of the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) emphasized the importance of building capacities in partnership with local duty-bearers and stakeholders, while Dr. Casper Fibæk from the European Space Agency shared how Copernicus data supports localized solutions by monitoring environmental changes. Additionally, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) underscored the value of living heritage in DRR efforts, with Lu’isa Uai Taunga advocating for integrating cultural practices like poetry and songs to raise youth awareness.

The APMCDRR 2024 reaffirmed that localization is not just a strategy — it is key to achieving resilient, contextually relevant solutions that can withstand the complex challenges of the region’s unique disaster risks.

In their remarks, President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., together with Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga and Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, Jr., highlighted the significance of empowering communities as a vital element of resilience.

Securing sustainable financing for DRR

Securing sustainable financing for disaster risk reduction (DRR) is another crucial pillar in building resilient communities across the Asia-Pacific region. While countries like the Philippines have made notable progress in utilizing disaster risk financing tools, significant challenges remain in scaling these initiatives. There are clear opportunities to leverage public-private partnerships and access global funds for disaster reduction and recovery, but persistent issues such as inconsistent investment, misalignment of climate finance with development goals, and limited cross-sector collaboration continue to hamper progress.

During the conference, governments were urged to significantly boost their DRR budgets. This call reflects the need for a concerted, regional effort to ensure communities are equipped to withstand and recover from future disasters. Increased investments in DRR were highlighted as critical to achieving long-term resilience, especially as the region faces growing threats from climate change and natural hazards.

Participants from multilateral development banks, bilateral donors, and international financial institutions acknowledged the need for increased financial support. The scale of disaster displacement requires significant resources not only for immediate relief but also for long-term recovery and the socioeconomic development of vulnerable communities.

“There must be an increase in financing, an increase in inclusion to support displaced populations, and greater investment in local governments and civil society organizations,” said Sanny Jegillos, Practice Coordinator (Disaster) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Inclusivity in DRR: Leaving No One Behind

Inclusivity in DRR is another vital pillar for ensuring that all communities, especially the most vulnerable, are protected and empowered to build resilience against natural hazards. By incorporating inclusive approaches, DRR efforts can better address the specific needs of marginalized groups — such as women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities — who are often disproportionately affected by disasters. Their active participation in DRR planning and implementation not only promotes equity but also strengthens the effectiveness of resilience strategies, making communities better prepared to withstand and recover from future risks.

Philippine Senator Loren Legarda underscored the importance of giving women and vulnerable groups a voice in shaping the post-2030 Sendai Framework. She advocated for a disaster management system that embraces diversity and inclusion at every stage, from planning to recovery. Legarda also highlighted the significant challenges persons with disabilities face in accessing resources during disasters, particularly in remote and underserved areas. She called for greater collaboration across sectors to address these disparities and ensure that no one is left behind in disaster resilience efforts.

“Resilience cannot be achieved by working in silos,” Legarda said. “Kanya-kanya, in the Tagalog word meaning to each their own, spells disaster. Governments, the private sector, civil society, local communities, the education sector – all must collaborate to create inclusive and innovative solutions.”

There are clear opportunities to advance gender-responsive strategies, empower persons with disabilities as leaders in disaster preparedness, and strengthen grassroots initiatives that equip local communities with resilience tools. By fostering a whole-of-society approach and enhancing international cooperation, there is potential to build more inclusive, coordinated disaster risk governance systems that address the needs of diverse populations. By addressing gaps and fostering collaboration at all levels, a more resilient, equitable, and inclusive DRR framework can be achieved, ensuring that communities are protected and supported.

Leveraging Development Finance for Greater Action on Climate and Disaster Displacement: Experts called for increased financial support to address disaster displacement, emphasizing both immediate relief and long-term recovery.

Strengthening Resilience Through Convergence and Synergy

As the conference concluded, Secretary Yulo Loyzaga emphasized the urgent need for interconnectedness, coherence, and convergence in drr. She highlighted that only by aligning efforts across sectors and ensuring collaboration at all levels can resilience be effectively built.

Echoing this, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction Kamal Kishore stressed that governments and organizations must work together and converge across sectors to create robust, inclusive, and well-financed disaster risk governance systems. Sustained investment, localized approaches, and the inclusion of all voices — especially those of vulnerable groups — are essential to ensuring the Asia-Pacific region is better prepared to withstand and recover from future disasters.

