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ABS CBN

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By: Pia Guttierrez

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Power is crucial to people's daily lives. We need it for almost everything we do. However, power generation is also one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions because coal is still the main fuel used to generate power in many countries, like the Philippines. Given this, it is clear that any road to decarbonization must start with cleaner power.

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By: Raymund Antonio

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NIKKEI ASIA

[Counting the cost of climate change](#)

By: Sayumi Take

Tokyo -- Part of growing up on the outskirts of Manila, 25-year-old Mitzi Jonelle Tan says, is living with the "very real" fear of drowning in your own bedroom.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Resetting SE Asia's climate agenda](#)

By: Aziz Durrani

Singapore— High inflation, rising interest rates, falling currencies, and volatile oil prices, on top of an economic slowdown and post-pandemic budget woes, may increase pressure on the Asean+3 — the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, together with China, Japan, and South Korea—to scale back efforts to mitigate climate risk.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Europe heating up more than twice global average](#)

Istanbul – Temperatures in Europe have risen more than twice the global average over the past three decades, according to the UN's World Meteorological Organization (WMO), which says Europe's is the highest increase in the world.

[PBBM eyes stronger PH-Japan strategic ties](#)

By: Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday expressed his intent to strengthen the Philippines' collaboration with Japan in various areas of mutual interest.

PHYS.ORG

[More rain on the way as Philippine storm death toll hits 150](#)

The death toll from a powerful storm that triggered flooding and landslides across the Philippines has reached 150, disaster officials said Thursday, as more rain was forecast in some of the hardest-hit areas.

RAPPLER

[World falling short on funding for climate adaptation – UN report](#)

By: Reuters

London, United Kingdom – The world is falling far short at rounding up money to help struggling nations adapt to the increasingly dangerous impacts of climate change, according to a report released Thursday, November 3.

RESILIENCE.ORG

[A Partnership With the Philippines Brings Composting to Detroit](#)

By: Jena Brooker

On a recent Saturday morning, Pamela McGhee and several neighbors were busy at work in a community garden on Detroit's East Side, weighing food scraps and assessing compost piles for compliance. Items in the compost are assessed according to a "yuck" and "yay" system. "Yuck" items, like animal bones and meat, which do not compost well in their system, were discarded; "yay" items, including fruit peels and coffee grounds, were added to the pile.

SUNSTAR

[Mass tree plantings](#)

By: Rox Peña

I've joined many tree planting activities. Most of these were done during Arbor Day. I've initiated tree planting activities myself when I was advocating the propagation of the balacat tree many years back. Our beloved Mabalacat city was named after this endemic tree. I'm happy that many of the balacat trees we planted are now full grown.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Church official calls for meatless Fridays](#)

By: Franco Jose C. Baroña

A Philippine Catholic Church official called on the faithful to support the "No Meat Fridays" after the University of Cambridge challenged Pope Francis to urge all Catholics globally to return to the traditional practice of not eating meat on the last day of the working week to help reduce global carbon emissions.

[Komunidad to lead Adapt Asia 2022](#)

Asia is prone to experiencing fatal heat waves, flooding, severe typhoons, droughts, and changes in water availability in the lack of climate adaptation initiatives.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Pimentel: Realign confidential, intel funds for disaster response](#)

By: Xave Gregorio

Manila, Philippines — Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel III on Thursday called on his fellow lawmakers to slash confidential and intelligence funds and rechannel them to disaster response and recovery programs in the wake of the devastation wrought by Severe Tropical Storm “Paeng.”

THE WORLD BANK

[Countries Could Cut Emissions by 70% by 2050 and Boost Resilience with Annual Investments of 1.4% of GDP](#)

Washington, Nov. 3, 2022—Investing an average of 1.4% of GDP annually could reduce emissions in developing countries by as much as 70% by 2050 and boost resilience, according to a new report from the World Bank Group.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

[Ex-NDRRMC chief sees 'missteps' in PH disaster response](#)

Manila — A former National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council chief said Thursday he found "missteps" in the country's disaster response following the onslaught of Severe Tropical Storm Paeng.

According to Alexander Pama, government officials should review the country's system of disaster response.

"What was surprising is it seems like there have been a lot of missteps, if you may call it that, in so far as implementation of our disaster risk reduction and management systems," he told ANC's "Headstart".

"I guess it's in the implementation side that we really, really need to look back and assess and analyze ourselves where we did wrong," he added.

Latest NDRRMC tally showed at least 150 people died from the onslaught of Paeng, while 128 were injured and 36 others remain missing.

The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanano has the most number of fatalities with 63, followed by Calabarzon with 33, and Western Visayas with 29.

Nearly 4 million people were also affected by the storm.

To improve the country's disaster management, Pama said there should be better coordination with the national government and local government units.

"In the case of Maguindanao, for example, we don't know [where is the gap] because nobody is admitting it," he said. "Kasi ang dinadahilan, hindi pa nangyari 'yan sa amin dito eh. It's climate change. It's now here."

"Somewhere along the line, there was a misstep, there was miscoordination, if you can say that. That's why we really need to review," he added.

Pama is now co-chair of ARISE-Philippines, a private sector alliance for disaster reduction and management.

He also said the government must invest to improve its weather forecasting system.

"I think I agree at this point, kawawa naman 'yung PAGASA siguro. They lack capacity and capability in so far as impact analysis is concern," he said.

Interior Secretary Benhur Abalos said last Monday that the government did all that it could to prepare for Paeng's onslaught.

Abalos said the local chiefs adhered to the protocols on disaster preparations days before the typhoon struck, and that they immediately coordinated with the national agencies.

The DILG chief issued the remark days after President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. expressed disappointment and sought an explanation from government offices following the high number of Paeng-related fatalities in Maguindanao.

Government did everything it could to prepare for Paeng: Abalos
Social Welfare Secretary Erwin Tulfo on Sunday assured those affected by Paeng that help is on the way after he and other ranking officials conducted an aerial inspection in Cavite and its neighboring provinces to see the impacts of the storm.

First Lady Liza Marcos named Chief Girl Scout of the Philippines

By: Pia Gutierrez

Manila — First Lady Liza Araneta Marcos was conferred the "Chief Girl Scout" title by the Girl Scouts of the Philippines in a ceremony in Malacañang Palace Thursday.

According to the GSP Charter, a woman President of the Philippines or the First Lady of the Philippines is automatically named Chief Girl Scout of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines.

In her speech, the First Lady recognized the efforts of the GSP in delivering its mission to "prepare young women for their responsibilities in the home, the nation, and the world community."

"As the First Lady of the Philippines, I have been designated as the Chief Girl Scout of the Philippines. It is a title that I will truly be proud of... not only because of its meaningful history but more so because it will allow me to help our young women cultivate the same values that I learned when I was a Girl Scout in school," Marcos said.

The First Lady noted how as a young girl scout she was taught to help the community by planting trees.

"Who would have thought that years later, especially after the recent typhoon Paeng, something as important as tree planting could help the community? All these flash-flooding and all that," she said.

"Have we planted trees, or maybe we could plant more trees, then maybe the calamities wouldn't be as grave as they are. Climate change is real. Climate change is a problem. If we can find ways to help our environment, we will definitely be able to help our community and our country."

The First Lady ended her speech by expressing her commitment to "help shape young women's mental, emotional, and social qualities."

"I will try my best to help our environment and to do our part towards nation-building. Together, we will be able to achieve these goals," she said.

Dr. Cristina Lim-Yuson, GSP National Executive Committee president, led the installation and investiture rites of Marcos attended by some 120 Girl Scouts.

"Your accepting to be our Chief Girl Scout will really attract many to join girl scouting," Yuson said. "You are like a mother who has come back home, a lovely young mother. Young, I say because I think she is the youngest Chief Girl Scout that we've had."

Yuson said that prior to Marcos' investiture, it had been 12 years since the GSP had its last Chief Girl Scout.

Why you should care about your energy source

Power is crucial to people's daily lives. We need it for almost everything we do. However, power generation is also one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions because coal is still the main fuel used to generate power in many countries, like the Philippines. Given this, it is clear that any road to decarbonization must start with cleaner power.

