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By: Rachel Cleetus

The annual UN climate talks, COP31, will take place in Antalya, Türkiye from November 9-20. People across the world struggling with the ever-worsening toll from climate change—the horrific flood disaster in Nepal is one stark example—need ambitious and fair outcomes from these talks. The latest science on the inevitability that the world will overshoot 1.5°C of global warming also underscores the need for rapid reductions in heat-trapping emissions, alongside ramping up funding for adaptation and climate loss and damage. These talks will also be happening in the context of incredibly fraught geopolitics and close on the heels of consequential elections in the United States, Brazil, and Israel, and massive youth-led protests in several countries.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS WORLD

Less talk, more climate action! Razon's Prime Infra teams up with CCC

Razon-led Prime Infrastructure Capital Inc. has partnered with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to strengthen climate resilience in the Philippines, with plans to help local governments access climate financing, track greenhouse gas emissions and protect watersheds.

MANILA STANDARD

Govt partners with private firm for climate action plans
By: Giselle P. Jordan

PRIME Infra, a company with businesses in water, waste management and energy, has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to help communities prepare for weather disruptions and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

PRIME INFRA

Prime Infra, Climate Change Commission formalize cooperation on climate adaptation and mitigation programs

Prime Infra and the Climate Change Commission (CCC) have partnered to advance climate action in the Philippines, bringing together government policy expertise and private-sector capabilities to strengthen climate resilience, ecological stewardship, and local capacity building.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

INSIDE CLIMATE NEWS

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By: Arcelia Martin

The three-term president has fought to stop Amazon deforestation. Many see his re-election as a victory for environmental defenders and climate progress.

Environmentalists worldwide are celebrating the re-election of Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva as a win for the Amazon's future and global climate policy.

The three-term incumbent narrowly defeated right-wing Senator Flávio Bolsonaro, who climate activists warned would have stripped away environmental policies and institutions protecting the world's largest rainforest if elected.

The victory gives Lula, who turns 81 on Tuesday, another four years to pursue his pledge to end deforestation by 2030 after the greatest slowdown in forest loss in years. Between August 2025 and March 2026, deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon fell by 36 percent from the previous year.

This comes as nearly one-fifth of the Amazon has already been deforested. Coupled with climate change, the forest is nearing an irreparable tipping point, scientists say, and tree loss could dry out the region and further accelerate climate change.

Carlos Nobre, a professor of climate and sustainability at the University of São Paulo, said preventing the irreversible transformation of vast areas of the Amazon is still possible, but time is running out.
"The reduction in deforestation over recent years has been crucial, but much more needs to be done," Nobre said in a statement. "The next four years will be decisive for the future of the world's largest tropical rainforest and for climate stability in Brazil and around the world."
Despite these warnings, governments across the Amazon, including Lula's administration, continue to expand oil drilling, mining and industrial agriculture. It's impacted local communities and environmental defenders.

Lula's re-election also preserves Brazil's role in international climate diplomacy after hosting COP30 in Belém in 2025. The government has pledged to implement its Paris Agreement commitments and accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels.

In November 2025, Lula's administration formally recognized 20 Indigenous territories covering more than 6 million acres, and gave the communities firmer legal grounds to protect the forests on their land from exploitation or seizure.

Climate activists have called for Lula to speed up the recognition of other Indigenous territories, pressure agriculture businesses to stop using illegally deforested land, better protect

environmental defenders and cancel oil and road projects that threaten the progress his administration has made.

“The Lula administration has shown that progress is possible, but much more remains to be done,” said Brad Adams, executive director of Climate Rights International.

Lula’s victory doesn’t shield the country from other political challenges, said Maurício Voivodic, the executive director of World Wildlife Fund Brazil. Voters elected Bolsonaro’s far-right Liberal Party to the most seats in both chambers of National Congress.

The newly elected Congress poses a significant risk to the president’s environmental and social agenda, Voivodic said in a statement. An analysis by the Brazilian climate advocacy group Observatorio do Clima found that nearly 70 percent of elected lawmakers have low or very low alignment with environmental protection policies.

