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[How tech companies can fund and scale climate projects in APAC](#)

By: Raja Aiman

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GMA NEWS

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By: Sundy Locus

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NIKKEI ASIA

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By: Kurt Dela Peña

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PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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By: Wilnard Bacelonia

The Philippine Senate continues to prepare for the country's hosting of the 31st Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF31), which will be attended by its 28 member-countries on Nov. 23 to 26.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Govt inaction on climate change hit](#)

By: Aric John Sy Cua

The Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ) held Climate Walk, a 1,000-kilometer hike from Manila to Tacloban, on October 8 to November 8, to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the landfall of Typhoon "Haiyan" (locally known as Super Typhoon "Yolanda"), the most powerful storm on the planet in 2013 and one of the strongest Pacific typhoons ever recorded.

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Pope Francis to address COP28 summit in Dubai](#)

By: Rommel F. Lopez

Pope Francis is set become the first pope in history to address a global climate change conference.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Gov't needs climate fund support](#)

By: Adrian H. Halili

Acknowledging government limitations, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) is calling for more private sector investments for climate action projects, an official said over the weekend.

CLTV 36

[Pagtatanim ng bakawan, malaking tulong para malabanan ang epekto ng climate change: CCC](#)

By: JM De Jesus

Pinag handaan ng mga opisyal ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) kasama ang Pampanga 4th district Representative na si Anna York Bondoc Sagum ang pag usad ng Barangay Consuelo, Macabebe ngayong biyernes Nov 10, ininspeksyon nila dito ang Mangrove Reforestation Project na inumpisahan ng Department of Environment Natural Resources na matatagpuan sa Macabebe at iba pang stake holders at ng iba pang nagtanim nung 2018.

MANILA BULLETIN

[Gov't officials, biz leaders, youth attend climate change forum](#)

By: Jel Santos

Amid the threat of global warming, a forum seeking to foster multi-stakeholder collaboration in implementing critical strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation was conducted on Saturday, Nov. 11, in Pasay City.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[UST, Climate Change Commission seal pact for climate innovation, sustainability](#)

The University of Santo Tomas (UST) and the Climate Change Commission (CCC) have agreed to solidify their commitment to drive climate innovation and sustainability.

SUNSTAR

[LOOK: Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Borje and fourth district Representative Anna York Bondoc led the ocular inspection of mangrove plantations along the Pampanga River in Barangay Consuelo, Macabebe.](#)

By: Princess Clea Arcellaz

Borje said mangroves are considered as among the best nature-based solution against climate change. "It provides an area for growing native species and at the same time gives protection against water surges and tidal waves," he said.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ECO BUSINESS

[How tech companies can fund and scale climate projects in APAC](#)

By: Raja Aiman

As the world grapples with the impact of climate change – which saw catastrophic floods, devastating forest fires and brutal heat waves continue wreaking havoc across the planet this year – the need to help vulnerable communities worldwide to quickly adapt is now greater than ever.

Google, through initiatives supported by its philanthropic arm – Google.org – has been funding artificial intelligence (AI) projects led by social impact organisations that are aimed at helping communities tackle not only climate-related but also medical and social issues.

“It is important to engage these local communities and give them a voice, so that they can be part of the solution,” said Marija Ralic, Google.org lead, Google APAC, who was speaking at the closing plenary of the Unlocking Capital for Sustainability event, an annual summit focused on sustainable finance, held in September. “Often, the people who are closest to the problem know what the solutions are, and what works for them.”

For instance, one key problem faced by the cotton farming communities in India is pest control. Up to 30 per cent of cotton crops are destroyed each year by pests such as the pink bollworm, leading to loss of yield and affecting the livelihoods of millions of rural households in India that depend on cotton farming. Most Indian cotton farmers are smallholders who lack the resources to adopt effective pest management systems.

Mumbai-based not-for-profit organisation Wadhvani AI sought to find a solution. In 2019, Wadhvani AI received a US\$2 million grant under Google’s AI for Social Good programme from Google.org to develop an app that uses AI to identify pests, recommend mitigation strategies and advise farmers on how to reduce pesticide use.

“They needed more support, so our Google fellows worked with them full-time over six months to bring their solution to life,” said Ralic, referring to Google employees working within a pro bono capacity, to support Wadhvani AI with their initiative.

