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24 October 2022 [08:20 am]

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[Agri modernization, climate risks top Asean labor agenda](#)

By: Samuel Medenilla

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INSIDE CLIMATE NEWS

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By Marianne Lavelle

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MANILA STANDARD

[Vietnam's 'wave of repression' threatens climate goals: rights groups](#)

By: Agence FRance-Press

A “new wave of repression” in Vietnam is jeopardising progress in tackling climate change, human rights groups told UN chief Antonio Guterres Friday as he began a visit

to Hanoi. Vietnam, which has an economy heavily reliant on coal, has committed to reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

MINDA NEWS

[Research probes links between extreme weather events and violent conflicts in the Bangsamoro](#)

By: Carolyn Arguillas

DAVAO CITY (MindaNews / 23 October) – While the peace processes between government and the Moro liberation fronts have converged for a smoother implementation of the peace agreements, old drivers of conflict in the Bangsamoro region could resurface and new drivers could emerge as climate change intensifies into the level of emergency.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[DOE project luring users to directly buy renewable energy falls flat](#)

The Department of Energy (DOE) will revise the rules governing a program that allows users to directly buy power from renewable energy sources as it is proving unpopular.

[Think global, act local to transform our planet](#)

By: Poul Due Jensen

With urbanization here to stay, our future lies in our cities. The Philippines' urban population is projected to double by 2050, while Southeast Asia's urbanization rate is at an all-time high.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Filipino journo for innovation in info drive on climate change](#)

Istanbul – Backing the practice of "smart agriculture" in a country like the Philippines, a senior journalist from the Southeast Asian nation on Thursday vouched for innovation in news dissemination on the issue of environment and climate change.

[PAVI eyes 1,000 MW of renewable energy in next 3 to 5 years](#)

Manila – Prime Asset Ventures, Inc (PAVI), through its renewable energy arm PAVI Green, is set to achieve up to 1000MW within the next three to five years to solidify the group's commitment to providing clean and sustainable energy.

[QC urban farmers help fight climate change](#)

By: Marita Moaje

Manila – Quezon City’s vision, for the next eight years at least, will focus on addressing poverty, food security, and environmental crisis.

RAPPLER

[Australia signs up to global pledge to cut methane emissions by 30%](#)

By: Reuters

Sydney, Australia – Australia’s climate change minister Chris Bowen on Sunday, October 23, said the government has joined the Global Methane Pledge as part of multilateral efforts to reduce global methane emissions.

SUNSTAR

[Groups propose local laws on environment, sustainability](#)

By: Iona Finlay Mendoza

Davao-based non-government organizations have proposed a set of new city ordinances focusing on sustainability and the environment to the 20th City Council of Davao on October 21, 2022.

THE MANILA TIMES

[GEOP 'game changer' in PH energy transition](#)

By: Eireene Jairee Gomez

The Green Energy Option Program (GEOP) is a "game changer" in the country's energy transition, which empowers consumers to switch from being part of the captive market, which is mostly fossil fuel-based, to running on 100-percent renewable energy, climate advocates said.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Quezon City vows more good, green jobs by 2030](#)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte has joined world mayors in calling for a common effort to create 50 million good, green jobs by the end of the decade, during the C40 World Mayors Summit in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

[Rebuilding differently for resilience in the Philippines](#)

By Kanni Wignaraja, Selva Ramachandran

For Filipinos, the last months of the year spur preparations for the year-end holiday festivities, but they also come with a premonition of devastating tropical cyclones that frequent the region during this season. In the past, they were few. However, the past decade has been unrelenting – dotted with a list of typhoon names, each recalling memories of destruction, of livelihoods disrupted, of lives lost.

[UN, Philippines to discuss development goals](#)

By Elizabeth Marcelo

MANILA, Philippines — The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Philippine government would discuss a possible collaboration on development priorities towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

THE STAR

[Climate anxiety affects half of world's youth; numbers very high in the Philippines, says global study](#)

Manila, Oct 22 (Philippines Daily Inquirer/ANN): Climate anxiety is gripping nearly half of the world's youth, who, while motivated to take action and help save the planet, are hindered depending on where they live, according to a recent global study that looked into how climate change is hurting people's mental health.

CCC IN THE NEWS

CBC EGYPT

[Philippine Climate Change Minister: The issue of climate change is complex and no country alone will be able to solve the crisis](#)

The Philippines' role here is significant. What we want to do is to amplify and articulate the important principle of climate justice. And that we all need at this point to agree on this principle and this is a basis for our urgent action so that we can unlock the many things that need to be done for the entire world community to address climate change and its impacts.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Agri modernization, climate risks top Asean labor agenda](#)

By: Samuel Medenilla

Agriculture modernization, digitalization, and the impact of climate change on employment are among the main issues on the agenda of the 27th Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) Labor Ministers Meeting (ALMM) to be hosted by the country this week, according to the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

Labor and Employment Secretary Bienvenido E. Laguesma will chair the ALMM, to be held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Bonifacio Global City from October 25 to 29.

It will be the first face-to-face ALMM since the onset of the pandemic in 2020.

Also a first in the event, Laguesma said agricultural modernization and food security are included among the top priorities in the meeting.

“This is a good development for the Philippines as it is fully aligned with the strategic priorities of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s socioeconomic agenda,” Laguesma said in a press statement on Sunday.

Emerging trends

Other issues to be tackled: the review of the progress of various regional programs on skills development, digitalization, climate change and green jobs, industrial relations and the changing world of work, migration and social protection.

On skills training, Laguesma said they will talk about upgrading competency and professional qualifications standards and the delivery of technical and vocational education and training (TVET); making ICT (information and communication technology) and digitalization accessible to all.

“The meetings will also highlight the need for more effective regional responses to unemployment especially in rural communities, rising food prices, and inflation, which are now among the biggest threats to workers’ welfare and well-being in the region,” Laguesma said.

Labor officials from the 10 Asean member-states—Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines—are participating in the event.

Laguesma said they will also hold meetings with ASEAN Plus Three dialogue partners China, Japan and South Korea.

Labor participation

Nagkaisa Labor Coalition chairman and Federation of Free Workers (FFW) president Sonny Matula said the ALMM participants are also expected to meet with labor representatives.

“The actual meeting will be for labor ministers only, but they are expected to also meet with labor representatives during the side event [of the ALMM],” Matula told BusinessMirror in a SMS.

He said they endorsed Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) Chairperson Elmer Labog to be their representative in the event.

Labog said he will raise the issues of trade union rights violations, low wages, and unemployment in case their meeting with labor ministers pushes through. As of press time last Sunday, DOLE has yet to confirm if the ALMM participants will be meeting with employer or labor representatives.

BUSINESS WORLD

Green Energy rules to be revised following low participation levels

By: Ashley Erika Jose

The Department of Energy (DoE) said it will revise the rules of Green Energy Option Program (GEOP) to encourage more participants to buy power from renewable energy sources.

“On this matter, we are planning to release a draft policy subject for focus group discussion by the first quarter of next year,” Jordan M. Ballaran, senior science research specialist of the DoE’s Renewable Energy Management Bureau, said in a virtual briefing last week facilitated by the Clean Energy Investment Accelerator.

The GEOP is authorized by the Renewable Energy Act of 2008, open to end-users with monthly average peak demand of 100 kilowatts or more over the past 12 months.

Mr. Ballaran said that to date, uptake has been weaker than expected, with 158 end-users currently enrolled under GEOP.

“There are some provisions under the Energy Regulatory Commission rules that are not harmonized with the DoE rules,” Mr. Ballaran said.

According to the DoE, retail electricity suppliers only need a permit from the DoE to enroll to the program, but the ERC requires end-users to secure permits from both agencies.

Mr. Ballaran said that the department will discuss harmonizing the rules with the ERC.

“We can always resort to amendments to rules or supplemental policies in the future. We will solicit comments from the public and industry stakeholders by conducting public consultations,” he said.