“This increases the risk of rollbacks in environmental and social legislation, with consequences for forest protection and deforestation,” Voivodic said. “Continued vigilance and public mobilization will be essential to defending the progress achieved.”

Meanwhile, Sen. Bolsonaro is continuing the populist movement built by his father, former president Jair Bolsonaro, who is serving a 27-year prison sentence for plotting a coup after losing the 2022 election.

Academic researchers report that Jair Bolsonaro systematically dismantled environmental regulations to enable corporate exploitation of natural resources while targeting Indigenous and traditional peoples, non-governmental organizations, scientists and other environmental defenders across Brazil.

In 2019, the first year of Jair Bolsonaro’s presidency, Brazil’s deforestation numbers spiked to the highest levels since satellite data became available. With Lula’s re-election, Adams said, Brazil’s forests and the people defending them have dodged a bullet.

“Flávio Bolsonaro could have brought back his father’s disastrous policies, which devastated forests and put communities and defenders in danger,” Adams said in a statement. “But the forests and their defenders are still at risk, and Lula should now double down on efforts to protect them.”

INSURANCE ASIA

Climate-resilient buildings curb losses as insurers tighten cover

Marsh and Hongkong Land measured an 84% reduction in expected storm surge damage.

Insurance broker Marsh and developer Hongkong Land have published a joint report establishing a framework to measure how climate-resilient building design lowers physical loss exposure and protects asset valuations as insurers tighten coverage across vulnerable markets.

The report, Building Value That Lasts, analyses Hongkong Land's 1.7-million-square-metre Westbund Central project in Shanghai. It reveals that engineered resilience features cut expected average annual losses from storm surges by 84% and rainfall flooding by 88% under present climate conditions.

With property insurers raising premiums, adjusting terms, and scaling back underwriting in high-risk areas, the study demonstrates how climate adaptation maintains a lower, more stable risk profile.

Under a high-emissions scenario for 2050, unprotected assets at the site face more than double the storm-surge losses and triple the wind damage compared to current levels.

With adaptation measures, Westbund Central's projected 2050 storm-surge losses remain at 0.12%, compared with 0.38% for an unprotected building today. Rainfall-flood losses in 2050 drop to 0.05%, against 0.19% today.

Wind losses fall by 36% today and 31% in 2050.

Engineering measures include 23% greater drainage capacity for 1-in-100-year storms, Grade 1 waterproofed basements, elevated critical machinery, and a 2,000-cubic-metre "Sponge City" stormwater system.

Executives from both firms noted that fewer than 10% of climate disclosures quantify adaptation returns.

They called on property developers, lenders, and insurers to collaborate during early design phases to standardise resilience metrics across commercial portfolios.

MANILA BULLETIN

Young leaders shape the future of clean energy across Southeast Asia

Flagship SAYEF 2026 convenes youth leaders from all 11 Southeast Asian nations to pioneer regional climate solutions, policy simulations, and community-led renewable energy models.

As Southeast Asia confronts intensifying energy insecurity compounded by the looming threat of Super El Niño, youth leaders across the region are taking center stage to drive the clean energy transition. Youth for Energy Southeast Asia (Y4E-SEA) officially convened the 3rd Southeast Asian Youth Energy Forum (SAYEF) 2026 in Manila, Philippines on October 2 and 3, 2026, marking the first time the high-level regional gathering was hosted in the country.

The flagship program brought together fully and partially funded delegates aged 18 to 35 from all 11 Southeast Asian nations to co-create actionable policy and technological solutions for the ASEAN Energy Transition Agenda.

“SAYEF 2026 is proudly organized by Y4E-SEA to bring together young minds interested and committed to building a sustainable, climate-resilient energy future for ASEAN,” expressed Amira Bilqis, Y4E-SEA Co-Founder and Managing Director. “Energy security is no longer just a national issue; it is a regional imperative. By bringing this platform to Manila, we are opening doors for youth to not just join the conversation, but to drive the actual policies and innovations that will power our region.”