The project has, so far, delivered promising results. “[Wadhvani AI] has helped smallholder farmers to reduce their use of expensive pesticides, safeguard their crops and improve their profit by over 20 per cent,” added Ralic.

To further build on this positive impact, Wadhvani AI received an additional US\$3.3 million grant from Google.org in 2022 as part of the AI for the Global Goals project, a

US\$25 million initiative specifically aimed at projects that use AI to accelerate progress on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“This grant allows them to partner with the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in India, so they can scale [their pest control solution] for billions of people in India,” Ralic said.

Ralic added that Google.org also looks at whether projects helping underserved communities are both feasible and scalable. She noted that social impact organisations should have access to the local underserved communities to understand the challenges they are facing.

Driving long-term sustainability solutions in APAC

Asia Pacific is especially vulnerable to climate change. From 2008 to 2020, the region accounted for 80 per cent of the total global new displacements related to disasters, becoming the world’s most climate-vulnerable region in both slow-onset and sudden-onset events, according to a 2023 UNESCO report.

“When we talk about an equitable transition, it means that everyone benefits from a shift to a cleaner economy, and it also means investing in communities most vulnerable to climate change,” said Kate Brandt, chief sustainability officer at Google, during her keynote speech at Unlocking Capital for Sustainability.

Brandt announced that Google.org was committing another US\$5 million to support the APAC Sustainability Seed Fund, which was launched last year by the Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN) in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The fund provides grants to non-profit organisations to fight climate change and drive sustainability in Asia Pacific (APAC).

“The APAC region is diverse,” said Ralic, referring to how organisations in the region are at varying stages of technology know-how.

Ralic added that Google.org is supporting these organisations through a two-pronged approach. The first approach is to support organisations’ innovative technology solutions, noted Ralic, highlighting that the APAC Sustainability Seed Fund allocated grant funding to 13 local organisations focused on sustainability solutions for vulnerable and underserved communities in Asia Pacific.

The second approach is to help social impact organisations that are keen to leverage innovative technology but are unsure where to start and how to use it for their

organisations. “We support them through capacity-building programmes so they can learn how to leverage AI technology to suit their purposes,” said Ralic.

“It is really important that we keep supporting these organisations’ innovative solutions that, in the long term, will have a positive impact on local communities.”

Forward-looking finance

Blended finance, or the strategic use of public finance to mobilise private finance, can be an effective way to unlock funding for climate investments that are seen as too risky.

Speaking at the closing plenary panel, Zia Nariman, senior investor officer and Asia Pacific Climate Lead, International Finance Cooperation, said that a significant amount of blended finance is needed. “We need to be judicious in the use of blended finance,” Nariman stressed. “It needs to play a role where we are pushing the envelope and supporting technologies that are currently not scalable or cost-competitive, like battery storage.”

Another panellist, Leticia Guimarães, lead, carbon markets; climate hub, United Nations Development Programme, noted: “We need to understand the ecosystem of the different players [involved in blended finance] so we can better position each of them.” There is a need to better measure the impact of initiatives as not all of them bring immediate results, she added.

Naina Subberwal Batra, chief executive officer of AVPN, noted that blended finance must take on a balanced role. “We can’t keep saying that philanthropy will take on the biggest burden just because it is the ‘catalytic capital available for the first loss,’” said Batra, referring to investments provided by an investor or grantmaker who agrees to bear first losses to incentivise the participation of co-investors that would not have otherwise entered the deal.

While philanthropists can catalyse change, the actual scaling of it takes place through partnerships, said Ralic. She added that there is a need for both “risk-taking” philanthropy that supports bold, AI-driven solutions, as well as “patient” philanthropy.

“For positive change to happen, it really takes time,” Ralic concluded. “We need to be comfortable with change. Sometimes that means we need to learn new things and unlearn some things.”

GMA NEWS

Eastern Samar town passes climate accountability resolution

By: Sundy Locus

A landmark resolution seeking climate accountability was passed in the coastal town of Salcedo, Eastern Samar, environment group Greenpeace said Friday.

The first of its kind in the Philippines, the municipal resolution seeks “accountability for conduct directly contributing to climate change” and its impact on the residents of Salcedo town.

Municipal Councilor Joselito Esquierdo sponsored the resolution, which was passed on November 6 ahead of the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the devastation of Super Typhoon Yolanda.