“As we close the chapter on this successful ministerial, UNDRR will ensure that our deliberations here will inform the preparation for the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which will take place in June 2025.” concluded Kishore.

The APMCDRR 2024 reaffirmed that the path to resilience lies in collective action and the implementation of disaster strategies that are localized, inclusive, and sustainably financed, leaving no one behind.

Green economy blooms with sustainability bonds

By Kathryn Jose

BDO already issued three tranches of peso-denominated ASEAN Sustainability Bonds to increase funds for environment-friendly projects.

One of the issues tackled during last week’s Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) hosted by the Department of Environment and Natural

Resources and the United Nations Office for DRR was the need for more funds to mitigate the impact of calamities.

One way of financing DRR is through sustainability bonds. Such debt securities are issued to raise capital specifically for financing projects that provide both environmental and social benefits, such as renewable energy (RE), energy efficiency, waste management, pollution reduction, sustainable agriculture, conservation, affordable housing, education, healthcare, poverty reduction and programs that enhance social equality.

BDO Unibank Inc., a member of the SM Group, is committed to helping businesses preserve and protect the environment by raising funds through sustainability bonds.

As a member of The Asian Transition Finance Study Group since 2021, BDO Unibank creates financing mechanisms and global standards and categories for selecting projects that truly lead to less if not zero carbon emissions. The bank also has its Sustainable Finance Framework that supports the goals of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in ensuring sustainable growth of industries in the region and protecting vulnerable communities from the worst effects of climate change.

The framework covers RE, energy and water efficient buildings, less polluting transportation, recycling, sustainable and smart agriculture, and livelihood for micro, small and medium entrepreneurs.

BDO already issued three tranches of peso-denominated ASEAN Sustainability Bonds (ASBs) to increase funds for environment-friendly projects. The latest ASB was issued in July with BDO raising P55.7 billion. It also raised P63.3 billion from an ASBs issued in January 2024.

The second batch marked BDO's biggest single bond issuance early this year as the bond proceeds emerged 12 times higher than the initial offer of P5 billion.

One notable project reportedly funded by BDO out of ASB proceeds was the 197-megawatt solar power plant of Citicore Renewable Energy Corporation in Tuy, Batangas.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said BDO and other universal banks have approved sustainability loans worth over P830 billion since the middle of 2022.

The Center for Energy, Ecology and Development Philippines said the global shift to cleaner energy among firms and consumers is partly being driven by declines in RE prices: 85 percent both for solar energy and lithium-ion batteries and 55 percent for wind energy.

PhilStar

[Unprecedented Water Stress](#)

By Boo Chanco

As if the problems arising from wars and pandemics are not worrisome enough, we now have to live with the growing fear that the world is also running out of water. Even though about 71 percent of the Earth's surface is water-covered, and the oceans hold about 96.5 percent of all Earth's water, the water we need to grow our food and sustain life is in short supply in more and more places.

A new study by the Global Commission on the Economics of Water reports that “for the first time in human history, human activities are fueling a growing water disaster that will wreak havoc on economies, food production and lives. A global water crisis could ‘spiral out of control’ due to overconsumption and climate change.” Data analyzed by this study concludes that half the world's food production is in areas where water availability is projected to decline.

Quoting the study, CNN reports that “decades of destructive land use and water mismanagement have collided with the human-caused climate crisis to put ‘unprecedented stress’ on the global water cycle... Disruptions to the water cycle are already causing suffering. Nearly 3 billion people face water scarcity. Crops are shriveling, and cities are sinking as the groundwater beneath them dries out.”

CNN explains that “the consequences of this water crisis will be even more catastrophic without urgent action. The water crisis threatens more than 50 percent of global food production and risks shaving an average of eight percent off countries’ GDPs by 2050, with much higher losses of up to 15 percent projected in low-income countries, the report found.”

“For the first time in human history, we are pushing the global water cycle out of balance,” said Johan Rockström, co-chair of the Global Commission on the Economics of Water and a report author. “Precipitation, the source of all freshwater, can no longer be relied upon.”

The crisis is made more urgent by the huge need for water. The report calculates that, on average, people need a minimum of about 4,000 liters (just over 1,000 gallons) a day to lead a “dignified life,” far above the 50 to 100 liters the United Nations says is needed for basic needs, and more than most regions will be able to provide from local sources.