With support from Tara Climate Foundation, 350 Pilipinas, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Youth, and New Energy Nexus, Y4E-SEA hosted the event at De La Salle University as the institutional partner. Supported by the community partners The Climate Reality Project Asia, Green Lotus, Generasi Energi Bersih, EnergyLab Asia, Youth for Energy Diplomacy (YED), and ESD Vietnam. The forum introduced two groundbreaking regional tracks:
1. Southeast Asia’s First IRENA NewGen Hackathon - Serving as the regional launch for the IRENA Innovation Lab, this track challenged youth teams to pitch scalable solutions addressing energy access and security. The selected team were mentored for three weeks virtually before the finalists traveled to Manila for the region’s final pitching.

2. First-ever HELIX Energy Council - A pioneering modelling-infused youth energy policy simulation that places participants inside a fictional 2035 ASEAN energy crisis, where they must negotiate real trade-offs across energy security, affordability, emissions, access and a just transition. Youth delegates translated their choices into numerical decisions bringing policy negotiation and energy-system thinking into the same room.

Beyond these tracks, the forum welcomed well-rounded representatives from the Department of Energy Philippines, IRENA, International Labour Organization (ILO), Ember, Institute for Essential Services Reform, Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC), Philippine Solar and Storage Energy Alliance (PSSEA), Institute of Brunei Technical Education (IBTE). The

engagement also includes leading communities such as Reboot Philippines, Power for People Coalition (P4P), and Green Economy Ready.

All delegates also immersed in an exclusive renewable energy site visit and engagement with the Polytechnic University of the Philippines - Institute of Technology (PUP ITECH) and the Jesse M. Robredo Village (JMRV) Homeowners' Association, Inc. in Manila. The visit showcased energy solutions and innovations led by students in PUP ITECH, youth organizations and urban communities for BASECORE (Baseco Community-Owned Renewable Energy), and Filipino families formerly informal settlers along tidal inlets for High-Density Housing Program under the Expanded Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino (4PH) Program in San Miguel, Manila.

"The Philippines is home to one of the most vibrant youth demographics in ASEAN," shared Jason Occidental, Y4E-SEA Philippines Country Director. "Welcoming our Southeast Asian peers to Manila provides a vital opportunity for Filipino youth to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with regional leaders in shaping the policies that will define our shared climate destiny."

Building on the massive success of last year's forum, SAYEF 2026 invites the next generation of changemakers to actively shape the region's sustainable energy future.

RAPPLER

Thermal Blueprint: USER INTERFACE 2026 Resurfaces with Technology-Driven Climate Innovation

As urbanization accelerates, the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect intensifies, creating challenges in contemporary cities that increase energy demand, threaten public health, and heighten climate vulnerability.

In response to this, the Civil Engineering Executive Organization (CEO), a duly recognized academic organization from the College of Engineering and Agro-Industrial Technology of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, presents USER INTERFACE, a national seminar dedicated to technological innovation in building information modeling and infrastructure.

USER INTERFACE is an annual undergraduate seminar focusing on the intersection of technology and engineering to promote safer, smarter, and more sustainable solutions by delivering the latest advancements, including engineering software, innovative research, and design projects. This is organized as part of the celebration of the organization's 26th anniversary, representing its mission of fostering professional, social, and academic proficiency among future engineers.

For this year's theme, distinguished presenters and industry experts will share their expertise and insights regarding urban sustainability and heat mitigation initiatives, including technology-based platforms. With this, engineering students, software developers, engineers, and associates from all institutions, universities, and businesses nationwide are all welcome and encouraged to participate, as the event is free for the general public. This will be an opportunity to interact with top professionals and companies to gain valuable perspectives.

In keeping with the CEO's commitment to giving back to the community, teachers, and students, the proceeds of this event will support the organization's 26th Anniversary Celebration initiatives, which consist of an exhibit, thanksgiving mass, Fiestambayan, and an outreach program.

SUNSTAR

BSP brings global leaders to Manila to advance climate resilience

THE Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) hosted the first Green Swan Conference held outside Basel, Switzerland. The event brough together participants from Europe, Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East, and the Americas.

Central bankers, climate scientists, and leaders from finance and business gathered to discuss how physical climate risks are evolving and what can be done to manage their impact on the economy and financial system.