FORBES

[At COP 27 In Egypt, Climate Accountability Will Be Challenging](#)

By: Michael Posner

The U.N. climate conference known as COP 27 will convene in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt next month. Sadly, the prospects of this meeting yielding any meaningful results seem remote.

Addressing the existential global threat of climate change seems even more daunting given the energy crisis caused mainly by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a continuing Covid health emergency, a global economic downturn tied to inflation, and a divided world reeling from various strains of authoritarianism. Holding the meeting in Egypt only adds to these strains and seems antithetical to the objective of bringing governments, corporations, and civil society together.

Since he seized power in 2014, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has led an assault on human rights in Egypt. His government has arrested more than 60,000 people on political grounds, according to reports by human rights groups. Sisi has silenced dissent, dismantled the independent media, undermined courts, and stifled a once-vibrant civil society.

There are credible reports linking government security forces to extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and torture of prisoners. Egyptians now refer to their country as a “republic of fear.”

Not surprisingly, Sisi’s government has imposed severe restrictions on environmental groups and will strictly curtail civil society participation in COP 27. Human Rights Watch reported in September that, “those working on these issues have been arrested, forced into exile, or silenced through a slew of bureaucratic restrictions that make research impossible.”

The Egyptian government has lashed out at Human Rights Watch, calling the organization’s report “misleading,” and characterizing its release as “deplorable and counterproductive.”

Five U.N. human rights experts echoed the same concern. “Arrests and detention, NGO asset freezes and dissolutions and travel restrictions against human rights defenders have created a climate of fear for Egyptian civil society organizations to engage visibly at the COP27,” they wrote earlier this month.

To date, neither governments nor the private sector have lived up to the commitments they made at the COP conference held in Paris seven years ago. This underscores the essential role environmental activists play in holding officials’ and executives’ feet to the fire.

The Paris Agreement, which was heralded by governments, business leaders, and many civil society activists as a major achievement, set a long-term goal to keep the mean global temperature lower than 2 °C (3.6 °F) above pre-industrial levels and preferably limiting the increase to 1.5 °C (2.7 °F). To reach these levels, governments agreed that emissions needed to be cut by roughly 50% by 2030. All but four governments have now ratified the Paris Agreement, though neither governments nor the private sector have come close to meeting its goals.

Public attention is now more focused than ever on the threat of climate change, the result in part of the now-constant climate emergencies around the world. Given the urgency of the agenda, this year's COP meeting in Sharm El-Sheikh should be drawing greater high-level participation than ever. But that will not be the case.

Already, several major corporations, including Citigroup and BlackRock, have announced that their CEOs will not attend the meeting in Egypt. Other corporate leaders are sure to follow, even though senior corporate engagement and leadership is needed now more than ever.

The COP process is further compromised by the unfortunate practice of recruiting corporate sponsors for these meetings. Given the private sector's contribution to the climate crisis and the role many companies are playing in lobbying against effective climate action, it is important to push companies to make global warming a key priority. Given this, it seems inappropriate at best for large global companies to be given a marketing platform to sponsor these meetings.

Last year in Glasgow, Unilever was a lead corporate sponsor; in previous years, companies like BMW, Facebook, and BNP Paribas have paid for the privilege of sponsoring climate meetings and used that designation to burnish their reputations.

It's not clear what criteria the COP organizers are using to vet potential sponsors, but whatever criteria they use needs to be revised. This year, Coca-Cola has paid to be an official sponsor, a role that is being criticized by civil society groups, especially those focused on plastic waste in the oceans.

According to John Hocevar, the oceans campaign director at Greenpeace, "Coca-Cola produces 120 billion throwaway plastic bottles a year – and 99% of plastics are made from fossil fuels, worsening both the plastic and climate crisis."

Another NGO activist, Emma Priestland, who is with the group Break Free From Plastic, charges that "Over four years, we've found Cola-Cola to be the world's top plastic polluter in our annual brand audits." She added that "it's astounding that a company so tied to the fossil fuel industry is allowed to sponsor such a vital climate meeting."

Still, the climate agenda is so urgent that despite all these challenges — the inhospitable Egyptian venue, the absence of key corporate leaders, and the ill-conceived array of corporate sponsorships — none of us can afford to waste the

opportunity next month to try to hold governments and companies accountable for the promises they already have made. Making this effort in Egypt will be especially difficult.

INSIDE CLIMATE NEWS

[The US May Have Scored a Climate Victory in Congress, but It Will Be in the Hot Seat With Other Major Emitters at UN Climate Talks](#)

By Marianne Lavelle

A year of floods, drought and other events linked to global warming have galvanized developing nations to demand redress for their losses. After years of frustration, they will also seek stronger commitments from colossal polluters to slash fossil fuel emissions and avert further damage.

For the first time in 27 years of United Nations-led negotiations on climate change, the world's largest historic greenhouse gas polluter will come to the table next month with a national law in place for reducing its outside emissions from the burning of fossil fuels.

President Joe Biden's success in gaining passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, which will invest \$370 billion in curbing emissions and making a transition to clean energy in the United States, is seeding cautious hope for greater global action after years of frustrating impasses at the talks.

But the long-sought U.S. legislative achievement is likely to be overshadowed at the conference, which begins Nov. 6 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. Instead, the unfulfilled promises of the United States and other wealthy countries seem certain to dominate COP27, the 27th Conference of the Parties under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. For one thing, the developed world has fallen behind on a 2009 pledge to mobilize at least \$100 billion annually to help poorer nations shift to clean energy and gird themselves against climate change. And nations have yet to agree on a systematic way to address the losses and damages that already have unfolded.

The delegates will convene in Africa toward the end of a year in which climate-driven suffering in the developing world has become all too evident. Floods from record monsoons in Pakistan took 1,500 lives this summer and uprooted 33 million people, wreaking destruction that will take years to mend. Drought has choked off the food supply for 22 million people in the Horn of Africa, and months-long downpours and mudslides have inundated villages in Central America, killing dozens and displacing 560,000.

For many, the devastation dictates an urgent agenda in this round of negotiations. "After decades of insufficient action from big, powerful and wealthy nations," the "unfortunate reality of today is that loss and damage have become the paramount issue for climate policy," said Saleemul Huq, an expert adviser to the 55-nation Climate Vulnerable Forum. "Loss and damage punishes above all the poor, the vulnerable and those least responsible for—and least equipped to handle—the severe and mounting catastrophes brought about through the climate crisis."

It is not lost on advocates for developing nations that the attention of wealthy nations has been consumed by other crises this year, particularly the war in Ukraine being waged by the fourth-largest greenhouse gas emitter, Russia, and mounting tensions between the two largest, China and the United States. Many observers believe it is possible that the developing countries will make a dramatic stand at the talks over how their plight has perpetually been placed on the back burner by their more powerful treaty partners. COP27 could even end in no agreement, they warn, because of the rift between rich and poor nations.

Yet those who have been engaged in the process also see the current logjam as a milestone of sorts, a signal that the international community has moved to a crucial stage in grappling with the climate crisis.

Jonathan Pershing, a longtime U.S. climate negotiator who recently returned to his role as director of the environmental program at the Hewlett Foundation, suggests that pressure is finally building to take concrete steps. “We’re not any longer doing a negotiation around an agreement,” he said. “We’re now in a negotiation about how do you implement the agreement? What are the pieces that countries have committed to try to do? And are they succeeding? And if they are not succeeding, what is it that this global community acting collectively can do to facilitate more action?”

The focus on putting commitments into force has increased pressure on the United States, which has produced 20 percent of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions since the Industrial Revolution, to come to the meeting with a genuine climate policy in place.

Laurence Tubiana, a French diplomat who was an architect of the legally binding agreement reached in Paris, told *Le Monde* that it was “essential” for the U.S. both to act and press other nations to act under the treaty.

“If, despite Joe Biden’s promises when he came to power,” no major climate law had been passed, “it is hard to see how the United States, the second largest emitter in the world, could have retained credibility,” Tubiana said.