Urban and industrial growth and agriculture are compounding existing shortages, with agriculture alone using up 70 percent of the world’s water supply. Extreme and prolonged droughts, made more frequent and severe by the climate crisis, are also putting pressure on ecosystems, which could have “dire consequences” for plant and animal species, the report’s authors said.

For Filipinos, the question can be asked: What else is new? With a population of 115 million people, access to safe water in the Philippines has long been a big challenge for most of the population. According to UN and UNICEF data, 53 percent of households in the Philippines lack access to a safely managed water supply, and 39 percent lack safe sanitation. Some 55 percent of schools lack access to a safely managed water supply, and 26 percent lack safe sanitation.

Back in 1995, the Water Crisis Act was passed, recognizing the need for the government to adopt urgent and effective measures to address the nationwide water crisis, which adversely affects the health and well-being of the population, food production and the industrialization process. Not much has happened because our leaders believe they have done their job after debating and passing a law.

Shortly after he was sworn into office, BBM said the Philippines is facing a water crisis, with some 11 million families lacking access to clean water as the dry season approaches. Speaking during the sixth Water Philippines Conference and Exposition in Manila, BBM said: “I call it a water crisis because it is.”

Thereafter, BBM certified a bill that will create a Department of Water to enable the government to pull our efforts and resources together to better address our water problems. Not sure at what stage the bill is now. The only thing certain is we are doing nothing to sufficiently address the water crisis.

Mega Manila is very water-insecure. We are 85 percent dependent on Angat Dam, down from 95 percent as Manila Water and Maynilad Water have built water purification facilities along the shores of Laguna de Bay, and Ricky Razon's Wawa Dam is getting completed ahead of schedule.

The problem with using water from Laguna de Bay is pollution. Manila Water and Maynilad Water have set up water treatment facilities along the lake shore because it was necessary to augment the water provided by Angat Dam. The treatment cost is roughly one-tenth the cost of using desalination to treat seawater. The water from Maynilad's side of the lake is more polluted and more expensive to process than water from Manila Water's eastern lakeshore.

What is critical now is the completion of the Kaliwa Dam project. It took MWSS ten years to get most, but not all, of the permits from DENR and the LGUs. The project will supposedly be completed in three years, but no MWSS official will confirm that. In the meantime, the water concessionaires will have to better manage water loss or non-revenue water (NRW). A 10 percent reduction in consumption will provide a 300-400 million liters/day security buffer that should help in a serious drought situation.

So much of the rainwater is wasted without water catchment infrastructure. The World Bank reported that the Philippines has about 50 cubic meters per person of storage. Vietnam has 500, while Thailand has 1,500. If we invested in building visible water storage all over the country rather than ghost flood control projects, that should help, especially outside NCR.

The creation of the Department of Water is urgently needed so responsibility for handling this crisis can be readily pinpointed.

Philippine News Agency

[Diamond dust injection may help reduce global warming](#)

Injecting 5 million tons of diamond dust annually into the stratosphere could lower the Earth's temperature by 1.6 degrees, potentially easing global warming, according to Science.org.

Researchers were inspired by past instances where volcanic smoke and particles cooled the Earth by covering the atmosphere.

They believe diamond dust in the stratosphere could reflect sunlight and reduce heat.

In the fight against global warming, scientists explored controversial geoengineering solutions, including dumping iron into oceans and launching mirrors into space to cool the planet.

One of the proposals is a solar geoengineering method known as "stratospheric aerosol injection," which involves spraying aerosols into the stratosphere to create a cooling effect similar to a volcanic winter, to reduce the sun's effect.

Historical volcanic eruptions caused global winters

In the past, volcanic eruptions released millions of tons of sulfur dioxide into the stratosphere, where sulfate aerosols formed through reactions with water vapor and other gases.

The aerosols reflected sunlight into space, causing volcanic winters. The most recent example was the 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, which cooled the Earth by 0.5 degrees for several years.

Inspired by that event, scientists considered injecting sulfate aerosols into the atmosphere.

They found, however, that artificial sulfur injections could lead to sulfuric acid rain, damage the ozone layer and disrupt weather and climate patterns in the lower atmosphere.

Research explores less harmful compounds: Calcite, diamond, aluminum

Climate scientist and postdoctoral researcher Sandro Vattioni and his team from ETH Zurich in Switzerland investigated alternative substances to sulfur dioxide.

The team wanted to find global particles that can remain in the atmosphere longer, do not trap heat by clumping and can reflect sunlight.