Co-organized with the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), Banca d'Italia, and Network for Greening the Financial System (NGFS), the conference took place on 19 October 2026 at the Philippine International Convention Center in Manila.

With the theme "Navigating climate risks amid uncertainties," the conference linked advances in climate risk assessment with practical ways to manage disaster losses and strengthen resilience in the real economy.

In his welcome remarks, BSP Governor and Chairman of the Monetary Board Eli M. Remolona, Jr. underscored how climate shocks can affect the economy. "A flooded rice field means higher prices for rice. A washed-out road disrupts supply chains. What begins as a climate event can quickly become an inflation problem, a financial stability concern, and a threat to sustained growth," said the BSP Governor.

De Nederlandsche Bank President and NGFS Chair Olaf Sleijpen, meanwhile, highlighted the growing economic impact of extreme weather and the need to strengthen resilience. "We must make our economies as resilient as we can to the effects of climate change," he said.

In a recorded opening address, Banca d'Italia Governor and BIS Board of Directors Chair Fabio Panetta emphasized that addressing climate risks is integral to central banks' responsibilities. "The challenge is not to expand our mandates. It is to fulfil our existing mandates in a changing environment," he said.

Panel discussions explored three interconnected dimensions of climate resilience: assessing physical climate risks, strengthening financial protection against disaster losses, and building resilience in the real economy.

Speakers discussed advances and challenges in translating climate science into economic and financial risk measures. They also examined the role of insurance and other risk-sharing mechanisms in narrowing protection gaps and helping businesses withstand climate-related shocks.

In his keynote address, European Central Bank Executive Board Member Frank Elderson underscored how climate and nature risks affect central banks' responsibilities for price stability, banking soundness, and financial stability. He stressed the need for better data and analysis, noting: "We cannot predict the future with certainty, but we can try to understand how risks may evolve, identify vulnerabilities and strengthen resilience."

The conference concluded with a high-level panel featuring BSP Governor Remolona, Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Governor Larry Howai, and Hong Kong Monetary Authority Chief Executive Eddie Yue. The discussion was moderated by BIS General Manager Pablo Hernández de Cos. The discussion focused on the impact of climate hazards on the economy and financial system, central banks' responses, and priorities for further work.

THE EQUATION

COP31 in Türkiye: Can Climate Talks Deliver Amid Worsening Disasters, Rising Fossil Fuel Energy Costs and Global Conflicts?

By: Rachel Cleetus

The annual UN climate talks, COP31, will take place in Antalya, Türkiye from November 9-20. People across the world struggling with the ever-worsening toll from climate change—the horrific flood disaster in Nepal is one stark example—need ambitious and fair outcomes from these talks. The latest science on the inevitability that the world will overshoot 1.5°C of global warming also underscores the need for rapid reductions in heat-trapping emissions, alongside ramping up funding for adaptation and climate loss and damage. These talks will also be happening in the context of incredibly fraught geopolitics and close on the heels of consequential elections in the United States, Brazil, and Israel, and massive youth-led protests in several countries.

Will world leaders heed the science and the urgent calls to put people and planet before selfish, myopic political gamesmanship and the corrupt interests of fossil fuel companies? I'll be on the ground in Türkiye alongside many others—including scientists, civil society organizations, Indigenous and frontline community activists, faith leaders, and youth leaders—to demand that policymakers take action commensurate with the scale and urgency of the climate crisis.

The sobering context for COP31
Two recent UN reports— on Limiting Overshoot of 1.5°C and the annual Emissions Gap report—underscore how far off track the global heat-trapping emissions trajectory is from the guardrails enshrined in the Paris Agreement, the dangers of the current path, and what's needed to help limit harms.

To limit exceedance of 1.5°C, the emissions gap report says, "global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would have to be reduced by 18 per cent by 2030, 45 per cent by 2035 and 69 per cent by 2040, all relative to 2025 levels," alongside increasing levels of carbon dioxide removal. However, nations' current commitments would only cut global emissions "by 5-8 per cent by 2030 and 11-15 per cent by 2035, relative to 2025 levels—leaving the world on track to only limit warming this century to 2.6°C." It's important to reiterate that those global emission reductions must be achieved in an equitable way, with richer high-emitting nations taking on responsibility for more rapid, steeper cuts and providing climate finance for lower income nations to also sharply reduce their emissions.