In an interview, Elina Bardram, the European Commission’s director for climate action services, said that hopes were pinned on the possibility that the passage of U.S. legislation will spur others to enact stronger climate policies. “This allows the U.S. to come with new confidence to the table and really talk with clear evidence about their resolve and determination,” Bardram said. “Like the EU’s legislative efforts and action over the years, that will be a strong signal for all other countries to really be transparent and open about what progress they have been making at the national level, in view of delivering the ambition that was agreed in Paris.”

Soon after Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act in August, Biden’s special climate envoy, former Secretary of State John Kerry, traveled to Bali and then had follow-up talks in New York with negotiators for Indonesia, which is one of the world’s Top 10 greenhouse gas polluters and heavily reliant on coal as its biggest export product. At a *New York Times* forum on climate in September, Kerry said the deal being

discussed for the country was to set a higher renewable energy target and shutter some of its coal plants, with the United States providing technology and financing.

“We’re this close to getting an agreement,” Kerry said, holding up his thumb and forefinger. “This is the challenge. How do we bring countries to the table?”

The U.S. and Indonesia have agreed on a framework for cooperation but are still working on a final agreement. Other major diplomatic deals have faltered. One of Kerry’s most ambitious and potentially consequential efforts was derailed, at least temporarily, this summer: In August, China’s president, Xi Jinping, suspended climate negotiations with the United States in response to a controversial visit to Taiwan by the U.S. House of Representatives speaker, Nancy Pelosi.

Early on in the Biden administration, Kerry expressed confidence that the United States and China, which together account for 40 percent of current greenhouse gas emissions, could work together on climate as a “standalone issue” separate from their disputes over trade and human rights. But this year it became more obvious how other points of contention can get in the way when the Biden administration banned imports of solar panels from a Chinese company accused of using forced labor in Xinjiang province.

“It’s never possible to fully separate things,” said Deborah Seligsohn, an assistant professor of political science at Villanova University and former State Department official who served in Beijing. She said circumstances were different when Kerry, then the secretary of state in the Obama administration, helped broker an agreement with China in 2014 that is now widely seen as having paved the way for the Paris accord and that he hoped to enhance in bilateral talks that continued this year.

“When both countries want to reduce the heat, they tend to look for areas where there’s more agreement to try to keep the relationship pretty good,” Seligsohn said. “Climate was seen as a good area for cooperation. The problem is at this point, the Chinese do not believe that the U.S. wants a good relationship.”

And although Kerry has voiced hope for a restart in climate talks with China, Seligsohn considers that unlikely after the Biden administration’s move on Oct. 7 to enact sweeping new restrictions on China’s access to U.S. semiconductor technology.

The conflict with China illuminates the limits of the goodwill the U.S. can expect to sow with its new climate law. “The Inflation Reduction Act will be a helpful dose of credibility for the U.S. in its relations with other countries with which the U.S. already has good relations,” said David Victor, professor of innovation and public policy at the University of California, San Diego.

Like many other experts, Victor believes the biggest challenge at COP27 will be how the United States and other wealthy nations engage with developing countries.

Patience Wears Thin in Developing World

In a report in June, analysts for the Climate Vulnerable Forum calculated that climate change had wiped out \$525 billion, or one-fifth, of the wealth of the 55 countries in its coalition over the last two decades. In other words, those vulnerable nations would have been 20 percent wealthier today if not for the losses incurred from climate change.

The group launched a #PaymentOverdue social media campaign to draw attention to the failure of wealthy nations to meet a pledge made at the 2009 COP talks in Copenhagen to mobilize \$100 billion in annual financing for the clean energy transition and adaptation in the developing world. Analysts do say the developed world will meet the target by next year, but it is widely accepted that a more ambitious goal must be set.

The breakdown of the financing has been a source of contention. Government funding is vastly inadequate, and the private sector in particular has been much more willing to invest in “mitigation” efforts like clean energy projects, on which they can reap a return, than on the much-needed “adaptation” projects that help poor nations protect themselves against drought, the rise in sea levels and more.

Last year, at COP26 in Scotland, delegates agreed on a goal of nearly doubling adaptation funding to 40 percent of the total. Adaptation made up only 24 percent of overall climate financing from 2016 to 2020, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which represents developed nations.

At the New York Times forum in September, Kerry stressed the danger of allocating too much of limited resources to helping nations cope with future climate change and not enough money to keeping catastrophe at bay.

“I have news for people who are putting all their hopes in adaptation,” Kerry said at the forum. “If we don’t mitigate enough, if we don’t cut emissions, it will be beyond the capacity of any country to be able to adapt to what is coming at us.”

There is even more disagreement about addressing “loss and damage,” which parties to the 2015 Paris climate accord recognized as a third category of needed climate action after mitigation and adaptation. Developing nations have coalesced around the idea of a new program to pay for the losses already sustained by vulnerable nations.

“While the world fiddles, climate change marches on unabated, and the hits keep on coming,” said Gaston Browne, prime minister of Antigua and Barbuda and chair of the Alliance of Small Island States, which has been a leader in the drive for addressing damages. “We must redouble our efforts and ensure the third pillar of the Paris agreement is finally given its due in Sharm El-Sheikh.”

But donor nations have argued that the establishment of a new fund for loss and damage could slow efforts to aid those in need as nations debate the structure, representation and method for funding. “We really need to work first and foremost within the structures that we have, and we have quite a lot in terms of humanitarian relief, early warning mechanisms, and faster access to finance for those in need,” Bardram said. “We are also looking into doing more in terms of insurance.”

One proposal advanced by Germany in its current role as president of the G7 group of advanced economies is Global Shield, a climate risk insurance program for developing nations. Last week, it reached an agreement with a group of 20 vulnerable countries to launch the program, with details to be unveiled at COP27.

But some climate justice activists have voiced skepticism about the German initiative, the potential rising costs of insurance premiums and whether an insurance-style program will address the needs of the poorest of the poor.

Victor, the policy expert at the University of California, San Diego, echoed concerns that COP27 will end without a formal agreement, just as climate talks sputtered in 2009 in Copenhagen when developing nations felt they were cut out of negotiations.

“I think that there’s a kind of seething disappointment and anger,” Victor said. “Countries feel like they were promised a bunch of stuff that they’re not getting. Those irredentist promises can create a real toxicity that is hard to overcome.”

A preview of how bitter the dispute has become surfaced in an exchange between Kerry and the British lawyer and environmentalist Fahrana Yamin at the Times forum. Yamin was an adviser to the foreign minister of the Marshall Islands, Tony de Brum, who died in 2017 and was one of the architects of the Paris accord’s loss and damage language.

“I think he would be turning in his grave at the lack of action, including by the U.S., on that article, which was negotiated in extreme good faith,” Yamin said. Referring to the new U.S. climate law, she added: “You’re bringing a lot to the table, and we really applaud that. But the most important thing that the U.S. can bring right now is honesty to COP27.”

Kerry responded, “Well, in all honesty, the most important thing that we can do is mitigate enough that we prevent loss and damage. And the next most important thing we can do is help people adapt to the damage that’s already there.” As for losses and damages, he said, “You tell me a government in the world that has trillions of dollars, because that’s what it costs.

“How do you measure it? How do you allocate? Where’s the money coming from?” Kerry said.

Biden has requested \$11 billion in funds to address global climate change in his budget proposal for fiscal year 2023, a sum that would allow him to meet his pledge of quadrupling such financing a year ahead of schedule. But it’s not clear how much of that package he can get through Congress; his request of \$2.5 billion in the previous year’s budget was whittled back to \$1 billion.

Talk about the arduous U.S. budget process is not likely to satisfy countries that are reeling from the effects of climate change, especially after seeing how quickly wealthy nations poured money into their own economies during the Covid-19 pandemic or funneled arms and other assistance into Ukraine to help defend it against Russia’s invasion.