Burning coal produces carbon dioxide which remains in the atmosphere, trapping heat and causing climate change. This is why carbon dioxide is called greenhouse gas. Too much carbon dioxide in the air leads to more frequent typhoons, severe droughts, and massive wildfires in the other parts of the world. This affects our food supply, damages our homes, and harms our health.

However, people cannot just simply stop using electricity. That is why there is a need to shift to cleaner energy solutions that provide stable power while doing less harm to the environment.

Reliable and clean energy

There are many types of renewable energy sources such as hydro, biomass, geothermal, solar, and wind. These are safe and clean energy sources that come infinitely from the environment. Renewable energy sources are beneficial as they release little to no carbon emissions that harm our planet. Using renewable energy sources can even help reduce greenhouse gas intensity in the environment. This is why having these renewable energy sources is necessary.

Solar and wind are among the most popular renewable energy technologies. However, they are intermittent, as they are unable to provide power when there is not enough sunlight or wind. This is why the switch to 100% renewable energy cannot happen overnight. As of today, battery storage is still not sufficient to fully provide uninterrupted power on a large scale.

Because of this, solar and wind require flexible and reliable supplementary sources of energy to quickly provide power when they are unavailable.

Natural gas supports intermittent renewables by quickly providing power when solar or wind are not able to. Natural gas power plants can provide power in as fast as 15 minutes, making it flexible enough to adjust to rapidly shifting power demands.

Aside from this, natural gas is cleaner than coal. It emits up to 60% less carbon dioxide. Moreover, it does not leave behind ash, sludge, and other particulate matter that are harmful to our health and the environment.

Because it is clean and flexible enough to support renewables, natural gas is crucial in supporting and encouraging the further development of solar, wind, and other renewables as we transition to a cleaner and greener future.

Providing stable electric supply with clean energy mix

First Gen Corporation (First Gen), the company that built most of the country's first and largest natural gas power plants in the Philippines, uses its plants to support the growth of renewable energy in the Philippines.

First Gen has four natural gas-fired power plants: the 1,000-MW Santa Rita, the 500-MW San Lorenzo, the 97-MW Avion, and the 420-MW San Gabriel power plants. It also owns and operates geothermal, hydro, wind, and solar energy facilities that complement these natural gas power plants.

First Gen commits to providing 100% Green Power, 100% Good Power without using harmful coal — ensuring clean and dependable power for existing consumers and the next generation of Filipinos.

DAILY SUN

[COP27: What have global leaders done on climate change in 2022?](#)

Last November global leaders met at the UN climate summit COP26 in Glasgow to agree next steps to tackle climate change. But climate experts have told the BBC that progress in 2022 has been slow - with governments around the world distracted by global energy and financial crises.

Last week the UN warned the world is heading towards catastrophe. But there are rays of hope - including fresh US legislation and a change of government in Brazil that could reverse the Amazon rainforest's destruction.

As leaders depart for COP27 in Egypt next week, we look at seven key players to ask who is leading the way and who is dragging their feet.

USA: A climate leader again?

The US made a huge leap forward this year when it passed sweeping new laws to confront climate change.

Measures within the Inflation Reduction Act could reduce US greenhouse gas emissions - those gases that warm the atmosphere - by 40% by 2030.

"This is the biggest investment in climate solutions in US history. It's a huge sign of progress," Dan Lashof, US director at the World Resources Institute, told BBC News.

The bill aims to make green energy the default in major sectors like electricity, transport and industry. The most obvious result for consumers is a tax credit of around \$7,500 (£6,500) for those who buy an electric car. But it is not all good news. After a senior US politician controversially visited Taiwan, China ended its co-operation with the US on climate - which could seriously affect international climate negotiations.

And in response to the energy crisis, President Joe Biden released 15m barrels of oil from reserves on to the market and approved new leases for oil and gas drilling.

The US has also not delivered its fair share of finance to support developing countries suffering the most from climate change, which could damage relations at COP27.

UK: Leadership and 'dithering'

The UK hosted COP26, secured major global pledges, and showed itself to be a clear international climate leader.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

[Climate-resilient bamboo homes, the way forward?](#)

Base Bahay Foundation Inc. and Hineleban Foundation are showcasing three model houses at Hineleban's Tuminugan Farm in Bukidnon which were designed and built using Cement-Bamboo Frame Technology (CBFT) as housing prototypes for future affordable housing projects in the region.

Visitors may view the model houses as part of Tuminugan Farm's walking farm tour.

A Mindanao-inspired design graces each of the model homes, built in three sizes: the standard Base Bahay house with a floor area of 25 square meters (sq.m.); a medium-sized 30.6 sq.m. version that comes with a porch; and the largest, a 66.44 sq. m. home complete with a ground floor dedicated to service functions, a second floor for bedrooms, and a loft area that can be used as storage or as an additional sleeping area.

By giving the public access to the homes, the Hineleban and Base Bahay Foundations hope to create more awareness around the use of sustainable material such as bamboo in future housing initiatives in Mindanao; to showcase the use Base Bahay's CBFT for housing; and to encourage more developers of affordable housing to consider the use of bamboo—a material abundant across Mindanao and BARMM – as sustainable building material.

“As a foundation that provides alternative building technologies, we look to widen our network of partners to build more quality socialized homes for more Filipinos –homes that are comfortable, affordable, disaster-resilient, ecologically friendly, and leave a positive social impact,” said Pablo Gorilla, Base Bahay general manager.

This latest initiative borne of the partnership between the Base Bahay and Hineleban Foundation supports Hineleban Foundation's objective of inspiring more organizations to help provide sustainable livelihood and more permanent housing to Bangsamoro and the Indigenous people in Mindanao.

“Building of permanent houses in the BARMM region is symbolic in an area where conflict has caused people to move constantly. These houses give communities the opportunity to ground themselves in their homes and land,” Jorillo said. “Investing in infrastructure is also a signal of development in this region.”

Aside from hosting the model houses, Hineleban Foundation has been a bamboo supply partner of Base Bahay through their network of local and sustainable farms that produce high-value crops. The foundation harvests and treats bambusa blumeana and dactyloctenium aegyptium which are used for Base's social housing projects.

To date, Base Bahay has built more than 1,200 CBFT houses across the Philippines sheltering about 5,000 individuals in 12 communities. Base works continuously to

optimize the use of bamboo in permanent housing. This will also help the communities to avoid the constant rebuilding of houses whenever calamity strikes. The treatment of bamboo poles also enables the construction of low-maintenance houses, as the treatment makes them termite-resistant. CBFT houses also provide good thermal comfort, which can help families save more on electricity consumption.

“We hope that, through our efforts, developers see the value of bamboo—a plant indigenous to our country and grows in abundance here. Despite this, 50 percent of homes are still built with resource-intensive concrete and imported steel,” Jorillo says. “Bamboo’s full potential has yet to be realized: It is long-lasting and renewable, and it is now easier, through our technology, to source, treat, and manufacture.”

MANILA BULLETIN

Concepts, organizations related to sustainability defined

Working towards a sustainable future goes beyond green practices. The initiatives of many companies to become sustainable will be presented in Manila Bulletin's first sustainability forum on Nov. 23-24.

Speakers from top companies in the Philippines will discuss how they worked to make significant changes to follow the path of sustainability through lifestyle, leisure, business – to leave behind a world that will sustain the next generations.

All the attention on sustainability has created concepts, words, phrases and organizations. To understand the language of sustainability, we have put together definitions of often used terms.