“The Sanggunian, on behalf of the people of Salcedo, is resolute in its pursuit for accountability and reparations for the losses and damages brought about by the detrimental impacts of the climate crisis caused by fossil fuel companies responsible for the excessive and cumulative greenhouse gas emissions,” the resolution reads.

Further, the resolution directs the local government to “pursue any and all actions on behalf of the people of Salcedo for the losses and damages inflicted upon the communities due to the impacts of extreme weather events.”

It also aims “to position the Municipality of Salcedo as a pro-active advocate for climate justice, demonstrating practices in alignment with the Paris Agreement.”

MANILA BULLETIN

[EU strikes deal on key biodiversity bill](#)

The European Parliament and EU member states reached an agreement on Thursday on a key biodiversity bill aimed at rewilding EU land and water habitats.

The law will force EU countries to put in place measures to restore at least 20 percent of the EU's land and 20 percent of the EU's seas by 2030, said a statement by the council, which represents the 27 member states.

There had been attempts by the parliament's biggest grouping, the conservative European People's Party (EPP), to shoot down the text earlier this year.

While EU lawmakers welcomed the agreement reached before midnight following hours of talks that began on Thursday afternoon, some critics pointed to watered down elements.

"We can be proud of this historic result setting ambitious and workable rules for all," Pascal Canfin, the head of the parliament's environment committee, said on social media.

Spain's minister for ecological transition, Teresa Ribera Rodriguez, said she was "proud" of the law, "the first of its kind".

"It will help us rebuild healthy biodiversity levels across member states and preserve nature for the future generations, while fighting climate change," she said.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, last year proposed the law that aims to resuscitate degraded ecosystems by boosting forested areas, marine habitats and increasing connectivity between rivers.

EU data shows more than 80 per cent of Europe's habitats are in a poor condition.

The law, aligned with the historic biodiversity agreement signed at COP15 last year, says EU states should take measures by 2030 to restore 30 percent of habitats in ecosystems that are in a bad condition, then 60 percent by 2040 and 90 percent by 2050.

- 'Crucial step' -

Environmental groups welcomed the agreement on the law that is a central pillar of the EU's biodiversity strategy.

It is part of the bloc's Green Deal approach to mitigate climate change and boost environmental protections.

Tatiana Nuno, senior marine policy officer Seas At Risk, said the agreement "is far from what is needed to face the biodiversity crisis, but regarding the ocean it is a crucial step towards restoring the precious marine life it harbours".

"While substantially weakened by the Council, the fisheries provisions in the law are a much overdue attempt at coherence between environmental and fisheries policy," Vera Coelho, deputy vice-president at Oceana in Europe, said.

The EPP on Thursday proudly pointed to the "notable improvements" to the "strongly revised" text, including "no more requirement to renature 10 per cent of farmland".

The grouping had argued before negotiations between member states and the parliament began that the text would reduce EU food security and limit possibilities to build wind and hydroelectric energy facilities.

Leftwing and centrist lawmakers at the time accused the EPP, which woos Europe's farmers as a key constituency, of using the bill as an election football before polls in Europe next year.

Recognizing safe keepers of the environment

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines awarded groups and individuals for their contributions to conserving nature as well as project partners from the private sector who supported WWF's projects and advocacies.

WWF-Philippines held its annual Partners' Night at the Raffles Fairmont Hotel in Makati City, with the 2023 theme "Web of Change," underscoring the interdependent roles of every group and individual in the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss.

Guests, staff, and partners graced the occasion, with Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga as the guest of honor.

"We all have a role to play in conservation as we are all tenants who temporarily live and share a common home," said Yulo-Loyzaga. "We should strengthen and reinforce these connections for positive change and be a voice for biodiversity conservation to encourage everyone to be part of simple and concrete solutions."

WWF-Philippines also introduced its newly elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees Atty. Anthony Charlemagne Yu.

"This year's partners' night celebrates our strength in diversity — of individuals who commit to changing the ending for the planet, of ideas and solutions, of actions and roles that we play in addressing the twin challenges of nature loss and climate change," shared Yu. "We thrive in diversity and in our intricate interconnectedness."

The main event of the night was the awarding of the Force of Nature awards to groups and individuals whose contributions made a significant impact in promoting and scaling the advocacy of nature conservation and promoting sustainability.