“Over time, yes, we are talking about money in the trillions,” said Alden Meyer, a senior associate at the climate-oriented think tank E3G and a longtime participant in the COP talks on behalf of the environmental community. “The island states would say, ‘You are already raising it for other purposes, like military spending, stabilizing your economy, helping Ukraine and other things. They say it’s not a question of the money not being there. It’s a question of political will and priorities.’”

It just so happens that Pakistan, still grappling with the multibillion-dollar impact of this year’s floods, holds the current chair of the U.N.’s G77 coalition of developing nations and will speak for those countries at Sharm El-Sheikh.

“This just adds real passion to the demand for climate justice—the demand for the countries that caused this problem to just step up and help those countries who had very little to do with causing the problem and are suffering disproportionately,” Meyer said.

MANILA BULLETIN

[\[Opinion\] ‘UN being tested like never before,’ says Secretary General Guterres](#)

As the United Nations marks its 77th founding anniversary today, it may be well for its member-countries to review and assess how well they are fulfilling the expectations of the UN Charter.

In his anniversary message, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres noted that “our organization is being tested like never before” yet asserted that it was “made for moments like this.” “Our world is in peril and paralyzed. We are gridlocked in colossal global dysfunction. The United Nations charter and the ideals it represents are in jeopardy and we have a duty to act. We cannot go on like this.”

As an organization born out of the crucible and conflict following World War II, its resiliency and adaptability is perennially under challenge. And the challenges now are much more formidable and daunting than ever before with the raging war in Ukraine and burning conflicts in a dozen other areas, threat of global recession, climate change, and hunger in many parts of the world. Amid these challenges, the UN could only be as strong as each member-nation’s capacity to tackle problems, surmount obstacles and move to higher ground.

The Philippines recently overcame a major hurdle with the formal ratification — by popular vote in a plebiscite — of the organic law that created the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. That came after the short-lived insurgency and siege of Marawi City that was decisively ended by the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Tackling the perennial problem of poverty and inequality has been another major national concern. Raising millions of Filipinos from the depths of poverty is a priority endeavor arising from the country’s commitment to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The government has institutionalized the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, popularly known as 4Ps, including the systematic conveyance of regular cash allocations to beneficiary families. Such efforts have been set back partially, on account of the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on marginalized and disadvantaged families.

Stemming the tide of global warming and climate change is another key concern. And this is where the UN is asserting its leadership. As an archipelagic country and owing to its location, the Philippines is highly vulnerable to these twin impacts. Ironically, too, the country bears the brunt of destructive typhoons and floods even while its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions that trigger global warming is minuscule.

In 1945, representatives of 50 countries met in San Francisco at the United Nations Conference on International Organization to draw up the United Nations Charter. The United Nations officially came into existence on 24 October 1945, when the Charter had been ratified by a majority of signatories.

MANILA STANDARD

[Vietnam's 'wave of repression' threatens climate goals: rights groups](#)

By: Agence France-Presse

A “new wave of repression” in Vietnam is jeopardising progress in tackling climate change, human rights groups told UN chief Antonio Guterres Friday as he began a visit to Hanoi. Vietnam, which has an economy heavily reliant on coal, has committed to reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

But its authoritarian government has also handed down prison terms to four environmental human rights defenders this year, sentencing them on “trumped-up” charges of tax evasion, the rights organisations said in an open letter to Guterres.

“These political prisoners are emblematic victims of a new wave of repression in Vietnam which, through a combination of threats and judicial harassment, is threatening progress in combatting climate change,” read the letter, signed by 15 rights groups including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

Guterres, who is in the capital to mark the 45th anniversary of Vietnam joining the UN, warned in July that humanity was facing “collective suicide” over the climate crisis.

The letter urged Guterres to “publicly call on the Vietnamese government to release” Nguy Thi Khanh, Mai Phan Loi, Bach Hung Duong, and Dang Dinh Bach during his visit.

Khanh, a globally recognised climate and energy campaigner who won the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2018, was sentenced to two years in jail in June.

Founder of Green ID, one of Vietnam’s most prominent environmental organisations, Khanh had been among the few in the communist nation challenging the government’s plans to increase coal power.

Dang Dinh Bach, a community lawyer and NGO worker, worked to inform local people whose health and livelihoods were threatened by coal projects and other dirty industries. He was sentenced to five years in prison.

The rights groups urged Vietnam to clarify the tax obligations of NGOs, warning the current regulations were “open to politically motivated attacks on civil society organisations”.

At a ceremony commemorating the 45th anniversary of the country’s accession to the UN on Friday, Guterres reminded Vietnam of its obligations “to ensure respect for fundamental freedoms including of expressions of association, to protect civil society”.

It should work “to bring these rights to life and to ensure the full engagement from journalists, human rights defenders to environmental advocates.”

Earlier, the UN chief met with Vietnamese President Nguyen Xuan Phuc and visited Ho Chi Minh's memorial.

MINDA NEWS

[Research probes links between extreme weather events and violent conflicts in the Bangsamoro](#)

By: Carolyn Arguillas

DAVAO CITY (MindaNews / 23 October) – While the peace processes between government and the Moro liberation fronts have converged for a smoother implementation of the peace agreements, old drivers of conflict in the Bangsamoro region could resurface and new drivers could emerge as climate change intensifies into the level of emergency.

“The path to sustainable peace is impossible to pave unless climate change and conflict effects are tackled together,” the research brief of a two-year project (2021 to 2023) of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) said.

The research, “Climate-Fragility Risks in the Philippine Bangsamoro,” aims to produce “robust and empirical evidence” that will establish the linkages between extreme weather events and violent conflicts in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), which has been dubbed the “most climate-and-conflict vulnerable Philippine region.”

The BARMM, along with neighboring areas in Mindanao, is projected to be drier than average in the year 2050, affecting its water supply that supports agricultural production.

According to the research brief, climate change and its impacts exacerbate humanitarian challenges, reduce development, and undermine people’s capacity to adapt. “As climate change intensifies — to the level of an emergency — in the Philippines, many of the old drivers of conflict can resurface in the Bangsamoro region, which, for decades, has been hosting violent conflicts, while, at the same time, new conflict drivers can also emerge. The path to sustainable peace, thus, is impossible to pave unless climate change and conflict effects are tackled together.”

It added that with the Philippines “extremely climate change-vulnerable, the short-term benefits of the Bangsamoro peace agreement can be easily jeopardized.”

The research is led by Laurence L. Delina of Santo Niño, South Cotabato, presently Assistant Professor at the HKUST’s Division of Environment and Sustainability. The other members in the team are anthropologist and Mindanao peace studies expert Rufa Guiam, Spatial Mapping Specialist Homer Pagkalinawan and Jon Gaviola, Senior Social Science Researcher.

The project assesses and outlines the specific and complex ways in which the risks affecting the Bangsamoro people are linked, “and designs and develops novel strategies to address these emergent climate-fragility risks.”

The research is described as “first-of-its-kind” in the Bangsamoro region comprising Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao del Norte, Maguindanao del Sur, Basilan,

Sulu and Tawi-tawi, the cities of Marawi, Lamitan and Cotabato and 63 villages in six North Cotabato towns, as it “goes beyond traditional risk assessments and combines culture-sensitive, inclusive, participatory, and qualitative and quantitative data-gathering techniques.”

According to Delina, the project examines the relationships “between intense precipitations and prolonged droughts, land-use changes, food price variations, and regional conflicts.”

Climate change, he said, is a “threat multiplier,” especially for agriculturally dependent societies with conflict histories and exhibiting high political exclusion, like the Bangsamoro.

The research team looked into the long-term hydrological data of the Bangsamoro region, including satellite observations to ascertain the variations in its forest cover and the surface water extent level in its lakes and marshlands.

The team also conducted interviews and focus group discussions with community members, security and development experts and state officials; reviewed the extant literature on the Mindanao conflict; and laid satellite data over data from the literature.