The climate impacts of overshooting 1.5°C of global warming, let alone going as catastrophically high as 2.6°C, are truly sobering—including accelerating sea level rise, extreme heat and wildfires, collapse of ecosystems like coral reefs, threats to food and water security and infrastructure, and even irreversible, profound changes to glaciers and permafrost.

The reality is we are already seeing devastating changes today. Research shows that this summer's brutal heatwaves in Europe killed over 50,000 people, two-thirds of those attributable to fossil fuel-driven climate change. Nepal's floods triggered by glacier collapse—which bear the clear fingerprints of climate change—has led to a death toll which has crossed 1,500 people, with 5,600 still missing, and a left this low-income nation reeling from over $4.7 billion dollars in damage.

Pre-COP stage-setting

This COP is unusual in that, for the first time, there will be two countries sharing leadership roles, Türkiye and Australia—a compromise solution reached in Brazil at COP30 after a protracted stalemate last year. The COP31 President is Murat Kurum, Türkiye's minister of environment, urban planning and climate change. Chris Bowen, Minister for Climate Change and Energy for Australia, has been appointed as COP31 President of Negotiations.

The Pacific pre-COP meeting held in Fiji in early October—which was far too sparsely attended—highlighted urgent priorities for the region, long champions for the 1.5°C goal, high ambition and equity in the climate negotiations. Nations endorsed the Taku Pakasoa Declaration, a Tuvaluan phrase connoting strength in unity and collective action. The powerful declaration recognizes the leadership of youth, Indigenous people, and local communities, as well as the Pacific Island nations which requested the historic International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion clarifying states' legal obligations to address climate change. It also calls attention to the imperative of using the best available science to inform climate action, the need to enhance climate finance for lower income nations, and elevating the importance of the ocean-climate nexus.

As Filimoni Vosarogo, the Fiji Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources noted: "The ocean has absorbed around a quarter of the carbon dioxide that we emit as humans and more than 90% of the excess heat that we have trapped. It is the planet's climate regulator and the largest carbon sink active, and the reason the world is not already far warmer than it is. And it's paying for this service with its health."

For more on the ocean-climate nexus, please read this blogpost from my colleague Erika Spanger.

Key Issues for COP31 Negotiations

Here are some of the crucial issues that will determine success (or lack thereof) at COP31:

Can a global electrification target help advance a transition away from fossil fuels to renewable energy? At the June climate talks in Bonn, the COP31 Presidency announced a new "35% by 2035" global electrification target—to raise the share of final energy demand met by electricity to 35% by 2035 from just over 20% today—as a centerpiece of its Action Agenda for COP. A subsequent report from the IEA shows how this can be achieved cost-effectively using technologies available today. To truly advance climate progress and cut global heat-trapping emissions, electrification of energy use across sectors including transport, industry and

buildings must be accompanied by a just transition away from fossil fuels to renewable energy as well as enhanced energy efficiency. The human and economic toll from the fossil fuel energy crisis triggered by the US's illegal war against Iran underscores, yet again, why a transition to clean energy is the best path forward. While renewable electricity—especially cheap, plentiful solar power—is booming globally, it's not yet displacing fossil fuels fast enough. Insights from the Santa Marta conference on a Just Transition Away from Fossil Fuels hosted by Colombia and the Netherlands, with a second one hosted by Tuvalu and Ireland now in the works, can help drive momentum alongside and within the COP negotiations. The deep-pocketed fossil fuel industry and its allies have long worked to obstruct progress at the UN climate talks. World leaders must stand up to those destructive tactics, hold fossil fuel companies accountable and chart a rapid path toward a fast, fair phaseout of fossil fuels.