Sustainability— The meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (United Nations Brundtland Commission)

By-product—The “secondary or incidental product of a manufacturing process (e.g., scrap or emissions). (United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA))

Carbon footprint –The amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions associated with all the activities of a person or other entity (e.g., building, corporation, country, etc.). (Encyclopedia Britannica)

Carbon offsets – The ‘tradable ‘rights’ or certificates linked to activities that lower the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere. (Research scientist Angelo Gurgel of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Climate Portal)

“By buying these certificates, a person or group can fund projects that fight climate change, instead of taking actions to lower their own carbon emissions. In this way, the certificates ‘offset’ the buyer’s CO₂ emissions with an equal amount of CO₂ reductions somewhere else.” (Gurgel, MIT Climate Portal)

Carbon Neutrality – The idea of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by balancing those emissions so they are equal (or less than) the emissions that get removed through the planet’s natural absorption; in basic terms it means we reduce our emissions through climate action. (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change)

Circular Economy – A model of production and consumption which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended. This economic model departs “from the traditional, linear economic model, which is based on a take-

make-consume-throw away pattern. This model relies on large quantities of cheap, easily accessible materials and energy.” (European Parliament)

Conference of Parties (COP) – The decision-making body responsible for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It brings together the 197 nations and territories – called Parties – that have signed the Framework Convention. (World Meteorological Organization)

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) – The management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders.” (United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO))

Cradle-to-cradle manufacturing – An approach to the design of products to be essentially waste-free; all materials used are designated as either technical nutrients, which are non-toxic synthetic materials that are reused in continuous cycles and biological nutrients, which can be disposed of into natural environments to decompose into the soil. (U.S. EPA)

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) –An assessment of the impact of planned activities on the environment, including impacts on biodiversity, vegetation and ecology, water, and air.” This assessment “can be seen as a process of identifying, predicting, and evaluating the likely environmental, socioeconomic, cultural and other impacts of a proposed project or development to define mitigation actions—not only to reduce negative impacts but also provide positive contributions to the natural environment and well-being.” (International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD))

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Investing –The set of standards for a company’s behavior used by socially conscious investors to screen potential investments.” (Investopedia)

“Environmental criteria consider how a company safeguards the environment, including corporate policies addressing climate change, for example. Social criteria examine how it manages relationships with employees, suppliers, customers, and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with a company’s leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls, and shareholder rights.” (Investopedia)

Greenwashing –The process of conveying a false impression or misleading information about how a company’s products are environmentally sound.” (Investopedia)

It is “an unsubstantiated claim to deceive consumers into believing that a company’s products are environmentally friendly or have a greater positive environmental impact than what is true.” (Investopedia)

Triple Bottom Line – A business concept that posits firms should commit to measuring

their social and environmental impact—in addition to their financial performance—rather than solely focusing on generating profit, or the standard ‘bottom line.’ This concept can “be broken down into three –profit, people, and the planet.” (Harvard Business School Online)

House bill to declare part of PH Rise a protected area

By: Raymud Antonio

A Mindanao lawmaker has filed House Bill (HB) No. 5687 declaring a large part of the Philippine Rise, formerly known as Benham Rise, a protected area.

House Deputy Speaker and Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez (Photo from Rep. Rodriguez's Facebook page)

The Benham Bank and its neighboring waters will be known as Philippine Rise Marine Resource Reserve when it becomes a protected area under the proposed Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act.

House Deputy Speaker and Cagayan de Oro City 2nd district Rep. Rufus Rodriguez said in a statement that the Philippine Rise could be managed and explored for its marine resources once the bill is passed into law.

"Monitoring and maintaining the high biodiversity and near pristine habitats in the Philippine Rise Marine Resource Reserve will contribute to sustainable fisheries productivity and ecosystem services for present and future generations of Filipinos," he stressed.

In HB 5687, it indicated the geographic coordinates of Benham Bank, which is composed of 352,390 hectares. The Philippine Rise is believed to be more than 24 million hectares.

The lawmaker said most of the Philippine Rise, including Benham Bank, is within the country's 200-mile exclusive economic zone.

He added that Filipinos conduct fishing activities in the area, "but the state of its habitats and biodiversity must be closely monitored to ensure the sustainability of the resources therein".

At present, Rodriguez noted the maritime patrols being conducted by the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Philippine National Police Maritime Group, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in protecting Filipino fishermen and enforcing fisheries laws.

The Philippine Navy's BRP Andres Bonifacio (PS-17) rescues six fishermen aboard a half-sunken fishing boat in the Philippine Rise. (Photo courtesy of Naval Forces Southern Luzon)

Aside from designating Benham Bank as a protected area, the proposed measure would provide additional funds for these agencies.

"Most importantly, passing the bill is an exercise of Philippine sovereignty over our waters and the resources therein," the House leader said.

In filing the bill, Rodriguez sought to establish a Philippine Rise Marine Resource Protected Area Management Board that will serve as the policy-making body for the management of Benham Bank.

The management board will be composed of the secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR); the chairpersons of the Senate committee on environment, natural resources and climate change and the House committee on natural resources; and representatives from BFAR, National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

Other members of the board are the representatives from the Department of National Defense-Office of Civil Defense (DND-OCD), PNP Maritime Group, National Security Council, National Coast Watch Council Secretariat, Department of Foreign Affairs Maritime and Ocean Affairs Office, AFP, and PCG.

Four representatives from non-government organizations accredited by the DENR, four from academic institutions and one from the private fishing sector would also sit in the board.

Some of the prohibited acts under the bill include poaching, dumping of toxic waste, use of destructive gears, and hindering law enforcement.

Violators may face a fine of up to P5 million and imprisonment of up to six years.

NIKKEI ASIA

[Counting the cost of climate change](#)

By: Sayumi Take

Tokyo -- Part of growing up on the outskirts of Manila, 25-year-old Mitzi Jonelle Tan says, is living with the "very real" fear of drowning in your own bedroom.

In the fall of 2009, Typhoon Ketsana struck Tan's home. She went without electricity or clean water for several days. Floodwater reached just beneath her knees, and she had to bail water out of her bedroom. "But we were fortunate because our city happened to be located higher from the ground."

In other cities, floods reached the third floors of buildings, people were stranded on rooftops and children were found dead in the flood below. At least 400 died, 500 were injured, and 185,000 houses were damaged, according to the humanitarian information service ReliefWeb.

At the time, Tan, not yet a teenager, had no idea such experiences could be attributed to climate change. Classes at school taught her that climate change was "about melting ice caps and polar bears, global warming and carbon dioxide emissions, and the way to fix it is to turn your lights off, and to reduce, reuse, and recycle," she said.

In 2020, the Philippines took a one-two punch from super Typhoon Goni followed by another typhoon. "Torrential rains, violent winds, mudslides" took about 100 lives, injured 500, flooded tens of thousands of homes and left 905,000 in need of assistance, according to a United Nations report.

"I had no electricity again, the roads were flooded, I couldn't go home and I couldn't contact my mom," Tan recalled. At a nearby community she visited for relief operations, "the rain and mud were piled up so high that when you walked, you could hold the top of your house."

By then, the young future activist had educated herself, learning that the greenhouse gases warming the Earth's surface and lower atmosphere were fueling extreme weather events like typhoons and floods. While these gases were mainly emitted by a handful of wealthy countries, the effects were mostly felt in poor communities that had barely contributed to global warming.

"What angers me the most," she said, "is the betrayal of leaders [of the developed world]" that have failed to take responsibility for "benefiting from the destruction of the planet."

Voices like Tan's feed into a long-standing controversy about whether rich, industrialized countries -- in addition to cutting emissions -- should offer reparations to poorer countries for the historical damage they have caused.

It is a debate that will feature at a crucial summit to be held next week in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. The U.N. Climate Change Conference 2022 (COP27) follows a particularly devastating year for climate-related disasters around the globe -- from disastrous floods in Pakistan to record heat waves in Europe, from catastrophic storms battering the U.S. to droughts hitting countries worldwide.

Climate change inequality

Climate change is indeed wreaking disproportionate havoc in developing countries, say experts. A June study commissioned by the Vulnerable 20 group, made up of over 50 economies vulnerable to global warming, found that those economies had lost \$525 billion, or 22% of their 2019 gross domestic product, in the past two decades due to human-induced changes in temperature and rainfall patterns.

Of the total losses, 44% were concentrated in Bangladesh (population 166.3 million), the Philippines (111 million) and Vietnam (98.1 million), due to their large populations and levels of economic development, according to the study.

The reality of climate change in these countries is increasingly obvious. In southern Bangladesh, Ajmat Ali, a farmer from the coastal village of Damuria, told Nikkei Asia that in recent years saltwater intrusion has been turning his land infertile, making it nearly impossible to earn a living.