To achieve the result, they developed a 3D climate model that analyzes the chemistry of aerosols, their atmospheric movement and thermal responses.

In addition to sulfur dioxide, they tested seven compounds, including calcite -- the main component of limestone, diamond, and aluminum.

Each trial was conducted on a supercomputer, evaluating the effects of each compound for 45 years in real-time for more than a week.

3D Model: Diamond dust could cool Earth by 1.6 degrees

The results indicated that diamond particles are highly effective at reflecting radiation and can remain airborne longer without clumping.

Additionally, diamonds are preferred because they do not engage in reactions that could produce acid rain, unlike sulfur.

Vattioni said that to achieve a lasting effect, 5 million tons of diamond dust would need to be injected into the stratosphere annually, potentially cooling the planet by 1.6 degrees.

Diamond option: USD200 trillion, 2,400 times costlier than sulfur

Vattioni said sulfur is the second-worst option due to its tendency to absorb light at certain wavelengths, which can trap heat and disrupt climate patterns, similar to El Niño effects.

Some scientists, meanwhile, estimate that spraying diamond dust into the atmosphere annually by 2100 would require about USD200 trillion, making it 2,400 times more expensive than sulfur dioxide, leading them to consider sulfur a more efficient choice.

The research was published in Geophysical Research Letters.

Inquirer

[Disaster risk reduction a must in PH school curriculum – Legarda](#)

By Maila Ager

Sen. Loren Legarda had this in mind when she presented the idea during a dinner in Malacañang with UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) head Kamal Kishore, and Education Secretary Sonny Angara, among others.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos hosted the dinner in Malacanang early this week.

“I suggested that we develop a module for DepEd (Department of Education) schools for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and Secretary Angara was very excited,” Legarda said in an interview with Senate reporters on Thursday.

“We could help develop modules for the Department of Education,” she added, referring to other concerned agencies like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Climate Change Commission.

The module, she said, could be a part of the curriculum – a subject in schools or a part of Araling Panlipunan.

“When there’s a module to be taught in the DepEd, isn’t that great? The children will learn, and from a young age, they will appreciate the importance of preparation,” [Legarda, a known fierce advocate for environmental protection](#), said in Filipino.

“We should start them young. And not just teach them when they’re already a grown-up,” she added in mixed Filipino and English.

This initiative is also in line with the existing Environmental Awareness and Education law, according to the senator.

Signed in 2008, the law mandates the promotion of environmental awareness by integrating environmental education into school curricula at all levels, whether public or private.

In another meeting with the UNDRR chief, Legarda said she hopes to learn more about how other countries integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in their basic education.

“Other countries, of course, have their own vulnerabilities, right? Bangladesh, even Indonesia, Vietnam, because everywhere, no one is spared, right?” she said, also noting the flooding in other parts of the world, including Europe.

“So each country has its own hazards and risks. So each also has its own adaptation to those things,” she further explained.

DILG

[Remulla to LGUs: Integrate disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation in local planning](#)

Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Juanito Victor ‘Jonvic’ Remulla on Thursday called on local government units (LGUs) to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in local planning to help achieve climate and disaster resilience.

“The DILG recognizes that mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in local planning is critical in ensuring that risks and vulnerabilities at the community level are addressed,” Remulla said.

“Proper land use planning is crucial in determining how communities develop and in reducing their vulnerability to hazards like floods, landslides, and storms,” he added.

The DILG Secretary stressed this during the 3rd plenary session on localization and urban and rural resilience of the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk

Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024 at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

“Beyond warning systems, preparedness drills, and emergency response, strategic land use planning can help achieve climate and disaster resilience,” said Remulla.

He also shared that the DILG has been helping LGUs achieve full compliance on the preparation, updating, and strict implementation of their Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP).

According to Remulla, a total of 651 or around 39 percent of cities and municipalities have updated their CLUPs; 837 or 51 percent are up for updating; and the remaining 146 or 9 percent still have no CLUPs.

He likewise called for concrete plans amid growing issues on climate change, citing proactivity and strategy as key to long-term resilience. “We do not have the luxury of time because climate change is here, it's here now.”

“We still have a lot of ground to cover. We hope that this activity will trigger concrete actions that will strengthen local capacities and build resilient communities,” he added.