The research team looked into the root drivers of the violent crises that Mindanao faced in the past to describe “how increasing social inequality, marginalization, weak governance, social exclusion, dominant gender norms and inequalities, demographic shifts, human rights violations, and the impact of climate change had, in concert, increased violent crises in the Bangsamoro.”

The team also produced a fact-driven climate-fragility risk (CFR) assessment tool to assist in identifying key risks and proposing pragmatic solutions.

A multisectoral deliberative workshop was held on July 13 and 14, 2022 at The Farm at Carpenter Hill in Koronadal City, South Cotabato, bringing together key stakeholders from the BARMM and other Mindanao areas to “collaboratively critique and test” the CFR assessment tool.

Participants deliberated and developed strategic policy and pragmatic recommendations to address their self-identified CFR risks, developed a suite of interventions and guiding principles for strategic engagement based on the identified Bangsamoro-specific CFR factors “which, if implemented, could help prevent negative security outcomes in this most climate-and-conflict vulnerable Philippine region.”

HKUST is a leading science, technology, and engineering-focused university in Asia and has been at the forefront of ground-breaking research.

The research project is funded by the United States Institute for Peace (USIP), a nonpartisan, independent national organization that collaborates with local partners in conflict zones around the world to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[DOE project luring users to directly buy renewable energy falls flat](#)

The Department of Energy (DOE) will revise the rules governing a program that allows users to directly buy power from renewable energy sources as it is proving unpopular.

“The DOE’s expectation on this matter is it’s quite slow on pace because there are some provisions under the ERC (Energy Regulatory Commission) rules that are not [in harmony with the] DOE rules and for that reason, [the uptake] slowed down a bit,” said Jordan Ballaran, senior science research specialist at the DOE’s renewable energy management bureau.

Renewable Energy Act of 2008

The Green Energy Option Program (GEOP) allows electricity end-users with an average monthly peak demand of at least 100 kilowatts to directly contract 100 percent of their energy requirements from renewable energy sources. It is one of the voluntary mechanisms provided under the Renewable Energy Act of 2008. GEOP, which seeks to help the country reduce its dependence on imported energy sources, was first introduced in 2018. It currently has 120 participants in Luzon and 38 in the Visayas, mostly from the manufacturing sector.

Confusing guidelines

Per the DOE policy, retail electricity suppliers only need a permit from the department to join the program, but guidelines from the ERC require them to secure permits from both agencies.

Ballaran added it would take customers more than four months before they could begin sourcing electricity from the supplier, longer than the one-month time frame under the retail competition and open access program, which allows certain customers to enter the competitive retail electricity market.

According to Ballaran, the revised rules are targeted to be released by the first quarter of next year and the DOE will solicit comments or suggestions from industry stakeholders through public consultations.

Think global, act local to transform our planet

By: Poul Due Jensen

With urbanization here to stay, our future lies in our cities. The Philippines' urban population is projected to double by 2050, while Southeast Asia's urbanization rate is at an all-time high.

While cities lie at the forefront of climate change, accounting for over 70 percent of global carbon emissions, they can also catalyze change as hubs for innovation, offering solutions for a sustainable future.

As we reflect on World Cities Day this Oct. 31, not only must we continue to recognize the role cities play in realizing global sustainable development, but must also seriously reflect on this year's theme, "Act Local to Go Global." The theme stresses that any transformative global agenda must first be localized within our current urban fabric through knowledge, solutions, and partnerships.

A local lens on climate issues. First, we need to apply a local lens to environmental issues and what it means for global climate action. Climate change is affecting countries everywhere. The interdependence of water and energy is intensifying, impacting both energy and water security. However, how these issues manifest from city to city varies, and require a crucial understanding of local conditions and concerns.

The Philippines faces acute climate risks, such as floods and storms, but several cities such as Manila and Cebu have simultaneously suffered from water shortages in recent years, exacerbated by a growing urban population and dry spells linked to El Niño.

It is vital that we do not lose sight of the local context while tackling the global issue of climate change. Only by taking a ground-up approach on understanding climate change can we ensure that no one is left behind.

A global toolbox with local solutions. Local sustainable solutions that cities have been developing and adapting to mitigate their climate future can contribute to a broader global toolbox. A prime example is China's sponge cities, which use nature-based solutions to address issues that come with grey infrastructure in light of worsening urban floods. While the concept was adapted from predecessors around the world, China's approach has been touted as a "revolutionary rethink" in urban planning.

Cities are also increasingly incorporating digital technologies to further bolster climate resilience, and achieve greater resource efficiencies, including pilot smart city projects in Cebu, Davao, and Metro Manila.

Digitalization can help cities navigate the trade-offs between more substantial sustainability efforts and their perceived barriers, including reimagining water systems. For example, by working with solution providers to connect pumping solutions in a city's water processes via a cloud platform, or leveraging advanced analytics and algorithms to predict leaks, some cities are already attaining significant energy optimization in their water and wastewater network. Building solution providers are also increasingly looking

at smart technology to achieve systems that can operate in optimized conditions, and use water and energy efficiently.

While many of these solutions were developed with the local urban environment in mind, rapid urbanization means cities are finding greater similarities in their experiences of climate change. Key learnings from such case studies can provide powerful insights, regionally and even globally.

Building inclusive partnerships. Lastly, continuous knowledge-building calls for inclusive collaboration, locally and globally. Global partners can leverage their network and reach to link up the necessary stakeholders, resources, and expertise to bring an initiative to life, while local collaborators can provide not only insights from the local landscape, but also recommendations for the best way forward.

For instance, the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group partnered with Grundfos and the Grundfos Foundation on the Water Safe Cities project, where the first phase of the research quantified the dire impact of climate-driven drought and flooding on the world's largest cities and its residents, including Quezon City.

These insights have subsequently helped launch the project's second phase to work on a water accelerator, for cities to pledge action to safeguard their water supply. The project provides a starting point for wider collaboration between cities, national governments, and the private sector, all of whom have an incentive to protect cities from water risks.

Many cities around the world are already formulating and implementing innovative policies and programs designed to achieve sustainable development. The sharing and harmonization of these actions will help us determine the best of what each city has to offer, and allow us to extrapolate these to drive the global push for a more sustainable world and future.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Filipino journo for innovation in info drive on climate change](#)

Istanbul – Backing the practice of "smart agriculture" in a country like the Philippines, a senior journalist from the Southeast Asian nation on Thursday vouched for innovation in news dissemination on the issue of environment and climate change.

"We should upgrade our knowledge, especially on social media," said Lilybeth G. Ison, senior news editor of state-run Philippine News Agency (PNA).

Ison told Anadolu Agency on the sidelines of the Environment Forum in Istanbul, which was hosted by Türkiye's global news wire agency, that governments and media organizations should "reach out to the youth in protecting our environment because they are the ones who will benefit from it."

"In producing news," she said, "we should tell the youth how to be environment protectors ... do not litter, do not use plastics."

On possible collaboration and cooperation with the Turkish news agency on "reshaping narrative" on climate, the PNA editor said: "Yes, especially with the Anadolu Agency, we (already) have an agreement on the exchange of news."

"So, through that, we can reach out to more people; we can report the devastation of how climate change affects our country, but more so on how to mitigate it or how to protect it or how to prevent it."

"It's more on prevention. I think that's more important than reporting the devastation," she asserted.

Ison said the PNA has increased its use of social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.

"We also have hourly news now; earlier, we didn't have the video, hourly news," she said, adding that the PNA is now releasing regular-hourly bulletins.

'Rice a political issue'

Noting that the Southeast Asian nation is an agricultural country, the senior editor said: "Geographically, we (Philippines) are the third-worst country in terms of climate change affected area."

"It affects our food sustainability," she said, recalling how recent climate change impacts had resulted in a sugar shortage.

"It's a very important issue and it has affected our businesses, such as the soft drinks and other confectionaries and our staple food, which is rice or grain," Ison added.

Rice, according to the journalist, is a "political issue" in the Philippines.