Ali's struggle is caused by rising sea levels. A 2009 study by the state-run Soil Resource Development Institute found more than 1 million square kilometers of arable land in the country's coastal areas was affected by salinity, a 26% increase from 35 years earlier.

"I cannot raise two crops of rice a year because of the shortage of fresh water," Ali told Nikkei in a recent interview. "Even vegetables don't grow well in the salty soil."

The ruinous Cyclone Amphan that struck Bangladesh in 2020 and disrupted agriculture across the country was the final straw for Ali. A few months later he and his family packed their bags and migrated to the capital, Dhaka, in search of a better future.

"My heart aches for my ancestors' home in my village," he said. "I just couldn't afford to live there anymore."

Cases like Ali's are increasingly being linked to global warming by scientists. Saleemul Huq, director of the International Center for Climate Change and Development, told Nikkei that, while extreme weather is common in Bangladesh, this year's pre-monsoon flash floods in the northeastern Sylhet region arrived well before the usual monsoon season and were "definitely attributable to human-induced climate change."

"Sea level rises, river erosion, cyclones and salty water moving inland could force millions of people to leave their homes and become climate refugees" in the near future, Huq added.

In a first for the country, this summer's devastating floods in Pakistan were also linked to climate change. Scientists reported that downpours in the region have become 50% to 75% more intense due to global heating, and that "the fingerprints of global warming are evident."

Pakistan's disaster left almost 1,400 people dead, 1.7 million houses in ruins, around 7,000 kilometers of roads washed away and as many as 250 bridges destroyed. Massive damage to crops and livestock beckons hunger and food shortage across Pakistan the next couple of years, according to experts.

At last year's COP26, held in Glasgow in the U.K., a coalition of more than 130 developing countries representing over 80% of the world's population proposed to include text in the final statement calling on parties to establish a facility that would provide new financial support to developing countries for addressing loss and damage.

But the proposal received pushback from developed countries like the U.S., who questioned the need for a new institution, as well as the European Union and Japan, whose negotiators said they did not have the mandate to agree to such a facility, according to the conference's observer and nonprofit Third World Network. Instead, countries agreed to "discuss the arrangements for the funding of activities" related to the issue. The dialogue is to be conducted on a three-year scale, due to finish in 2024.

But developing country leaders say they are more determined than ever to secure concrete financial commitments for loss and damage at this year's conference.

"We are very clear on our position for the upcoming COP," Pakistani climate minister Sherry Rehman told Nikkei. "Big emitters must move to create a formal mechanism to finance losses at the next COP, as we will continue to experience loss and damage."

Host nation Egypt has appointed Germany's climate envoy and Chile's environment minister to facilitate negotiations. "We are consulting widely with all major groups and players to listen to their positions" on the issue, Germany's Jennifer Morgan told Nikkei. "It's important that everybody listens to each other, and we're helping to facilitate that."

But for many developing countries, being listened to is not enough. "[At COP27], I think developing countries will need to get the right assurances that their concerns are being addressed with a level of seriousness, [and] that we are not just having another round of discussions that doesn't have expected outcomes," said Mohamed Nasr, chief climate negotiator for Egypt.

On its official COP website, Egypt says it is eager to accelerate a "just transition" on behalf of African and other developing countries at the conference.

Sticking points

Unsurprisingly, calls for loss and damage compensation face skepticism from countries that are most responsible for carbon emissions.

The U.S. -- the No. 1 emitter going back centuries -- has made clear it will not meet at-risk countries' demands. According to Our World in Data, of total carbon emissions from 1751 to 2017, the U.S. emitted the most (25%), with EU countries and the U.K. coming in second place at 22%.

In contrast, the Philippines and Vietnam were responsible for 0.2% each, and the whole of Africa contributed 3%. China ranks third in the data, although its carbon emissions did not really start accelerating until the 2000s.

In September, John Kerry, U.S. special presidential envoy for climate, told the audience at a Climate Week event in New York he refuses to feel "guilty" for climate change. On whether the current Congress would vote to pledge financial compensation for loss and damage, he said, "Good luck. I'm in the zone of reality."

At an event hosted in late October by London-based think tank Chatham House, Kerry expanded on his stance. "We are not resisting the notion that we have to deal with the dialogue, but there are complicated relationships here," he said. "An awful lot of countries have been using coal for 70 or 80 years, not just us. So how do you apportion that? How do you deal with that?"

Whether rich countries are truly guilty of damage caused decades ago -- before climate science was even born -- is just one of many sticking points of the proposal to establish a new facility. Experts also point out the need to hammer out the details of the facility, from the scale and source of funding to how it will be managed and the criteria for providing it.

"If it becomes just some liability, compensation, and reparation [issue] or something, that's not going to advance the dialogue," Kerry said. "The dialogue has to advance around finding ways to address loss and damage. ...What will be the legitimate, not facility, but financial arrangements, by which we go forward?"

Another major sticking point for wealthy nations is that, should they start agreeing to pay, they may end up having to pay vast amounts. Annual financing necessary to address loss and damage in poor countries could be at least \$116 billion in 2020, \$290 billion in 2030, and \$1 trillion in 2050, according to a widely cited estimate by researchers at the Basque Center for Climate Change in Spain.

"You tell me the government in the world that has trillions of dollars, because that's what it costs," Kerry said at the September event in New York.

The U.K., which played a prominent role in raising the issue at COP26, is committed to delivering on the commitments to loss and damage made "within" last year's agreement, a spokesperson told Nikkei.

Nasr said summit host Egypt would make an agreement on loss and damage a priority. "We will use our maximum diplomatic skills to bring [the parties] together in an agreement on a way forward that is focused on delivering finance for loss and damage," he said.

Too little, too late?

A leading developing country in the debate this year is Pakistan, still struggling to recover from the stupendous rainfall and flooding this summer that affected at least 33 million people and left one-third of its land underwater. At COP27, it will head the flagship coalition of developing nations that last year made their case in Glasgow.

Pakistan is burdened with an estimated \$30 billion bill to repair the losses and damages created by this year's floods. As of early September, Pakistan had received pledges to fund 2%, or \$610 million, of the amount, mainly in the form of humanitarian aid. Of the pledged amount, \$350 million would come from the World Bank, \$160 million from the U.N., \$58 million from China and \$50 million from the U.S.

In October, the U.N. revised its appeal for aid fivefold to \$816 million, having received only \$90 million, a little over half the previous appeal, according to Reuters.

"The funds pouring in right now are barely Band-Aids, which are essential to cope but certainly not enough for a sustainable future for the country," climate minister Rehman stressed.

Developed countries have long argued that paying for loss and damage is already being done in the course of current climate finance, which is used mainly for two purposes: "mitigation" measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as investments in solar panels and onshore wind projects, and "adaptation" measures to minimize future damage, such as early warning systems and land conservation.

For example, of \$83.3 billion raised from developed countries in 2020 for climate action in vulnerable countries, 58% went toward mitigation, with 34% going to adaptation according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The figure, meanwhile, was still short of commitments made at the U.N. climate conference in 2009 which pledged to mobilize \$100 billion per year by 2020 for climate action in developing countries.

Meanwhile, climate-vulnerable countries insist financing "mitigation" and "adaptation," however, does not address the damage that has already been done.

"Can you tell Pakistan, when their country is flooded, to please put [up] solar panels? No, you need to first give them money to reconstruct their homes," argued Harjeet Singh, head of global political strategy at the nonprofit Climate Action Network. "You [also] don't talk about adaptation. You talk about relief, rehabilitation, providing food, helping rebuild homes. That is addressing loss and damage."

The quest for compensation so far

COP27 comes with developed countries tending to multiple crises impacting politics, the economy and people trying to make ends meet. In Europe and other developed countries, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and subsequent sanctions have strained energy supplies and lifted inflation. As a result, governments might be more inclined to keep an especially tight hold of their purse strings.

"The context for this COP is difficult all around," said German climate envoy Morgan, recognizing that the EU is "not alone" in the multiple issues it faces.

Alok Sharma, president of COP26, in October warned an audience at an event at the Wilson Center in Washington that "what we need to make sure [of] is that we build consensus around [loss and damage]." Otherwise, "a number of countries will walk away, and suddenly the whole fragile discussion falls apart."