Will leaders prioritize adaptation and loss and damage? Adaptation and loss and damage do not get nearly enough attention at the climate talks, leading to a continued shortfall in commitments and funding for these priorities from richer nations. As global heat trapping emissions continue to rise, already putting the world on a trajectory to soon exceed 1.5°C of global warming, many communities are struggling to cope with extreme climate impacts, often beyond their ability to adapt. This year's deadly heatwaves in Europe, Asia and Africa; intensifying Pacific typhoons and hurricanes; catastrophic wildfires in Canada, the US, Spain and Portugal; and the terrible floods and mudslides in Nepal triggered by melting Himalayan glaciers are just the latest reminder that burning fossil fuels has dangerously altered the climate regime. It's not enough to just react after disasters hit; we have to ramp up resilience proactively to protect people ahead of time. The UN Adaptation Gap reports repeatedly point out the massive gap in funding required by lower income nations, in the absence of which people are losing their lives and livelihoods and entire economies are being battered by climate disasters. Adaptation finance must be at least tripled by 2035, as already agreed, and concrete outcomes are needed on the Global Goal on Adaptation. Nations—especially high-emitting, rich nations—must do their utmost to cut heat-trapping emissions and get to net negative emissions quickly to limit climate change. And they must provide funding for people on the frontlines of the climate crisis who desperately need investments in resilience and measures to address the loss and damage they're already facing. The Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FFRLD) has just agreed to "set aside" $21.6 million dollars in response to Nepal's urgent ask for support after its deadly floods, at a first-ever Extraordinary meeting of the FFRLD Board on Oct 22. Nepal and many more low-income countries reeling from devastating climate impacts caused by richer countries' emissions deserve justice on a much larger, more meaningful scale. It's absolutely shameful how paltry the amounts are that richer nations have thus far committed to the FFRLD.

Will climate negotiations be guided by the best available science from the IPCC? Recent climate meetings have seen a highly concerning trend of attacks on the inclusion of references to the best available science from the IPCC in negotiating texts. Added to this, the suspension of the recent IPCC plenary meeting because of a continued lack of agreement between countries on the timeline for producing the IPCC's seventh assessment cycle of reports (AR7) ahead of the conclusion of the second global stocktake under the Paris Agreement in 2028 is extremely worrying. Science and equity should never be pitted against each other. Using the best available

science to guide and inform the climate negotiations, emissions reduction goals, adaptation investments and measures to address loss and damage is vital to protecting people and ecosystems. “For countries on the frontlines of climate change, timely science is not a matter of convenience. It is essential for protecting lives, livelihoods, and our futures. We cannot afford a process in which the best available science arrives too late to inform decisions that will shape our survival,” Ambassador Adao Soares Barbosa, Chair of the Least Developed Countries Group on Climate Change powerfully said in a recent statement. Crucially, world leaders must commit to funding mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage in equitable ways so that poorer nations are not unfairly burdened with the costs of responding to climate change caused primarily by rich nations. Equity is a core principle guiding the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and should not be treated as an afterthought or optional. Without that, we greatly increase the risks of falling short of necessary climate goals, putting more people and more critical ecosystems in danger.

Will richer countries address their grossly insufficient climate finance commitments? Year after year, richer nations continue to renege on their climate finance commitments, even as they deepen the climate crisis by remaining tethered to polluting fossil fuels. This injustice is untenable and is directly contributing to a breakdown in trust in the UN climate negotiations. Lower income nations struggling to overcome poverty and reach basic development milestones are being set back repeatedly by climate-fueled disasters, wars, and unsustainable debt. Added to that, the unfolding Super El Niño, coming on top of fossil fuel-driven climate change—threatens to push tens of millions more into acute hunger. Global North countries must prioritize climate finance—including tripling adaptation finance by 2035—on par with actions they must take to phase out fossil fuels, otherwise the world will not meet climate goals and the inequities of that failure will mount.

Can leaders find ways to drive forward climate ambition in a new world order? Current geopolitics, including the destructive actions of the Trump administration, are scrambling the world order in unpredictable ways. One certainty is that addressing major global challenges—including climate change—requires global cooperation and cannot be solved through unilateral actions by any one nation. And it’s not enough for global climate agreements to just endure; world leaders must actively recommit to meeting their goals in a just way. UN Secretary-General António Guterres, an extraordinary climate champion, will soon come to the end of his term and the new UNSG will face a formidable task on multiple fronts, including urging greater ambition to meet climate goals. COP32 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, next year, and the 2028 conclusion of the next global stocktake under the Paris Agreement, will be key moments for measuring progress coming out of Türkiye.