The Force of Nature awardees included the San Jose Sico Landfill Multipurpose Cooperative for their contributions to achieving a world without waste through collecting, recycling, and composting waste from business establishments in Batangas City.

The Association of Young Environmental Journalists also received a Force of Nature award for helping spread environmental communications advocacies by training over 1,000 youth and professionals on environmental journalism and communications.

United Ilijan Agricultural Workers for Sustainable Development in Negros Occidental president Rodel Cadigal was the final Force of Nature awardee. He was honored for his involvement in addressing deforestation and agricultural land degradation issues, watershed management, water conservation, and sustainable farming.

WWF-Philippines also honored BPI and the BPI Foundation, Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines, Inc., Globe Telecom, HSBC, Mynt, and the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines for consistently supporting the organization's projects and advocacies.

“We hold all of these wins and these lessons together within this web of change. WWF means World Wide Fund for Nature, but among us pandas, we also say WWF means work with fun and work with friends,” said WWF-Philippines executive director Katherine Custodio. “WWF Philippines is the organization it is today because of all of you. We count you as our friends—people who make this work fun and fulfilling.”

NIKKEI ASIA

[Philippines searches for answers 10 years after Typhoon Haiyan](#)

By: Michael Beltran

Mayeth Martinez has been left homeless twice since Typhoon Haiyan ripped through the central Philippines a decade ago, killing thousands and causing billions of dollars in damage.

The November 2013 tropical cyclone, one of the most powerful on record, swept away Martinez's seafront home in Tacloban where once-bustling neighborhoods were flattened by 300-kilometer-an-hour winds, torrential rain and crashing waves.

Martinez, a 56-year-old cashier, rebuilt her home. But the government tore it down in 2015 as it pushed ahead with a \$300 million sea wall stretching about 45 km across the coast of hard-hit Leyte province, a project designed to protect one of the world's most disaster-prone nations from future destruction.

"They said it was too risky living there," Martinez told Nikkei Asia. "So I didn't complain when they demolished my house."

But three years past its original target completion date, the sea wall is still only about half finished and the government has not set a new deadline for a project central to its flagship infrastructure push -- a stark reminder of the country's woeful disaster mitigation record, critics say.

"It's expensive and unproven to be effective," said Minet Aguisanda-Jerusalem, director of the Leyte Center for Development, an NGO involved with post-Haiyan recovery efforts. "Did the government really have to displace thousands of families, including fisherfolk, away from the shore for a project they cannot finish?"

Planting mangrove forests would help protect the coast from future disasters, she added.

"Mangroves are a much cheaper, proven way to deal with storm surges," Aguisanda-Jerusalem said. "It also only takes three years for them to be fully grown."

The government did try its hand at a mangrove planting program years after the disaster, with Leyte as one its main targets. But the plan drew flak for wasting public funds and valuable seedlings: Officials used an incompatible mangrove species that quickly died.

Mangroves were not on the mind of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. when he visited the region Wednesday to mark 10 years since the disaster that claimed more than 6,300 lives struck.

The Storm Surge Protection Project (SSPP) started under his predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte, has made the region "better prepared," said Marcos, whose government is bumping climate-change spending up 17% to 543.45 billion pesos (\$9.7 billion) next year, with much of it earmarked for flood control.

"We are now better adapted to the vagaries of very severe weather events," he added.

Despite the public spending, the Philippines has for years remained the most at-risk nation for natural disasters, according to the World Risk Index, an annual report by the Germany-based Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict.

Timothy Cipriano, an environmental geographer at the University of the Philippines, said the unfinished sea wall is symptomatic of how the Philippines' disaster response has been repeatedly reduced to big-ticket construction feats.

"The problem in the Philippines is that infrastructure is the only way we deal with it," said Cipriano, a member of science advocacy group AGHAM. "Our officials don't see the limitations of engineering solutions and they keep wondering why after years of the same approach the country still experiences periodic flooding."

Cipriano said his research found that the hazard maps used by authorities for the Haiyan evacuation were several years out of date, possibly contributing to the heavy death toll.

"The impacts were underestimated and that contributed to a lot of evacuation centers sustaining a lot of damage and casualties," he said.