Small island countries scattered over the Caribbean, Pacific, and other seas say they are getting especially desperate. The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) founded the debate in 1991, when they requested at a U.N. climate committee meeting that "industrialized developed countries" bear "the financial burden of loss and damage" that had fallen to them "as a result of rising sea levels." These demands have been the subject of negotiations for the three decades since.

The Maldives, a member of the grouping, has been particularly vocal in driving the loss and damage debate ever since its cabinet held an underwater meeting in 2009 to raise awareness of rising sea levels.

Mohamed Nasheed, a former Maldivian president and leader of the 2009 gathering, told Nikkei that "the Maldives has done almost nothing to cause the climate emergency, yet it is an existential threat to the future of our nation."

Nasheed added that "it is time for the countries which caused this crisis to properly fund the loss and damage we are already suffering."

Vanuatu, a state comprising over 80 islands in the South Pacific Ocean, is also campaigning to ask for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice, the U.N.'s top court, on how responsible states are for preventing and fixing climate change.

In the face of potential legal challenges, rich countries signed on to a compromise in 2015, when the landmark Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21, legally binding countries to ambitiously work toward limiting global warming.

The Agreement includes an article on the importance of addressing loss and damage, but on the condition that it did "not provide a basis for any liability or compensation."

Developing countries "agreed not to discuss liability or compensation any further, in return for having a stand-alone article that explicitly mentioned loss and damage," said Nagisa Shiiba, a policy researcher for Japan's Institute for Global Environmental Strategies and an adviser to the nation's COP delegation.

For at-risk countries, this was considered a positive outcome because the Agreement finally recognized loss and damage as a new category of climate finance that developed countries must contribute to in addition to mitigation and adaptation, Shiiba said.

The first financial pledges for loss and damage were made at last year's COP26, by Scotland in the U.K., Wallonia in Belgium and philanthropists offering a total of about \$7 million. In September, Denmark became the first country to join in, with \$13 million.

Alternative approaches

Other countries are exploring approaches that provide help without explicitly mentioning funding for loss or damage.

One approach is to provide technical assistance, another approach is to explore insurance, providing property owners with financial relief for loss or damage caused by extreme weather events.

Germany, home to large global insurers and which holds the presidency of the Group of Seven developed nations this year, is coordinating G-7 countries and vulnerable economies in "a wider effort to accelerate prearranged financing" such as insurance, with a plan to launch an initiative crowned the Global Shield Against Climate Risks at COP27.

However, many say insurance schemes do not tackle loss and damage to their full extent. According to the OECD, "barely a tenth" of economic losses and damages from climate-related extreme events are insured in countries with low and middle income, versus a majority in high-income countries.

Insurance is also unsuitable for addressing the impact of disasters that take place over a long period of time, such as rising sea levels and coastal erosion. It also fails when cultural heritage and other noneconomic assets are lost, a report by the Stockholm Environment Institute notes.

The institute's report points to "innovative" sources of finance that could "sidestep the need for reaching consensus" at COP in the first place, such as raising funds through air passenger levies, taxing fossil fuels or shifting their subsidies, or canceling debts.

Nasr insisted, however, that the key is securing government-level commitments. "We need to avoid spillover from other issues into the climate change discussion," he argued. "If you look at the climate finance pledges, they are minimal compared to what was mobilized for COVID, for other causes.

"Sometimes the challenge [lies] in the political will and the commitment to go beyond the COP to deliver on the ground what we pledged to at the COPs."

Philippine activist Mitzi Tan says policymakers from both sides have told her that "the only way to change political will is to make [governments] see that their voters care -- you need that pressure.

"That's why I went to COP26 and am going to COP27 too. I know that if [policymakers] are left alone, they're really not going to change. We've seen that."

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Resetting SE Asia's climate agenda](#)

By: Aziz Durrani

Singapore—High inflation, rising interest rates, falling currencies, and volatile oil prices, on top of an economic slowdown and post-pandemic budget woes, may increase pressure on the Asean+3—the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, together with China, Japan, and South Korea—to scale back efforts to mitigate climate risk.

While this policy shift may make fiscal sense, it is a mistake that could have grave repercussions for the region and, ultimately, lead to slower economic growth and greater financial instability.

If not addressed, the risks climate change poses to Asean+3 countries could have far-reaching implications for the region's agricultural production, water availability, energy security, transport and infrastructure, tourism industries, and coastal resources. Over the past two years, flooding, cyclones, droughts, rising sea levels, and landslides have become increasingly frequent, making Myanmar, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Thailand among the world's 10 most climate-vulnerable countries. These countries suffered some of the highest fatalities and biggest economic losses from weather-related disasters between 1999 and 2018.

However, the transition to a low-carbon economy carries risks of its own. For starters, industries heavily reliant on fossil fuels are facing greater regulatory burdens. A large portion of the region's oil, gas, and coal reserves may end up being left in the ground and discounted or entirely written off. Shifts in energy policy are also likely to increase banks' credit risks. If Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam meet their commitments under the 2015 Paris agreement, for example, coal-fired power plants valued at \$60 billion will become stranded assets in 15 years, rather than 40.

The green transition would most likely also affect the profitability of coal mines elsewhere in the region, such as in Indonesia. And the European Union's efforts to shift away from palm oil biofuel and encourage the use of deforestation-free products may turn land banks in Malaysia and Indonesia into stranded assets. Despite these transition risks, doing nothing would ultimately be costlier for Asean economies.

To be sure, Asean countries have taken some steps to mitigate climate risks. Brunei has implemented coastal protection structures. Indonesia has promoted mangroves and climate-tolerant crop varieties. Laos has developed sustainable crop-management techniques. And Malaysia has pursued climate-adapted technology and organic farming.

Notwithstanding such efforts, more must be done to meet the Asean+3 countries' renewable energy goals. Several initiatives could support these: the Asean Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation, for example, aims to increase renewable energy to 23 percent of the region's energy supply by 2025, compared to 14 percent in 2017. And the

2021 forum on the carbon neutrality goals of China, Japan, and South Korea has outlined concrete ideas for achieving net-zero emissions through trilateral cooperation on innovation and technology.

Carbon pricing is essential to the green transition. Asean+3 countries have held discussions on balancing pricing schemes against the need to stimulate economic growth. In July 2021, China launched the operation of its national emissions trading system (ETS), designed to be an “important market-based instrument,” to help China achieve its climate goals. One year on, though still dealing with data-quality issues, China’s ETS is the world’s largest in terms of covered emissions, and prices are rising steadily. While there have been calls for a regionwide carbon tax, this idea seems unlikely in the short term, given differences in tax regimes. Nonetheless, a carbon tax will likely remain a key focus of discussions among the Asean+3 in the next few years.

Promoting sustainable finance will also be essential to a successful transition, as the financial sector could drive an economy-wide shift. In the past few years, many central banks and financial supervisors in Asia have implemented, or have begun to implement, such measures despite ongoing capacity and resource constraints.

In the short term, there is significant scope for Asean+3 central banks and financial regulators to incentivize the transition to a low-carbon economy, by directing firms and lenders to reduce carbon usage and focus on renewable energy and green technologies. Such measures would encourage a similar shift across the economy, leading companies to price climate risks into their products and services.

By promoting low-carbon policies and encouraging green finance, policymakers could spur new renewable energy sectors and stimulate economic growth. Moreover, reducing reliance on dollar-denominated fossil fuels would enable Asean+3 countries to shift government revenues from maintaining large foreign-exchange reserves toward domestic policies.

To minimize the damaging effects of climate change on their population and economies, Asean+3 policymakers must implement risk mitigation policies that help prevent regional spillovers, and encourage the emergence of new industries and technologies. Doing so would also boost energy security. Shutting down the sun and the wind is much harder than blowing up a gas pipeline.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Europe heating up more than twice global average

Istanbul – Temperatures in Europe have risen more than twice the global average over the past three decades, according to the UN's World Meteorological Organization (WMO), which says Europe's is the highest increase in the world.

"As the warming trend continues, exceptional heat, wildfires, floods and other climate change impacts will affect society, economies and ecosystems," said a report jointly released on Wednesday by the WMO and the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service.