“For countries on the frontlines of climate change, timely science is not a matter of convenience. It is essential for protecting lives, livelihoods, and our futures. We cannot afford a process in which the best available science arrives too late to inform decisions that will shape our survival.”

Ambassador Adao Soares Barbosa, Chair of the Least Developed Countries Group on Climate Change

Renewed clarity, determination and resolve

The latest science on fossil fuel-driven climate change is truly sobering, as are the dire impacts already devastating communities around the world. The gross injustice of climate change is also mounting—for billions of people today who are suffering despite contributing the least to the problem, and for young people and generations to come who are literally seeing their futures greatly diminished because of choices being made today by the rich and powerful.

The United States, the world's biggest historical emitter, has played an especially egregious role in stepping away from the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, with the Trump administration taking a wrecking ball to federal clean energy and climate policies. The 2026 UNEP emissions gap report notes that in 2025 "emissions growth slowed down in the G20, with the United States of America being the major exception."

It bears repeating that we already have most of the core climate solutions we need today, and those solutions can help advance public health and economic prosperity too. Richer nations also have the ability to raise the funding needed to scale up climate solutions globally—they are just choosing to spend it on things that are directly contrary to the public good (such as endless wars) or on outright giveaways to fossil fuel industry and corporate billionaires while driving up costs to everyone else.

As scientists and climate justice advocates, these times can feel dark and daunting. In many ways, the climate future we feared is now here—deadly and costly fossil-fueled disasters mounting, oceans boiling, an accelerating pace of warming, and the profound injustice of the worst losses inflicted on those who are least responsible for climate change. Wars, lack of care for our shared humanity, and the erosion of multilateral institutions are taking the world in the opposite direction from acting in the collective good.

Yet the solutions we have been fighting for are (still) exactly what this moment calls for, which brings renewed clarity, determination and resolve. Whether we are trying to address inequality and affordability concerns, pollution and public health challenges, the energy poverty gap or food insecurity, it's clear that just climate and clean energy solutions are crucial to improving human welfare and healing the planet.

Wherever you are engaged in this transformative fight for climate justice—from your hometown to world capitals to international venues like COP31—this is a fight we must win, for people across the world today and for the sake of generations to come. We are on the right side of history as we take on intransigent politicians and fossil fuel villains to save a livable future.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS WORLD

Less talk, more climate action! Razon's Prime Infra teams up with CCC

Razon-led Prime Infrastructure Capital Inc. has partnered with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to strengthen climate resilience in the Philippines, with plans to help local governments access climate financing, track greenhouse gas emissions and protect watersheds.

Razon-led Prime Infrastructure Capital Inc. has partnered with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to strengthen climate resilience in the Philippines, with plans to help local governments access climate financing, track greenhouse gas emissions and protect watersheds.

The two parties signed an umbrella memorandum of understanding on Oct. 20 to support the country's National Adaptation Plan and Nationally Determined Contribution.

Under the agreement, Prime Infra and the CCC will help local government units strengthen their Local Climate Change Action Plans and integrate climate measures into local development programs.

The partnership also covers capacity building to access the People's Survival Fund, develop greenhouse gas inventories and support watershed protection through Prime Infra's sustainability platform, Prime Kalikasan.

Prime Infra president and CEO Guillaume Lucci said climate resilience was central to the company's operations, from securing water supplies and managing waste-related emissions to protecting communities affected by its projects.

"Whether it is dealing with watersheds and securing water supply for our customers, or addressing emissions through our waste management processes, or ensuring that our projects truly make a positive impact on the communities where we operate, climate resilience is something we take as a central element and very seriously," Lucci said.

Controlled by trilyonaryo Enrique Razon Jr., Prime Infra operates across water supply, waste management, natural gas, power generation and pumped storage hydropower.

CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert Borje said private-sector participation was crucial to translating climate policies into practical solutions.