The Department of Public Works and Highways, which is responsible for the sea wall project, cites red tape, fluctuating material prices and additional feature requests for the yearslong delay. Nevertheless, the unfinished project helped reduce damage and protected those living in its shadow when Typhoon Rai struck in 2021, it said. "The people living behind the tide embankment structure of the SSPP were very thankful for this project," the department's Leyte office said.

Those claims are at odds with a report by the country's National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, which said Rai did not make landfall in Leyte province.

Meanwhile, Martinez wonders why she cannot return to her old neighborhood, especially since several hotels and other commercial projects have since been constructed in what was thought to be a no-build zone after Haiyan.

Like many now living in a resettlement community, Martinez travels several hours to her job in downtown Tacloban. It costs about 130 pesos (\$2.30) round trip on public transit, one-third of her daily wages.

"There is barely anything left to take home!" she said. "I also have to buy food, pay electricity and buy water outside because we haven't had running water since I arrived. Before, we all used to live where our livelihoods were. But our savings and homes were wasted -- that might be what happened to the project budget, too."

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Ounce of prevention better than pound of cure in times of disaster—Oxfam tells LGUs](#)

By: Kurt Dela Peña

Local government units (LGUs) should shift from reactive to proactive spending, a humanitarian and development organization said, stressing that the best way to mitigate the damage caused by disasters is to prepare.

This was pointed out by Oxfam Pilipinas as the country marked the 10th anniversary of Yolanda (Haiyan), one of the world's strongest typhoons that hit over 14 million people in 46 provinces.

For Erika Geronimo, executive director of Oxfam Pilipinas, "we learned the hard way that the best way to reduce the impacts of a climate crisis is by preparing early for an imminent disaster."

She said "we cannot afford another Haiyan devastating people's lives."

"It will be better if local governments proactively utilized their 70 percent mitigation/preparedness funds that do not require a declaration of state of calamity instead of merely expending their 30 percent QRF (Quick Response Fund) when disaster strikes," she said.

As explained by Oxfam Pilipinas, LGUs are required by law to apportion 70 percent of their Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (LDRRMF) for mitigation and prevention, and 30 percent for response and recovery.

However, even after Yolanda, Oxfam said while LGUs spend their 30 percent QRF in response to actual disasters, they are less likely to make use of a significant share of the 70 percent fund for preparedness and mitigation.

Hit hard

The Philippines, based on the Global Climate Risk Index, is the fourth most vulnerable to extreme weather events such as typhoons, next to Puerto Rico, Myanmar, and Haiti, from 2000 to 2019.

It was pointed out that in the last 20 years, 317 extreme weather events devastated the country, resulting in a yearly average of 859 deaths and \$3,179.2 million in losses, with the poor considered the hardest hit.

The Index classifies countries in two broad categories—those that had experienced exceptional catastrophes such as Myanmar, and those that had experienced and are experiencing extreme weather events on an ongoing basis, like the Philippines.

Based on a latest study by Oxfam Pilipinas, which examined how LGUs were spending their LDRRMF, mitigation and prevention, together with preparedness, got the biggest slice as required by the Philippines Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2012.

The problem, however, is how much of these resources were actually used.

Spending less

The Oxfam study “Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund Utilization Patterns and Opportunities for Improvement” revealed that at first glance, LGUs seem compliant with the 70 percent-30 percent allocation.

As Oxfam Pilipinas said, the indicative distribution of LDRRMF were mitigation/prevention (42.20 percent), response (32.4 percent), preparedness (21.2 percent), and recovery/rehabilitation (4.3 percent).

However, the year-on-year underspending trend is concerning.

Based on data, while underspending of the 70 percent mitigation/prevention funds lessened from 41 percent in 2017 to 30 percent in 2021, underspending of QRF dropped from 25 percent to 10 percent over the same period.

For Oxfam Pilipinas, this means that LGUs were using the QRF more, indicating again its “reactive” attitude towards disaster risk despite the need for a proactive one such as prevention and preparedness.

Needed change

Oxfam stressed that based on its projection, the trend will still be the same for the next five years.

Spending of the 70 percent mitigation/prevention funds and the 30 percent QRF was likely to improve but 11 percent of prevention funds is still expected to be underutilized by 2026 while funds for actual disaster will run out.

Almost 10 years ago, the Commission on Audit had already expressed concern over the government's spending pattern characterized largely as "reactive, insufficient, inefficient and for the most part, too slow."