The report focused on rising temperatures in 2021 along with land and marine heatwaves, extreme weather, and retreating ice and snow.

"Temperatures over Europe have warmed significantly over the 1991-2021 period, at an average rate of about +0.5 °C per decade," the report said.

As a result of the rising temperature, Alpine glaciers lost 30 meters in ice thickness from 1997 to 2021, while the Greenland ice sheet is melting and contributing to accelerating sea level rise, the report found.

Although the EU's greenhouse gas emissions fell 31 percent between 1990 and 2020 – still behind the 55 percent reduction target for 2030 – high-impact weather and climate events continued to disrupt the lives of Europeans in 2021.

"Europe presents a live picture of a warming world and reminds us that even well-prepared societies are not safe from impacts of extreme weather events," WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas said in a statement. "This year, like 2021, large parts of Europe have been affected by extensive heatwaves and drought, fuelling wildfires. In 2021, exceptional floods caused death and devastation."

Talaas urged Europe to continue bringing down greenhouse gasses emissions, adding that Europe can play a "key role towards achieving a carbon neutral society by the middle of the century to meet the Paris Agreement."

"European society is vulnerable to climate variability and change, but Europe is also at the forefront of the international effort to mitigate climate change and to develop innovative solutions to adapt to the new climate Europeans will have to live with," Carlo Buontempo, director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service at the European Centre of Medium-range Weather Forecasts, said in the same statement.

PBBM eyes stronger PH-Japan strategic ties

By: Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday expressed his intent to strengthen the Philippines' collaboration with Japan in various areas of mutual interest.

Marcos made the commitment, when Mori Masafumi, the Special Advisor to Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, paid a courtesy call on him at Malacañan Palace.

Marcos mentioned his plan to improve the two countries' cooperation on climate change mitigation, maritime security, agriculture and food security, and infrastructure development, Undersecretary Cheloy Garafil, officer-in-charge of the Office of the Press Secretary (OPS), said in a press statement.

The President also sought strategic partnership with Japan in the West Philippine Sea, Garafil added.

"Marcos said he wants to work with the Japanese government on climate change, maritime security, the West Philippines Sea, agriculture and food security, as well as infrastructure development," she said.

During his meeting with Masafumi, Marcos said Japan "is and will remain a solid and steadfast partner of the Philippines."

"I look forward to work closely with Prime Minister Kishida in building an even stronger strategic partnership with your country," Marcos said, as quoted by the OPS.

Masafumi, in response, echoed Kishida's confidence in Marcos and his administration.

He also reiterated Kishida's strong commitment to continue the two nations' mutual high-level engagements and bilateral platforms in pursuit of enhanced strategic partnership.

"Masafumi said his country looks forward to continuing its tie-up with the Philippine government in various areas of cooperation, particularly in infrastructure development," Garafil said.

Masafumi also renewed Japan's invitation to Marcos to embark on a state visit to Japan.

Masafumi flew to the Philippines to participate in the 13th High-Level Joint Committee Meeting on Infrastructure Development and Economic Cooperation.

Before his meeting with Masafumi, Marcos thanked Japan for partnering with the Philippines in pursuing infrastructure development projects.

Marcos also thanked the Japan International Cooperation Agency for providing financial support for the implementation of four stations of the Metro Manila Subway-Contract Packages 102 and 103.

During the Philippines and Japan's 9th Military-to-Military dialogue in Manila on Oct. 21, the two countries discussed plans to further expand their defense relations.

In another Philippine-Japan Vice Ministerial Strategic Dialogue held in Manila on Sept. 7, the two nations saw emerging partnerships on space and energy security.

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[More rain on the way as Philippine storm death toll hits 150](#)

The death toll from a powerful storm that triggered flooding and landslides across the Philippines has reached 150, disaster officials said Thursday, as more rain was forecast in some of the hardest-hit areas.

More rain on the way as Philippine storm death toll hits 150

The death toll from a powerful storm that triggered flooding and landslides across the Philippines has reached 150, disaster officials said Thursday, as more rain was forecast in some of the hardest-hit areas.

More than 355,400 people fled their homes as Severe Tropical Storm Nalgae pounded swathes of the archipelago nation late last week and over the weekend.

Of the 150 deaths recorded by the national disaster agency, 63 were in the Bangsamoro region on the southern island of Mindanao where flash floods and landslides destroyed villages.

At least 128 people were injured and 36 are still missing across the country, the agency said. Authorities have warned there is no hope of finding more survivors.

Mindanao is rarely hit by the 20 or so typhoons that strike the Philippines each year, but storms that do reach the region tend to be deadlier than in Luzon and the central parts of the country.

With more rain forecast Thursday, disaster agencies in Bangsamoro were preparing for the possibility of further destruction in the poor and mountainous region.

"The soil is still wet in areas where flash floods and landslides occurred so further erosion could be instantly triggered," said Naguib Sinarimbo, regional civil defence chief.

"Waterways and rivers that were in the path of the flash floods are blocked by debris and boulders so they could easily overflow."

President Ferdinand Marcos has blamed deforestation and climate change for the devastating landslides in Bangsamoro.

He has urged local authorities to plant trees on denuded mountains.

"That's one thing that we need to do," Marcos told a briefing this week.

"We have been hearing this over and over again, but we still continue cutting trees. That's what happens, landslides like that happen."

Marcos has declared a state of calamity for six months in the worst-affected regions, freeing up funds for relief efforts.

Scientists have warned that deadly and destructive storms are becoming more powerful as the world gets warmer because of climate change.

RAPPLER

[World falling short on funding for climate adaptation – UN report](#)

By: Reuters

London, United Kingdom – The world is falling far short at rounding up money to help struggling nations adapt to the increasingly dangerous impacts of climate change, according to a report released Thursday, November 3.

As well as finding the money and political will to slash emissions and contain global warming, hundreds of billions of dollars are needed to protect countries from changes that have happened much faster than scientists had anticipated.

Current international finance flowing to developing countries is between 5 and 10 times below what is needed, the United Nations Environment Programme report said. (LIVE UPDATES: UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt)

In 2020, money from donor nations set aside for helping poorer countries adapt to climate change was just \$29 billion — far below the \$340 billion per year that could be needed by 2030.

“It’s time for a global climate adaptation overhaul,” said United Nations secretary-general Antonio Guterres in a media statement, noting he had asked green climate funds to work with public and private financiers to pilot a new accelerator for adaptation investment.

The accelerator will help financiers work with developing countries to invest in their adaptation priorities and specific projects.

Adaptation funds are often put into programs like improving food security by planting crops that are resilient to heat and drought, or in infrastructure, such as sea walls to help keep rising waters at bay.

At the UN climate summit in Glasgow last year, developed countries agreed to double support for adaptation financing to \$40 billion per year by 2025.

At COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, beginning November 6, countries “must present a credible roadmap with clear milestones on how this will be delivered – preferably as grants, not loans,” said Guterres.

Africa, in particular, has struggled to respond to worsening weather extremes. Current annual adaptation spending on the continent is \$11.4 billion – or about 40% of all climate finance, according to a report by the Global Center on Adaptation, an international solutions broker hosted in the Netherlands. Meeting countries’ emissions pledges would require an additional \$41 billion a year.

“Adaptation finance is scaling too slowly to close the investment gap in Africa,” said Patrick Verkooijen, CEO of GCA. One of the key programs to combat this shortfall is the

Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program which seeks to raise \$25 billion for countries in the next three years.

It's "the best vehicle we have to ensure the adaptation investment shortfall in Africa is met with action from all available sources including the private sector," said Verkooijen.

RESILIENCE.ORG

[A Partnership With the Philippines Brings Composting to Detroit](#)

By: Jena Brooker

On a recent Saturday morning, Pamela McGhee and several neighbors were busy at work in a community garden on Detroit's East Side, weighing food scraps and assessing compost piles for compliance. Items in the compost are assessed according to a "yuck" and "yay" system. "Yuck" items, like animal bones and meat, which do not compost well in their system, were discarded; "yay" items, including fruit peels and coffee grounds, were added to the pile.