The 2024 APMCDRR, with the theme “Surge to 2030: Enhancing ambition in AsiaPacific to accelerate disaster risk reduction”, is the largest biennial gathering which aims to accelerate progress in reducing disaster risk in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Radyo Pilipinas News

[Pagsama sa usapin ng disaster risk reduction at climate change adaptation sa aralin ng mga estudyante, itinutulak ni Senadora Loren Legarda](#)

Minumungkahi ni Senadora Loren Legarda na bumalangkas ng module para sa mga paaralan patungkol sa disaster risk reduction at climate change adaptation.

Ayon kay Legarda, mahalagang maaga pa lang ay namumulat na ang mga kabataan sa naturang isyu nang makatulong sila sa pagbawas sa epekto ng climate change.

Suhestiyon ng senadora, magtulungan ang Department of Education (DepEd), ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at ang Climate Change Commission sa pagbuo ng pinapanukala niyang module.

Pwede rin aniyang maging bahagi ng curriculum sa mga eskwelahan ang module at maisama sa paksang Araling Panlipunan.

Naiparating na aniya ng mambabatas ang suhestiyon niyang ito kay Education Secretary Sonny Angara nang makipagpulong kasama si UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction head Kamal Kishore.

Ang rekomendasyon ay kahanay din ng ipinatutupad na Environmental Awareness and Education law na nagmamamandato ng pagpapalaganap ng environmental awareness sa pamamagitan ng pagsasama ng environmental education sa school curriculum sa lahat ng level.

Manila Bulletin

[Heherson Alvarez: Patriot, statesman, and outstanding Filipino](#)

By Former Speaker of the House Jose C.De Venecia Jr.

Former Senator Heherson “Sonny” Alvarez and this columnist saw each other more than a month ago, when he and his beloved wife, Cecile Guidote-Alvarez, visited us in our office in Makati. Cecile, a multi-awarded theater artist and culture and arts advocate, came to discuss with us an “art festival/forum for peace and climate justice” to be held in Manila, hopefully in September this year, which she is spearheading, with the full support of her husband Sonny and various government and non-government institutions.

During their visit, Sonny, as former Senator Heherson Alvarez was fondly called, was in his usual self, especially when he was in the company of friends. He was jovial and loquacious. We reminisced about our respective political battles when we were still active in the political arena. We also exchanged views on national events and global issues. As always, he was profound, eloquent, and passionate.

As both of us are in our eighties (Sonny Alvarez was 80 years old and we are 83), we also talked about our health and daily regimen. Sonny was actually healthier and stronger for his age. Curiously, we did not talk about the dreadful Coronavirus (Covid-19) which, sadly, later claimed his life.

Before we parted ways, Sonny, Cecile and we agreed to meet with our “core group” for lunch or dinner at a mutually convenient schedule. As it turned out, it was the last time we would ever see him.

Heherson “Sonny” Alvarez served our country with great distinction, both in the executive and the legislature, and in his private capacity; before he entered public service and even after he retired from the government.

He was a member of the 1971 Constitutional Convention, two-term senator, Isabela representative, secretary of Agrarian Reform and of Environment and Natural Resources, and commissioner of the Climate Change Commission (CCC).

He was also the founder of Earth Savers Movement, a now 29-year-old organization devoted to environmental protection and the battle against climate change.

As many Filipinos know, environment and climate change are among the issues closest to Sonny’s heart, which he championed at the time when only very few people paid attention to or cared to understand. Truly, Sonny Alvarez embraced causes larger than himself and he was ahead of his time.

As a legislator, he authored landmark legislation, among which, are the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, Department of Energy Law, Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, Solid Waste Management Act, Clean Air Act, National Commission on Culture and the Arts Law, and the Indigenous People’s Rights Law.

A steadfast advocate of democracy and human rights, he fiercely and fearlessly fought Martial Law, endured tremendous difficulties while in self-exile in the United States with his wife Cecile, and served as secretary general of the Movement for Free Philippines (MFP), founded by another great Filipino democrat and father of Christian democracy in Asia, the late Senator and Foreign Affairs Secretary Raul Manglapus.

We must confess that earlier, like many of the friends of Sonny and Cecile Alvarez, when we learned that they were in critical condition at the hospital due to Covid-19 and while we offered prayers for their recovery, we were more worried for Cecile than for Sonny. As some may know, Cecile Alvarez is a cancer survivor.