Oxfam Pilipinas said that "sub-optimal use of government funds and other resources bodes ill to the welfare of the public," stressing that "reduced spending can be construed as less presence of the government."

For Esteban Masagca, executive director of People's Disaster Risk Reduction Network, "inclusive and community-based disaster preparedness, along with anticipatory actions such as pre-disaster cash assistance, are effective strategies to reduce the devastating effects of the climate crisis."

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[APPF31 to focus on regional socio economic issues, challenges](#)

By: Wilnard Bacelonia

The Philippine Senate continues to prepare for the country's hosting of the 31st Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF31), which will be attended by its 28 member-countries on Nov. 23 to 26.

Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri said APPF31 will focus on finding common understanding and approaches to existing and emerging challenges facing the Asia Pacific region.

"The Philippines has consistently participated in APPF's Annual Meetings as we find great value in the various deliberations with our fellow parliamentarians, especially on key issues relating to regional security, transnational crime, free and fair trade, climate change adaptation and sustainable development, migration, and most recently, on global health pandemics and ensuring post-pandemic economic recovery," Zubiri said.

"This is a great start for the President's (Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.) administration, to show that the Philippines is once again open to the international community, in this period of post-pandemic recovery," he added.

The Philippines' hosting of APPF31 also comes in the same year that the country has officially joined the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership after the Senate concurred to its ratification in February.

During the plenary deliberation on the proposed 2024 budget of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and its attached agencies on Thursday night, Zubiri appealed for the full support of Secretary Benhur Abalos Jr. and Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Benjamin Acorda Jr. to the gathering.

"Two weeks from now, we will be having the APPF, the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum. It's the APEC of parliamentarians as I have mentioned earlier Secretary. Kailangan namin ng tulong ng office ninyo (We need the help of your office] because together with the PNP Chief, we must protect the safety of these 300 or so legislators and their delegations)," Zubiri told the two officials.

"Maybe a week before it starts, we will ask you for a briefing from the different agencies that are coordinating with the Senate. Kami kasi ang host niyan (We are the host of that) Secretary so we want to make sure that all of it will be flawless," he added.

It is the second time that the Philippines will host the annual forum, bringing together parliamentarians from 28 countries to discuss pressing political, security, socio-economic issues, and challenges confronting the region.

Since its establishment in 1993, the APPF remains at the forefront of promoting multilateralism and parliamentary dialogue.

The 31st Annual Meeting of the APPF will focus on forging resilient partnerships as key to recovery.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Govt inaction on climate change hit](#)

By: Aric John Sy Cua

The Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ) held Climate Walk, a 1,000-kilometer hike from Manila to Tacloban, on October 8 to November 8, to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the landfall of Typhoon "Haiyan" (locally known as Super Typhoon "Yolanda"), the most powerful storm on the planet in 2013 and one of the strongest Pacific typhoons ever recorded.

PMCJ Energy Working Group Co-Chairman Aaron Pedrosa said Climate Walk aimed to highlight the continuing demand for climate justice.

"The idea was to put a spotlight into the injustice suffered by the victims of Yolanda and the injustices that may still happen in our generation and in our lifetime, should inaction continue on the part of the government," said Pedrosa, whose home was totally destroyed by Yolanda in 2013.

He added that the government has not learned its lessons from the disaster.

"We are seeing the worsening impacts of the climate crisis... the order of the day should have been to realign government programs, projects and resources in ensuring the survival of the community, boosting the adapted capacities of our communities, but we're seeing none of that," Pedrosa said, noting the Philippines has no existing plans addressing the rising sea level.

"For instance, and to be concrete, we do not have a national plan to address sea level rise. The Philippines is vulnerable to sea level rise. We are next to the rapid and the fastest-rising ocean, which is the Pacific Ocean. Ironically, the government doesn't have any master plan to address droughts; we don't have a master plan to address the devastating impacts whether the extremes of Yolanda are twice or three times stronger than what we had in 2013," he said.

Pedrosa, a Taclobanon, said what is being promoted as government climate projects were just ordinary infrastructure projects not designed to survive climate change-related catastrophes.

He said that after Yolanda, the goal should be to build back better, but the country, he lamented, is nowhere near better.

In a statement released via social media on Wednesday, the PMCJ said the government continues to fall short in addressing the climate crisis.