McGhee and her neighbors are participating in a pilot program to build zero-waste systems for Detroit. It's something they say the city sorely needs. For decades, Detroit was home to one of the country's largest waste incinerators.

Detroit Renewable Power burned thousands of tons of trash each day, releasing toxic fumes—nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and lead particles—into the air. Nearby residents kept their windows closed to avoid the stench. They said the incinerator, located in a low-income, majority-Black neighborhood, contributed to the city's high asthma rates, which are 46% higher than Michigan's state average.

Three out of four of McGhee's children have asthma; her sister does too. "It was terrible," she said. "You could smell it just about every day in the summer, and in the wintertime too."

The existence of the incinerator also discouraged investment in alternative waste management systems, like recycling or composting, according to the nonprofit Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA). In 2014, Detroit became the last major U.S. city to implement citywide curbside recycling; today, its waste diversion rate is only 4%, compared with the state average of more than 19%.

East Side residents formed Breathe Free Detroit, one of several groups behind a successful campaign to shut down the incinerator; the plant closed in 2019. Now, that same group is working with the city to develop a composting system.

"Our communities still face a lot of respiratory and health problems because of the pollution that was caused from the incinerator," said KT Andresky, Breathe Free Detroit's campaign organizer. Andresky said many of her neighbors see a direct line between composting and recycling and improving their community health.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, food waste is the most common material found in landfills and sent to incinerators in the U.S., comprising 24% of landfill materials and 22% of combusted municipal solid waste.

A citywide composting program would create local jobs, decrease truck traffic and emissions from waste pickup, and provide organic fertilizer for community gardens like the one in which McGhee was volunteering, Andresky said. It would also help the U.S.

reach its climate goals: Food that decomposes in landfills is a major source of methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Composting and recycling could help reach net-negative waste-sector emissions by 2030, according to a new report by GAIA.

But Detroit organizers didn't have much experience with communitywide composting, so when they began developing a program, they turned to an unlikely mentor more than 8,000 miles away: the Mother Earth Foundation in the Philippines. Over the past 20 years, the organization has earned a reputation for training low-income communities, government agencies, civic organizations, and businesses in zero-waste practices.

"Culturally, [composting] has been part of our ancestral practices," said Rap Villavicencio, a program manager at the Mother Earth Foundation. "As an agricultural country, the Philippines has been using and producing a lot of organic wastes since the early days."

Despite that ancestral knowledge, few citywide systems were helping communities keep organic matter out of landfills, Villavicencio said.

"We cannot rely on the large-scale anymore. We need to empower every household, every sector, to do their own composting."

For more than a decade, the organization has set up compost-training programs in communities across the country; it helped one neighborhood in Manila divert 92% of its solid waste from landfills, according to a report from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

It was that success at the local level that convinced organizers with C40 Cities, a global network of metropolises that collaborate on climate solutions, to connect the Mother Earth Foundation with Breathe Free Detroit.

Starting in November 2020, the two groups organized monthly calls, in which Mother Earth Foundation organizers offered advice based on their experiences setting up community composting systems.

"It's just really important for us to learn from and be guided by some of the most impacted communities across the world, because these communities are experts in understanding the solutions for the problems that they face on a daily basis," said Andresky.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a funder of C40, provided the volunteers, including McGhee, stipends for participating in training sessions and collecting data on her community's composting practices. The foundation's grant also included money for materials, staffing of the pilot, and data analysis. Next spring, Breathe Free Detroit and its partners plan to share that data with city officials. Members of Mother Earth Foundation and community organizers in Detroit plan to visit each other's cities early next year, Andresky said.

The Manila–Detroit partnership is part of a larger effort helmed by C40 Cities to connect U.S. communities with non-U.S. groups to advance climate justice and public health.

“Climate change is so overwhelming often, and it requires so many innovative ideas and, really, transformation at the root,” said Nia Mitchell, manager of U.S. health and equity climate for C40 Cities. International collaboration has a lot to offer, Mitchell said. “Being able to be inspired by and demonstrate that new strategies can work is one really big benefit,” she said.

The Manila–Detroit partnership isn’t the only one of its kind led by C40 Cities. Officials in Jackson, Mississippi, have partnered with their counterparts in Barcelona to study how replacing asphalt with vegetation can combat urban heat islands. Community organizations in Lawrence, Massachusetts, have studied Fortaleza, Brazil, on how to make the city’s streets more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly.

Cities learning from one another is easy—it’s scaling those solutions that proves challenging, said Josh Sorin of the Centre for Public Impact, another organization working to bring together cities across the world to address climate change.

“There are some exciting examples at the moment of cities learning from one another’s experiments and solutions to address the climate crisis in their cities,” he said. “However, the greater challenge we see is the need for cities to embed and influence insights from individual experiments into broader city policies, and even regional and national policies,” Sorin said.

“At the end of the day, it’s really about relationships,” Mitchell, of C40, said. “To have trust amongst these cities, to really confront these problems together, to lean on each other’s expertise together only makes us stronger and makes our ability to confront climate change, globally, that much more possible.”

SUNSTAR

Mass tree plantings

By: Rox Peña

I've joined many tree planting activities. Most of these were done during Arbor Day. I've initiated tree planting activities myself when I was advocating the propagation of the balacat tree many years back. Our beloved Mabalacat city was named after this endemic tree. I'm happy that many of the balacat trees we planted are now full grown.

It's sad however that for some tree planting projects, no follow up activities are done to ensure that the seedlings survive. The plants are forgotten and left on their own. As a result, many of the seedlings don't make it. They wither and die. It's a waste of time, effort and money. Tree planting is more than 'feel good' and photo ops. Honest-to-goodness tree planting is about a commitment to the environment ensuring that every seedling becomes a full grown tree.

I've read a story on Yale 360 (<https://e360.yale.edu/features/phantom-forests-tree-planting-climate-change>) about massive tree planting activities that failed. One of these was in the Philippines. On March 8, 2012, more than 7,000 volunteers in Camarines Sur planted 1,009,029 mangrove saplings into coastal mud in one hour. The Guinness World Records declared that 'nobody had ever planted so many trees in such a short time' and proclaimed it as a world record.

However, an on-the-ground study published in 2020 by British mangrove restoration researcher Dominic Wodehouse found that fewer than 2 percent of the mangroves that were planted had survived. The other 98 percent had died or were washed away. The outcome was "entirely predictable," he wrote. The muddy planting sites were washed by storms and waves and were otherwise "ecologically unsuited to mangrove establishment, because they are too waterlogged and there is no oxygen for them to breathe."

Even the ambitious National Greening Program (NGP) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) failed to meet its target. There was inadequate preparation and support, according to the Commission on Audit (COA). In its 2019 performance audit, COA said that the "DENR forced itself to meet the 1.50 million-hectare target... Instead of accelerating reforestation, fast-tracking only opened the program to waste...Forest cover yielded a marginal increase of 177,441 hectares after five (5) years of implementation, which is 88.17 percent below the target of 1.50 million hectares. It could not be expected that the forest cover would increase significantly because the seedlings are not surviving." I wrote the DENR and asked for their comment but they did not reply.

Every year, "millions of dollars" are spent on reforesting landscapes, according to Lalisa Duguma of World Agroforestry, an international research agency in Nairobi, Kenya. Yet "there are few success stories." Typically only a minority of seedlings survive, he says, because the wrong trees are planted in the wrong places, and many are left untended,

in part because ownership and management of trees is not handed over to local communities.

So in your tree planting project, consider choosing native trees and have adequate site study and preparation. Most importantly, have a plan for seedling maintenance and involve the local community.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Church official calls for meatless Fridays](#)

By: Franco Jose C. Baroña

A Philippine Catholic Church official called on the faithful to support the "No Meat Fridays" after the University of Cambridge challenged Pope Francis to urge all Catholics globally to return to the traditional practice of not eating meat on the last day of the working week to help reduce global carbon emissions.

Radio Veritas president and Caritas Manila executive director Fr. Anton C.T. Pascual said the challenge made by the British research university is "very timely" due to the ongoing changes in the world's climate resulting in catastrophic disasters.