If there is a rice shortage, "they will blame the government," she said, adding: "So, rice is a very important issue after the climate change."

On how to mitigate the climate change impact, Ison said it is connected to food sustainability.

"(The Philippines) Department of Agriculture has implemented a smart agriculture project, such as the development of crop variety, which is resilient to climate change," she said, referring to a rice variety produced as part of such a project by the Rice Research Institute.

It is flood-resistant, but it has reduced productivity, she added.

She said the Filipino researchers are working on a project to "increase" production of the new rice variety.

Filipino people have begun to practice "urban agriculture" due to the shortage of spaces, planting vegetables along the pathways, she added.

Environment Forum

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan addressed the opening of the forum via video message.

Anadolu Agency's Deputy Director General and Editor-in-Chief Yusuf Ozhan moderated the session, Media Responsibility on Climate Change.

Besides Ison, the panel was also attended by General Director of Italy-based ANSA Stefano De Alessandri, Director-General of Somali National News Agency Ismail Mukhtar Omar, and CEO of Zimbabwe-based agency New Ziana Rangarirai Shoko.

Representatives of many local and foreign NGOs and international organizations, politicians, academics, and journalists participated in the event, which featured sessions on Clean Energy for Sustainable Development, The Media's Approach to Natural Disasters, and Climate Crisis and Responsibility Sharing, as well as issues such as climate change, energy, the media's view of climate change and environmental education.

Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay also spoke at the event.

The day-long event aimed to address issues such as the need to develop a new media language on environmental and climate issues, international news agencies raising

global awareness, the duties of traditional and new media outlets, and the pursuit of environmental awareness in new news areas.

“We aim to redefine the relationship between media and environment by creating a medium for environmental experts to voice their opinions and discuss solutions,” according to the forum’s website.

Among the forum’s international participants were Portugal’s former Minister of Europe Bruno Macaes, Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Ovais Sarmad, global climate and environment news editor at Associated Press (AP) Peter Prengaman, and climate director of Spain’s EFE Agency Arturo Larena.

PAVI eyes 1,000 MW of renewable energy in next 3 to 5 years

Manila – Prime Asset Ventures, Inc (PAVI), through its renewable energy arm PAVI Green, is set to achieve up to 1000MW within the next three to five years to solidify the group's commitment to providing clean and sustainable energy.

This as PAVI strengthened its energy assets after recently adding PremiereREIT (real estate investment trust) among its list of subsidiaries.

QC urban farmers help fight climate change

By: Marita Moaje

Manila – Quezon City’s vision, for the next eight years at least, will focus on addressing poverty, food security, and environmental crisis.

The city will bank on its “Grow QC” and “Joy of Urban Farming” projects, part of a collective and multi-sectoral food security initiative that addresses food inefficiency that mostly affects vulnerable and indigent families.

The project aims to increase the consumption of healthy, plant-based food, thus cutting emissions from inefficient supply chains while feeding the city’s population.

It also promotes urban farming and grants livelihood opportunities to residents.

The programs support the call of world leaders for a common effort to create 50 million good, green jobs by the end of the decade during the three-day C40 World Mayors Summit that ends Friday in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The summit brought together mayors, alongside business leaders, philanthropists, campaigners, youth leaders, scientists, and residents to showcase solutions and city climate leadership around a fair and inclusive pandemic recovery, well-being of cities, and urgent need for climate finance.

"Quezon City's vision of a livable, green, and sustainable city is centered on building an economy that ensures equitable access to environmental goods now and in the future. We believe that creating jobs that sustain a healthy environment provides equal benefits to nature and people, especially the marginalized," Belmonte said in a statement sent from Buenos Aires on Friday.

"Thus, programs on sustainable food consumption, clean energy, ecological transport, and circular economy, among others, are actively pursued, while climate financing to support more green investments and jobs are explored," she added.

“Grow QC” was launched in 2020 when the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic hit the country to sustain food security while “Joy of Urban Farming” started way back when Belmonte was still vice mayor.

Idle lands are converted into productive farms that reduce carbon emissions and empower the next generation of urban farmers who were previously earning minimal or zero income.

To date, QC has already established 337 urban gardens and 10 model farms in various sites, creating livelihood for about 4,119 urban farmers who are mostly workers displaced by the pandemic like vendors and jeepney drivers.

The 10-hectare New Greenland Farm in Barangay Bagong Silangan and the Sitio Payong Backyard Fishpond and Urban Gardening Project in Barangay Old Balara are among the model and demonstration farms which are open for anyone interested in urban agriculture.

"This is one of the best examples of how we can fight climate change with opportunities that benefit both the people and the environment. We're showing that good, green jobs exist outside of traditional climate sectors and can set off a domino effect that boosts employment, protects the health of residents, and fights climate change all at the same time," Belmonte said.

QC is a member of the C40 Cities network of mayors that collaborates to deliver urgent action to confront the climate crises.

"Urban farms address the problem of food security which is a global crisis and limit transportation emissions because we don't have to import food from other parts of the country. By promoting eating vegetable, we address climate problems as well, while advancing a circular economy where the food in our farms, aside from feeding our farmers, are sold in our markets, used in our feeding programs, and now, there are restaurant owners who get their supplies from our farms as these are organic, healthier, and affordable food," Belmonte said.

Egypt will host global leaders for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) on November 6 to 18, with concerns over fuel security and rising costs made worse by the Russia-Ukraine war.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos is among the invited leaders.

RAPPLER

[Australia signs up to global pledge to cut methane emissions by 30%](#)

By: Reuters

Sydney, Australia – Australia’s climate change minister Chris Bowen on Sunday, October 23, said the government has joined the Global Methane Pledge as part of multilateral efforts to reduce global methane emissions.

“By joining the Pledge, Australia will join the rest of the world’s major agricultural commodity exporters including the United States, Brazil, and Indonesia in identifying opportunities to reduce emissions in this hard-to-abate sector,” Bowen said in a statement.

The government will continue to partner with industry to decarbonize the economy, especially in energy and waste sectors, and capture waste methane to generate power, he said.

Government investment to assist the pledge will include up to A\$3 billion (\$1.91 billion) from a \$15 billion National Reconstruction Fund to support low emissions technology and component manufacturing, and agricultural methane reduction, Bowen said.

The senior minister said the pledge would not require Australia to focus only on agriculture, or reduce agricultural production or livestock.

“As result of signing the Pledge, the Australian Government will not legislate or introduce taxes or levies to reduce livestock emissions,” Bowen said.

The US- and EU-led effort pledges to slash methane emissions by 30% by 2030. The effort now covers 60% of global gross domestic product and 30% of global methane emissions.

More than 100 countries have joined the push to cut emissions of the potent greenhouse gas, an initiative aimed at tackling one of the main causes of climate change.

“Canada, with a very similar economy to us, Brazil, Argentina, New Zealand and the European Union are all signatories and it’s appropriate that Australia joins,” Bowen told reporters in Sydney.

SUNSTAR

Groups propose local laws on environment, sustainability

By: Iona Finlay Mendoza

Davao-based non-government organizations have proposed a set of new city ordinances focusing on sustainability and the environment to the 20th City Council of Davao on October 21, 2022.

During the Green Agenda Forum, the organizations focused on highlighting agendas on Climate Action, Clean Water and Sanitation, Disaster Resiliency, Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security, Waste Management, Air Quality, Good Governance, and People's Participation.

Some of the NGOs that participated are the Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (Idis), Masipag Mindanao, and Kinaiyahan Foundation Incorporated.

"The Davao Green Agenda was crafted to present to our local policymakers and their legal staff real-time environmental issues and problems that our city is facing. Organizations within Davao City gathered to draft this green agenda to provide solutions and/or suggestions like doable advocacy action plans, government programs, and policies that our local legislative officials can adopt," Idis told SunStar Davao on Sunday.

Idis proposed a Marine Biodiversity Protection Ordinance and revival of the Davao Gulf Management Council in line with protecting the local marine biodiversity amid current threats.