As of this writing, our dear friend Cecile has been discharged from the hospital. Our family and friends continue to storm heavens with prayers for her full recovery and for her emotional and spiritual strength as we know how immensely painful it is for her to lose her beloved husband Sonny.

May Cecile and their children be consoled by the thought that Sonny is now with our Creator, in a place where there is no more pain and suffering.

And so we bid farewell to our dear friend Sonny Alvarez. His remarkable life and outstanding legacy have carved a niche in our nation’s history. He will never be forgotten.

CCC in the News

Manila Times

[Single-use plastics ban in govt offices pushed](#)

By Catherine S. Valente

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has pushed for a ban on single-use plastic in government offices to contribute to the government's broader climate change agenda.

This was after CCC commended the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) for the issuance of an order which bans the unnecessary use of single-use plastics across all DTI offices and facilities nationwide.

"By eliminating single-use plastics in its operations, DTI sets a benchmark for how national agencies can lead efforts to combat pollution, protect marine ecosystems, and reduce the carbon footprint of government operations," CCC vice chairman and Executive Director Robert Borje said in a statement.

"Plastics, often made from fossil fuels, contribute to greenhouse gas emissions throughout their lifecycle—from production to disposal. Reducing reliance on these materials lessens the burden on landfills, prevents marine pollution, and curbs greenhouse gas emissions," he added.

Borje said that the CCC has consistently advocated for integrating climate policies at all levels of government.

"DTI's order reflects this advocacy that we hope will create a ripple effect that will inspire other national agencies, local government units, and private institutions to adopt similar measures," he said.

He noted that the policy also supported the Philippines' Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement, especially in the waste sector.

"Through this initiative, DTI contributes to the country's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve sustainability goals," he said.

Further, Borje said that the initiative "aligns with the broader targets of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), which promotes climate resilience through waste reduction and sustainable consumption."

Borje added that "the CCC encourages other government agencies to adopt similar measures and calls on all sectors of society to reduce reliance on single-use plastics, promote reusable alternatives, and engage their stakeholders in these efforts."

He reiterated that the CCC remained committed to work with agencies to translate policies into action.

Borje said, "The issuance of Department Order No. 24-172 demonstrates how policy can improve sustainability, reduce ecological degradation, and strengthen national climate resilience. We congratulate DTI on this initiative and urge other agencies and sectors to take similar bold steps."

Daily Tribune

[DTI a role model in plastic pollution control — CCC](#)

TDT

National agencies should take the cue from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in dealing with plastic pollution, according to the Climate Change Commission (CCC).

DTI has banned the unnecessary use of single-use plastics across all its offices and facilities nationwide through the issuance of Department Order 24-172 this year.

In a statement, CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje said the ban is a significant contribution to the government's broader climate agenda.

"By eliminating single-use plastics in its operations, DTI sets a benchmark for how national agencies can lead efforts to combat pollution, protect marine ecosystems, and reduce the carbon footprint of government operations," he said.

"The CCC has consistently advocated for integrating climate policies at all levels of government. DTI's order reflects this advocacy that we hope will create a ripple effect that will inspire other national agencies, local government units, and private institutions to adopt similar measures," Borje added.

"We congratulate DTI on this initiative and urge other agencies and sectors to take similar bold steps," the CCC chief said.

According to Borje, DTI's policy also supports the Philippines Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement, especially in the waste sector.

"Through the plastic ban, the agency contributes to the country's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve sustainability goals. It aligns with the broader targets of the National Adaptation Plan, which promotes climate resilience through waste reduction and sustainable consumption," Borje said.

Bombo Radyo

[CCC, pinuri ang DTI sa patakaran na pagbabawal sa paggamit ng single-use plastic sa pasilidad ng ahensya](#)

Nilabas ng Department Trade and Industry (DTI) ang bagong Department Order No. 24-172, s. 2024 na naglalayong ipagbawal ang single-use plastic sa buong DTI offices at kanilang mga pasilidad.

Pinuri naman ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) ang ganitong hakbang ng ahensya at naniniwalang ang naturang ahensya ay nagtakda ng standard hinggil sa kung paano ang ahensya makakatulong sa paglaban sa polusyon, protektahan ang marine ecosystems at sa pagbawas ng mga carbon footprints ng mga government agencies.

Hinimok din ng komisyon ang iba pang mga ahensya na sumunod sa mga ganitong hakbangin upang makatulong sa pagbabawas ng epekto ng climate change.