In a new study, Cambridge University researchers assessed the impact of a return to meat-free Fridays for Catholics in England and Wales. They found out that even a small dietary change by just a minority of Catholics had significant environmental benefits, and that a papal decree to reinstate meatless Fridays across the global church could mitigate millions of tons of greenhouse gases annually.

Professor Shaun Larcom from Cambridge's Department of Land Economy and lead author of the study said the Catholic Church is "very well placed to help mitigate climate change, with more than one billion followers around the world."

"Pope Francis has already highlighted the moral imperative for action on the climate emergency, and the important role of civil society in achieving sustainability through lifestyle change," Larcom said.

"Meat agriculture is one of the major drivers of greenhouse gas emissions. If the Pope were to reinstate the obligation for meatless Fridays to all Catholics globally, it could be a major source of low-cost emission reductions, even if only a minority of Catholics choose to comply, as we find in our case study," he added.

The Cambridge researchers pointed out that the results highlight how a change in diet among a group of people, even if they are a minority in society, can have very large consumption and sustainability implications.

"While our study looked at a change in practice among Catholics, many religions have dietary proscriptions that are likely to have large natural resource impacts. Other religious leaders could also drive changes in behavior to further encourage sustainability and mitigate climate change," said co-author Dr. Luca Panzone from Newcastle University.

The practice of meat-free Fridays dates back to Pope Nicholas 1st's declaration in the 9th century. Catholics were required to abstain from eating meat on Fridays in memory of Christ's death and crucifixion.

"This is a tradition to us, Catholics. That's why the advocacy that we do at Radio Veritas is so beautiful that we can spread it with the help and inspiration of our Holy Pope," said Pascual, who led the launch of the "No Meat Friday" campaign in the Philippines in 2016.

Pascual expressed confidence that the challenge made to Pope Francis will spur the members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines to support and promote the "No Meat on Friday" campaign of Radio Veritas.

[Komunidad to lead Adapt Asia 2022](#)

Asia is prone to experiencing fatal heat waves, flooding, severe typhoons, droughts, and changes in water availability in the lack of climate adaptation initiatives.

Adapt Asia provides a forum for practitioners and professionals from many sectors to meet, exchange their experiences and learnings, and collaborate on generating beneficial results and workable solutions to Asia's climate concerns.

To be led by Komunidad, a data and environmental intelligence company with offices in Singapore and the Philippines, Adapt Asia 2022 is set to investigate the current challenges and potential for more climate-adaptive industries and communities by analyzing climate adaptation methods and taking steps to apply these strategies to build strong climate resilience.

Komunidad's intelligent solutions and products empower businesses and communities in Asia to construct and deploy their decision support tools more efficiently and sustainably by streamlining weather and climate data and making crucial information scalable.

This two-day forum will enable industry leaders to analyze and communicate groundbreaking strategies that will help them thrive in a changing world and encourage more Asian communities and businesses to take action by utilizing resources through innovative ideas and strategies.

Day 1 of the forum will focus on the theme "Taking Action," where specialists and officials will share their stories of pushing risk resilience, while Day 2 will tackle the various technologies and innovations applicable to or have already been applied to empower businesses, communities, and the local government to maintain risk resilient operations.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Pimentel: Realign confidential, intel funds for disaster response](#)

By: Xave Gregorio

Manila, Philippines — Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel III on Thursday called on his fellow lawmakers to slash confidential and intelligence funds and rechannel them to disaster response and recovery programs in the wake of the devastation wrought by Severe Tropical Storm “Paeng.”

“Let us cut confidential and intelligence funds and rechannel this much-needed allocation to strengthen our disaster response capabilities,” Pimentel said in a statement.

The proposed budget for 2023 contains P9.29 billion in confidential and intelligence funds, around half or P4.5 billion of which would go to the Office of the President. Due to the confidential nature of these allocations, they are notoriously hard to audit.

“These funds can be used instead to beef up the weather forecasting capabilities of PAGASA, build houses damaged by typhoons and earthquakes and repair damaged roads and bridges,” Pimentel said.

According to Senate finance panel chair Juan Edgardo Angara, there is roughly P30 billion earmarked for the calamity fund, which he said is “larger than in the past years.” Pimentel, however, said this “could easily be proven insufficient” given the frequency of calamities in the country.

But with the onslaught of Paeng, which has so far left an estimated damage of P5.27 billion in agriculture and infrastructure, top congressional leaders are toying with the idea of increasing the allocation for disaster response.

“Certainly, the committee will always be open to changes, which may help our people during these difficult times and which will improve the government’s response to these calamities,” Angara said in a statement on Wednesday.

House Speaker Martin Romualdez (Leyte, 1st District) said Sunday that he has asked House appropriations panel chair Rep. Zaldy Co (Ako Bicol party-list) to compile damage assessments that may aid them “in reviewing possible adjustments in budget allocation for repair and rehabilitation of affected areas.”

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. has placed the regions of Calabarzon, Bicol, Western Visayas and BARMM under a state of calamity for a period of six months, unless he lifts it ahead of time.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council earlier recommended placing the entire country under a state of calamity for a period of one year, but the chief executive rejected this.

A state of calamity declaration allows local governments to use calamity funds "for rescue, recovery, relief and rehabilitation and for the continuous provision of basic services to the affected populations."

It will also put price controls on basic necessities and prime commodities.

An average of 20 tropical cyclones pass through the Philippines annually. Scientists have warned that storms are becoming more powerful as the world continues to heat up because of climate change.

THE WORLD BANK

[Countries Could Cut Emissions by 70% by 2050 and Boost Resilience with Annual Investments of 1.4% of GDP](#)

Washington, Nov. 3, 2022—Investing an average of 1.4% of GDP annually could reduce emissions in developing countries by as much as 70% by 2050 and boost resilience, according to a new report from the World Bank Group.

The analysis, *Climate and Development: An Agenda for Action*, compiles and harmonizes results from the Bank Group's Country Climate and Development Reports, covering over 20 countries that account for 34% of the world's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It shows that investment needs are markedly higher in lower-income countries which are more vulnerable to climate risk, often exceeding 5% of GDP. These countries will need increased amounts of concessional finance and grants to manage climate change impacts and develop along a low-carbon path.

The report draws from the richness of the individual country reports and highlights lessons for countries on integrating climate and development objectives. It finds that this approach to climate action can help them manage the negative impacts of climate change, while generating positive impacts on GDP and economic growth, and delivering critical development outcomes such as reducing poverty. The key conditions for success include impactful reforms, improved allocation of public resources, higher mobilization of private capital, and significant financial support from the international community.

"Achieving climate and development objectives must go hand in hand. Climate action is a key global public good, requiring significant new financing from the global community and mechanisms for inflows," said World Bank Group President David Malpass, "Well prioritized and sequenced climate actions, strong participation of the private sector, substantial international support and a just transition are critical components for impact."

The report also notes that while all countries have to increase their climate action, high income countries with their greater responsibility for emissions need to lead the way with deeper and more rapid decarbonization, as well as increased financial support to lower income countries. Major current and future emitters in the developing world also have a key role to play for the world to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. The report also examines the technologies and innovations needed for lower carbon intensity production of electricity, steel, cement, and manufacturing, and how the world will build green and efficient supply chains for a sustainable future.

Country Climate and Development Reports combine the best available data, models, and tools and aim to provide policymakers with immediate and actionable recommendations to guide climate and development decisions today. They are a core element of the World Bank Group's Climate Change Action Plan, which outlines how the WBG will support climate action in developing countries.

Countries need to prioritize and sequence key investments and policy reforms, according to the report. These will deliver multiple benefits. And emission reductions can deliver immediate development outcomes such as reduced vulnerability to fossil fuel price volatility, improved trade balances and enhanced energy security, and better air quality and related positive health impacts. Early action can also avoid locking countries into high emitting infrastructure and systems, which will be costly or even impossible to transform in the future.

This analysis covers over 20 countries including: Argentina, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, China, Arab Republic of Egypt, Ghana, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa, Türkiye, and Vietnam. The findings from these analyses will inform Bank Group engagements with public and private sector clients and will feed into the Bank Group's own country engagement frameworks and operational portfolio.

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