The Davao Gulf Management Council, on the other hand, would help ensure sustainable livelihood for local fisherfolks as well as protect the existing mangrove forests.

A Pesticide Drift Ordinance, drafted by Masipag Mindanao, aims to regulate the use of pesticides and fungicides through aerial spraying, boom spraying, and knapsack spraying.

Advocacy officer Gary Villocino said the organization hopes their drafted ordinance will be adopted by the City Council.

The groups also pushed for strengthened enforcement of existing ordinances such as Ordinance No. 0298-09 Davao City Rainwater Ordinance, which promote the collection and use of rainwater for non-potable use, and storage of rainwater for flood mitigation, among others.

Idis policy advocacy officer Amelou Dawn Catague-Ferrer said the ordinance could be mainstreamed by giving incentives to establishments and households practicing rainwater harvesting.

In addition, Kinaiyahan Foundation Inc. representative Evangeline Notarte said that Ordinance No. 0500-21 No to Single-Use Plastic Ordinance should cover sando bags, labo bags, and PET bottles which are single-use items that are also widely used in the city.

She also proposed policy recommendations on waste segregation and single-use plastics that could help strengthen the implementation and enforcement of existing ordinances.

Meanwhile, Idis program coordinator EnP. Lemuel Manalo highlighted green urban initiatives including nature-based infrastructure development, sustainable transportation and drainage systems, and Clean Energy.

“Urban livability and sustainability should be the goal. We should protect the urban wetlands, prioritize urban trees over gray infrastructures, and enhance green spaces in urban planning and design,” he said.

Members of the 20th City Council councilors Temujin Ocampo, Luna Acosta, and Bonz Militar were present during the Green Agenda Forum to listen to the recommended policies and concerns of the different organizations. The councilors also bared their own green initiatives for Davao City.

Acosta said she supports the proposal for a once-a-week car-free day along Roxas Avenue. “The City Council will do its part to help create regulations and policies that will make Davao City not only environment-friendly but also sustainable in the long run,” she said.

Ocampo, who is also the chairperson of the committee on environment, said they are exploring other alternatives for waste management aside from the proposed Waste-to-Energy Incineration Facility.

Idis said that Ocampo committed to supporting the policy on the Quarry Regulation Ordinance of Davao City. A Green Information Technology project is also being lobbied by Militar to help push for environmental research.

The Green Agenda Forum, organized by Idis and Sentro ng Alternatibong Ligap Panligal (Saligan)-Mindanaw aims that these policy recommendations will be adopted by the local legislative body to address issues and concerns in various sectors of Davao City.

Saligan-Mindanaw Atty. Tanya Rosales said Davao City should have an environment code to promote the people’s participation in local governance and protection of environmental rights, and to take part in different green initiatives.

“The councilors are supportive on some of the identified policies in the Green Agenda, particularly the passage of Environment Code of Davao City. This is one of the long overdue policies that needed the attention of the legislators,” Idis said.

According to Idis, the next step would be the endorsement of copies of the Green Agenda to the councilors and note the policies and programs being pushed in the city council in line with the councilors’ commitments.

THE MANILA TIMES

[GEOP 'game changer' in PH energy transition](#)

By: Eireene Jairee Gomez

The Green Energy Option Program (GEOP) is a "game changer" in the country's energy transition, which empowers consumers to switch from being part of the captive market, which is mostly fossil fuel-based, to running on 100-percent renewable energy, climate advocates said.

The GEOP provides energy consumers an option to source 100 percent of their electricity supply from renewable energy resources such as biomass, solar, wind, geothermal, ocean energy and hydropower. The program allows consumers to potentially enjoy electricity cost savings, while unlocking brand reputation benefits.

A new white paper prepared by the Clean Energy Investment Accelerator (CEIA), an international initiative, shows that one payment scheme under the GEOP offers a fixed discount from the monthly rate offered by the local distribution utilities, with the discounted rates potentially reaching 5 to 12 percent lower than the prevailing generation rate.

Atty. Angela Ibay, WWF-Philippines Climate and Energy Program head, said the GEOP can be the game changer in accelerating the shift toward a clean energy future as it enables everyone to participate in the clean energy transition.

"Shifting to renewables is our country's least expensive path to achieve energy independence while fighting climate change. Filipinos deserve to have affordable, sustainable and renewable energy sources," he added.

Nazrin Castro, Climate Reality Philippines branch manager, said: "GEOP is a vital program in our country's energy transition because it empowers consumers to switch from being part of the captive market, which is mostly fossil fuel-based, to running on 100-percent renewable energy."

While market stakeholders initially expressed excitement for GEOP, there is a slow uptake among energy consumers within the first eight months of the GEOP's implementation, with only less than 160 end-users currently enrolled in the program. It is estimated that this only translates to less than 40 megawatts of renewable energy demand, or less than 1 percent of the Philippines' total electricity demand. Factors contributing to the lack of participation include limited awareness among potential buyers and inability for businesses who lease their facilities to engage directly with retail electricity suppliers. Improvements to the design of the GEOP and clarification on ownership of the accompanying Renewable Energy Certificates are needed to unlock the full potential of the program.

Marlon Apanada, CEIA Philippines lead, said that "improving the GEOP will not only be advantageous for the Philippines' energy transition, but will also support global companies to purchase more renewable energy and invest in renewable energy plants."

THE PHILIPPINE STAR GLOBAL

[Quezon City vows more good, green jobs by 2030](#)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte has joined world mayors in calling for a common effort to create 50 million good, green jobs by the end of the decade, during the C40 World Mayors Summit in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Good, green jobs provide opportunities for residents and at the same time address the concurrent climate and inequality crisis, as well as rising poverty toward a global green, just and resilient recovery by 2030.

“Quezon City’s vision of a livable, green and sustainable city is centered on building an economy that ensures equitable access to environmental goods now and in the future. We believe that creating jobs that sustain a healthy environment provides equal benefits to nature and people, especially the marginalized,” Belmonte said.

“Thus, programs on sustainable food consumption, clean energy, ecological transport and circular economy, among others, are actively pursued, while climate financing to support more green investments and jobs are explored,” she added.

At a press conference, Belmonte announced that the city’s food security program, Grow QC, has provided relief to help residents recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and build resilience through nutrition and employment schemes.

Launched during the pandemic, Grow QC is a collective and multi-sectoral food security initiative that addresses food inefficiency that mostly affects vulnerable and indigent families.

It aims to increase the consumption of healthy, plant-based food, thus, cutting emissions from inefficient supply chains while feeding the city’s population.

Grow QC, which was also one of the 2022 C40 Cities-Bloomberg Philanthropies awards finalists, has established 337 urban gardens and 10 model farms that created a livelihood for 4,119 urban farmers, 258 displaced workers and 298 vendors and jeepney drivers.

Through the initiative, idle lands were also converted into productive, green and urban farms that reduce carbon emissions, as well as empower the next generation of urban farmers who previously earned minimal or zero income.

“This is one of the best examples on how we can fight climate change with opportunities that benefit both the people and the environment. We’re showing that good, green jobs exist outside of traditional climate sectors and can set off a domino effect that boosts

employment, protects the health of residents and fights climate change all at the same time,” Belmonte said.

C40 Cities executive director Mark Watts commended Belmonte for spearheading the program, which has provided residents with more livelihood opportunities.

“Mayor Belmonte has shown us the job she has created: converting idle lands into urban farms in Quezon City, bringing healthy food to the table for families when the COVID lockdown had affected supplies. From 1,400 jobs there (in urban farms), Mayor Belmonte told me that there are now 15,000 jobs, so I guess it is the kind of inflation that we like,” Watts said during the opening plenary of the summit.

Rebuilding differently for resilience in the Philippines

By Kanni Wignaraja, Selva Ramachandran

For Filipinos, the last months of the year spur preparations for the year-end holiday festivities, but they also come with a premonition of devastating tropical cyclones that frequent the region during this season. In the past, they were few. However, the past decade has been unrelenting – dotted with a list of typhoon names, each recalling memories of destruction, of livelihoods disrupted, of lives lost.