"The private sector plays a vital role in protecting local communities from the impacts of climate change. Through partnerships that mobilize private sector expertise, resources and innovation, we can strengthen community resilience and support climate solutions that respond to local needs," Borje said.

“By working together, we can turn national climate priorities into concrete action that protects lives and livelihoods,” he added.

The CCC is the government’s lead policymaking body on climate change under the Climate Change Act of 2009.

MANILA STANDARD

Govt partners with private firm for climate action plans

By: Giselle P. Jordan

PRIME Infra, a company with businesses in water, waste management and energy, has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to help communities prepare for weather disruptions and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In a statement Monday, the company said the partnership would combine government policy expertise with private-sector resources to support the country's climate priorities, including the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and its commitments to cut emissions under the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

The NAP is the country's roadmap for preparing for the effects of climate change, such as stronger typhoons, floods, droughts and rising sea levels. It guides efforts to protect communities, livelihoods and infrastructure.

The NDC sets out the country's commitments under the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change.

The partnership will help local government units strengthen their climate action plans and incorporate measures to address climate risks and reduce emissions into local development programs.

It will also help local governments access climate financing, including the People's Survival Fund, and develop their ability to measure greenhouse gas emissions.

Watershed protection will be supported through Prime Kalikasan, the company's sustainability platform.

The two parties also signed a separate agreement covering Prime Infra's support for the Philippine Hub at the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Prime Infra president and CEO Guillaume Lucci said preparing for climate risks is central to the company's operations. He cited efforts to protect watersheds, secure water supplies, reduce emissions from waste management and ensure that projects benefit host communities.

The company's energy businesses include natural gas, power generation, pumped storage, and hydropower. It said environmental protection and community development form part of its approach to building and operating infrastructure.

CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje said private-sector partnerships provide expertise, resources, and innovation to help protect communities from climate change.

“By working together, we can turn national climate priorities into concrete action that protects lives and livelihoods,” he said.

PRIME INFRA

Prime Infra, Climate Change Commission formalize cooperation on climate adaptation and mitigation programs

Prime Infra and the Climate Change Commission (CCC) have partnered to advance climate action in the Philippines, bringing together government policy expertise and private-sector capabilities to strengthen climate resilience, ecological stewardship, and local capacity building.

The two parties signed an umbrella Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) during a ceremony at the Prime Infra head office on October 20 to strengthen climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. The partnership will support the implementation of national climate priorities, including the Philippines' National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

In his message, Prime Infra President and CEO Guillaume Lucci emphasized the importance of integrating climate resilience into the company's businesses and operations.

"Whether it is dealing with watersheds and securing water supply for our customers, or addressing emissions through our waste management processes, or ensuring that our projects truly make a positive impact on the communities where we operate, climate resilience is something we take as a central element and very seriously," Lucci said.

Prime Infra operates across three core sectors: essential utilities, energy security, and energy transition. Its businesses span water supply, waste management, natural gas, power generation, and pumped storage hydropower, with ecological stewardship and community development forming part of its approach to developing and operating critical infrastructure.

"The partnership that this agreement fosters is a great combination between the CCC's leadership in driving the mandate and initiatives of the government and our experience in developing and operating projects," Lucci said.

Under the MOU, areas of cooperation include capacity-building initiatives for local government units (LGUs) to strengthen their Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs). These efforts also aim to integrate climate change adaptation and mitigation measures into local development plans and programs.

This includes building capacity to access climate financing such as the People's Survival Fund, building capacity for greenhouse gas inventories, and supporting watershed protection through Prime Infra's sustainability platform, Prime Kalikasan.

"The private sector plays a vital role in protecting local communities from the impacts of climate change. Through partnerships that mobilize private sector expertise, resources, and innovation, we can strengthen community resilience and support climate solutions that respond to local

needs. By working together, we can turn national climate priorities into concrete action that protects lives and livelihoods," CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje said.

The CCC is the country's lead policymaking body on climate change pursuant to the Climate Change Act of 2009. It coordinates and evaluates government programs on climate change, and works to mainstream climate policies into national, sectoral, and local development planning.

Following the MOU signing, Lucci and Borje also signed the Memorandum of Agreement for Prime Infra's support of the Philippine Hub at the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

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