Ang Climate Change Commission (CCC) ay ang policy-making body ng gobyerno pagdating sa mga hakbang ng mga ahensya ng gobyerno sa kanilang climate actions.

Manila Times

[Should the CCC be placed under the DENR?](#)

By Ludwig Federigan

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) is vital to the country's efforts in addressing climate change through the formulation and implementation of national policies and programs. In a recent budget hearing, a senator suggested that the CCC could just be placed under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The question of whether the CCC should be situated within the DENR warrants careful consideration, as this decision could significantly impact governance, policy execution and overall climate action strategies.

One of the primary arguments for placing the CCC under the DENR is the potential for improved coordination and efficiency in policy execution. Climate change is closely linked to various environmental issues such as biodiversity conservation, forest management, waste management and land use. By positioning the CCC within the DENR, a more unified approach to environmental governance could be achieved.

Climate strategies often require action across multiple sectors; housing both organizations under one roof can foster smoother interagency collaboration, enhance synergies and reduce bureaucratic delays in decision-making processes.

Integrating the CCC with the DENR will allow for more strategic allocation of resources, both financial and human. Climate change initiatives can leverage the existing expertise, infrastructure and funding channels that the DENR offers. This could lead to more effective resource utilization, particularly in areas like research, capacity building and community engagement.

The integration could promote knowledge exchange, allowing the experience and insights within the DENR regarding environmental conservation to inform climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, ensuring they remain grounded in ecological realities.

Combining the two entities could also enhance accountability and transparency, creating clearer lines of authority and responsibility in addressing climate issues. Climate governance would benefit from the DENR's established public accountability frameworks, which would facilitate better reporting and compliance mechanisms.

The DENR has a history of engaging local communities and stakeholders on environmental matters. This engagement could be amplified, ensuring a broader audience is involved in the discussion and fostering a culture of accountability.

Several countries in the Asia-Pacific region have successfully integrated climate change agencies within their environmental ministries.

Japan has established a comprehensive framework for climate governance through its Ministry of the Environment (MOE). The MOE coordinates climate action while managing policies related to natural resources and environmental conservation. Japan employs a two-pronged approach: first, it integrates climate and environmental policies to ensure that sustainability is pursued holistically rather than in a segmented manner; second, it actively engages nongovernmental organizations, local communities and the private sector to gather input on climate policies, fostering transparency and enhancing the effectiveness of implemented programs.

South Korea's Green Growth Strategy, led by the Ministry of Environment, exemplifies effective climate policy integration. It emphasizes a synergistic policy development that highlights the interconnection between environmental health and economic growth, promoting energy transition, sustainable land use and urban planning. Stakeholder involvement in the policymaking process ensures that the various sectors' concerns and needs are reflected in national strategies.

In Europe, Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom have aligned their climate governance with their environmental ministries. Germany's model of integration allows for aligned goals on renewable energy (RE) and pollution reduction, which fosters comprehensive legislation and cohesive implementation.

The UK's Climate Change Act and its implementation through the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy illustrate how effectively integration can produce robust climate strategies connected to broader environmental goals. Norway's climate strategy incorporates its environmental policies within a unified framework,

resulting in significant advancements in RE investments, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and enhanced climate resilience.

These countries demonstrate how such organizational structures can facilitate coherent governance and effectively adhere to international climate commitments. By studying the frameworks of nations that have successfully integrated climate initiatives within their environmental portfolios, the Philippines can adopt best practices for its own governance structure, thereby enhancing its power in international climate negotiations.

As Republic Act 9729, or the Climate Change Act of 2009, celebrates its 15th anniversary on October 23, it is worthwhile to assess whether the lead coordinating government body on climate change effectively fulfills its mandate and to identify potential gaps that hinder its performance of the latter.

While integration has its benefits, it is crucial to consider counterarguments such as the potential loss of autonomy, increased bureaucratic complexity and the need for a dedicated focus. Despite the challenges currently faced by the CCC leadership, critics will argue that placing the CCC under the DENR may compromise its independence, making it vulnerable to other environmental priorities that could overshadow climate issues.

Moreover, given the environment-related challenges confronting the DENR, merging these two significant bodies could introduce unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles, potentially reducing the efficiency of climate action rather than improving it.

Scientists' statement that "climate change is a distinct and complex issue" underscores the need for dedicated attention that might be diluted within the broader jurisdiction of the DENR.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

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