The Philippines is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate-related disasters. Each year, this archipelagic country experiences an average of 21 tropical cyclones with varying degrees of strength. Last year, the country was struck by Typhoon Odette, a Category 5 super typhoon that left seven provinces in ruin. Odette was the 15th to hit the Philippines in 2021 and by far the strongest. It affected more than eight million Filipinos and left hundreds of thousands of people displaced without shelter, access to food, clean water and connectivity.

A year prior, 26 provinces in northern Philippines suffered the brunt of two major typhoons – Rolly and Ulysses. These two typhoons, which swept across Luzon one after the other, upended the lives of two million Filipinos.

And deeply etched in the memory of Filipinos is Super Typhoon Yolanda, which laid waste to the whole Visayas region, in 2013. It was one of the most powerful typhoons ever recorded. Yolanda's fury affected more than 14 million people across 44 provinces, taking the lives of more than 6,000 people with 1,800 more missing.

The cost of disasters to this country is a massive burden on peoples' security and well-being and on national, local and household budgets. It tears through the social contract between leadership, state institutions and people. Local governments and communities bear the heaviest brunt, repeatedly hitting hardest at the poor and most vulnerable.

According to the Department of Finance (DOF), climate-related disasters have caused \$10 billion in losses and damage over the past decade. Located in the typhoon belt and the Pacific Ring of Fire, the Philippines regularly incurs loss and damages amounting to 0.5 percent of its annual GDP due to extreme weather events and climate-related disasters. This is despite the country contributing only 0.3 percent of the world's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

According to the World Bank, climate change will push around 132 million people into extreme poverty over the next 10 years, unraveling a decade of hard-won development gains. This means more farmers will lose more of their yields; fishing catches will dwindle as fish stocks decline; more families will be swept into informal shelters due to the direct damages to housing and infrastructure. And these often become their state of permanent impermanence.

The 2022 Human Development Report by UNDP highlights how layers of uncertainty are stacking up and interacting to unsettle life in unprecedented ways. The disproportionate impacts of these protracted global crises, with a still ongoing pandemic, are causing an increase in poverty, inequality and are damaging long-term economic growth prospects.

Against the backdrop of uncertainty and insecurity, these catastrophic typhoons underscore the imperative of a robust disaster response and sustainable recovery, in the Philippines, for its future development. While typhoons, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions among other natural hazards are inevitable, the high death toll and huge economic impact can be mitigated.

What would it take for rebuilding efforts to ensure greater resilience in the face of these repeated threats? The Philippines has made significant progress in the areas of disaster risk reduction and climate action, and now looks to strengthen resilience in response and outcome. This means the consideration of systemic risks and the need for deeply transformative measures that involves all stakeholders.

This means sustained efforts and investments in building the capacities of national and regional governments across sectors to work together on more joined-up solutions. This means communities being directly involved from the get-go, on how best to build-back that has people assured that their ideas and feedback has been taken into account. This means spending much more on prevention, anticipating the risks well ahead and planning for them ahead of a post-disaster recovery.

Risk-informed planning and development leverages the use of real-time data and fast evolving digital, mobile and satellite technologies that must link to provide accurate information, early warning and risk-informed protocols and regulations. These include decisions on location of settlements, industries, city centers; spatial development and safety protocols for buildings, for cities and sustainability measures for infrastructure that limits damage. This is rebuilding for resilience that saves billions of dollars in losses, and saves lives and livelihoods.

A final word on financing – it is a collective responsibility to ensure that the money follows this high-value proposition of investing in a more sustainable recovery, in resilience. Public and private capital can be blended and channeled in these directions, reducing the cost of financing and leveraging more by working together to a common end.

These changes must come soon, as time is of the essence. Every moment of inaction, or worse, still harmful action, drives the unbearable costs and losses to a point of no return.

UN, Philippines to discuss development goals

By Elizabeth Marcelo

MANILA, Philippines — The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Philippine government would discuss a possible collaboration on development priorities towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

In a statement, the group said United Nations assistant secretary-general and UNDP regional director Kanni Wignaraja will be in Philippines from Oct. 22 to 28 on official mission.

“During her week-long mission, Ms. Wignaraja will meet with senior government officials and private sector, civil society and youth representatives, to discuss UNDP’s work and contribution to the country’s development priorities and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals,” the UNDP said.

Wignaraja is also scheduled to grace the launching of “Pintig: Women, Data and the Pandemic,” a documentary which highlights the work and commitment of women leaders in the Philippines at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UNDP said Wignaraja would also conduct field visits in select areas in Mindanao to hand over equipment to support sustainable livelihoods for local communities.

“She will also have discussions on resilience with leading thinkers, industry practitioners and civil society organizations to explore what the Philippines should do to use the economic, social and environmental policy and financing instruments to support green recovery, while also building sustainable and resilient economies and societies,” the statement read in part.

The UNDP has been working with the Philippine government, civil society organizations and private sector since 1965 in several projects and programs that aim to promote “inclusive, green and resilient” economic growth. The development initiatives are geared toward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, it added.

“Today, it (UNDP) continues to strengthen the country’s capacities at the national and local levels to promote democratic governance, sustainable management of natural resources, climate change adaptation and disaster risk management and resilience and peace-building,” the UNDP said.

“In all its programs, UNDP integrates human rights and gender equality, believing that everyone should have equal access to the benefits of development,” it added.

The SDGs were adopted by 193 UN member-states, including the Philippines, during a world summit held in 2015.

The 17 goals, which included eliminating poverty and hunger, promoting quality education, good health, gender equality, climate action and strong justice system, among others, are targeted to be achieved by 2030.

THE STAR

[Climate anxiety affects half of world's youth; numbers very high in the Philippines, says global study](#)

Manila, Oct 22 (Philippines Daily Inquirer/ANN): Climate anxiety is gripping nearly half of the world's youth, who, while motivated to take action and help save the planet, are hindered depending on where they live, according to a recent global study that looked into how climate change is hurting people's mental health.

The study, "Climate anxiety, well-being and pro-environmental action" recently published in the Journal of Environmental Psychology, sought to take the broadest look at climate anxiety among over 10,000 university students in 32 countries including the Philippines.

Generally, climate anxiety is understood as the psychological distress—fear, shame, guilt, worry, hopelessness and despair—caused by the environment and climate crisis on people.

Overall, they found that almost half of the young people surveyed felt "very" or "extremely" worried about climate change. Nearly a quarter felt "terrified," and even more felt either "very" or "extremely" anxious.

In the Philippines, the number is higher: 63 per cent of the 1,418 respondents felt "extremely worried," while 44.5 percent felt "very or extremely terrified."

They found that climate anxiety is directly related to the amount of attention people pay to climate news: not just the sheer volume of media exposure, but "the content of the information and the amount of attention people pay to it ..."

Information about climate change impacts also appears more strongly linked to climate anxiety than information about climate change solutions.

More significantly, the study found that the ability to do something about it depends on where they live. While anxiety can drive people to adopt pro-environmental behavior, this is largely confined to Western, democratic and relatively affluent countries.

In contrast, people in the Global South or authoritarian countries could be unable to engage in climate action due to financial or political barriers, having insufficient knowledge, or simply lacking opportunities irrespective of how they feel about climate change.

For example, only a dismal 5.1 percent of the Filipino respondents have attended climate protests or engaged in climate activism even though the country is one of the most vulnerable to climate impacts.

CCC IN THE NEWS

CBC EGYPT

[Philippine Climate Change Minister: The issue of climate change is complex and no country alone will be able to solve the crisis](#)

The Philippines' role here is significant. What we want to do is to amplify and articulate the important principle of climate justice. And that we all need at this point to agree on this principle and this is a basis for our urgent action so that we can unlock the many things that need to be done for the entire world community to address climate change and its impacts, said Sec. Robert Borje.

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