"A decade post-Yolanda, the Philippine government continues to fall short in addressing the far-reaching impacts of the climate crisis and preparing for the imminent onslaught of extreme weather events, resulting in the continual cycle of destruction, loss of life and heightened vulnerability among our communities," it read.

"Both national and local governments respond to disasters reactively. Lives are lost, and homes are destroyed first before any help is given. Without any concrete plan of action to prevent the causes of stronger storms and to improve our disaster response, then communities are just rebuilt so they can be battered by typhoons again," it added.

PMCJ's recent activities have coincided with the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in the United Arab Emirates on November 30.

[\[Opinion\] Are we ready for the next El Niño?](#)

The World Meteorological Organization is predicting a "strong" El Niño beginning the end of November that could last until March next year. And the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says there is a 35-percent chance that we could be in for a "super El Niño," whose impact could be far more devastating.

Spawned by the abnormal warming of the strip of the Pacific Ocean along the equator, an El Niño grows into a weather anomaly that affects the planet's climate system, triggering prolonged dry spells in one region and severe rainfall in another.

With climate change pushing up global temperatures, El Niño episodes have become more intense, ratcheting up their potential to wreak destruction.

The Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) projects that between 2020 and 2050, all areas in the country will get warmer. That increases the chances of longer and more severe dry spells and droughts.

There have been three super El Niños since 1950, when meteorologists began to track changes in sea surface temperatures. The last was in 2016, which was also the hottest year on record.

The year 2023 could break that record after new temperature highs were set in October. Climatologists believe the fourth super El Niño is imminent.

If that happens, the Philippines could be among the countries that will feel its full impact.

The 2015-2016 El Niño triggered droughts that parched more than 556,000 hectares of farmland and left P15.2 billion worth of damage. It also led to food scarcity and reduced fish harvests. Several provinces were forced to declare a state of calamity.

The El Niño also pulled down the country's gross domestic product and set back the fight against poverty.

So, is the Philippines prepared for the next super El Niño?

Last week, Pagasa said 47 provinces will start experiencing dry spells or dry conditions as rainfall drops by 21 to 60 percent. "This may adversely affect the different climate-sensitive sectors such as the water resources, agriculture, energy, health, public safety and other key sectors," Pagasa Officer in Charge Nathaniel Servando said.

Vulnerable areas

Identifying the vulnerable areas is just the first step in setting up a response, specifically for so-called slow onset events like a drought, which does not occur as frequently or rapidly as typhoons or floods, yet could be more destructive.

Developing a disaster risk response for slow-onset events has not been the government's strong suit. Despite the huge losses from the 2016 El Niño, the Duterte administration slashed the proposed 2019 funding for climate change from P267.09 billion to a meager P63.6 billion.

The Marcos government appears to be more sensitive to the fallout from climate change. The Department of Agriculture has prepared an El Niño mitigation plan which includes cloud seeding, using drought-resistant crops and adjusting the planting calendar.

The Philippines already has in place the Roadmap to Address the Impact of El Niño (RAIN), which in 2016 helped stabilize food prices and supplies by supporting crop production in unaffected or mildly affected regions.

But more needs to be done. A study published by the Yale School of the Environment recommends the development of "a new policy instrument that would support a more anticipatory DRR cycle."

Government efforts in climate adaptation "must be done with the participation of nongovernment institutions such as the private sector, people's organizations and members of the vulnerable communities themselves," the study suggested.

Local governments must gain access to additional financing "as they are the ones representing the people who are most vulnerable to disasters."

Perhaps it is also time to rewrite the rules governing the Quick Response Fund, which is primarily designed for post-disaster response, so it could be made available for slow-onset events.

There is also a proposal to make the People's Survival Fund more accessible to communities most threatened by El Niño.

Climate Change Commission Vice Chairman Robert Borje acknowledged that the people must be made more aware of climate risks and how they can avoid them. More

accurate drought forecasts and advisories, climate updates and water supply assessment reports will keep the public better informed.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Pope Francis to address COP28 summit in Dubai](#)

By: Rommel F. Lopez

Pope Francis is set become the first pope in history to address a global climate change conference.

The Holy See has confirmed that the pope will address the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP28) Summit in Dubai, as well as engage in several bilateral meetings and inaugurate the "Faith Pavilion" at Expo City from December 1 to 3.

According to the released official program for the Pope's visit to Dubai, the pope will depart from Rome on the morning of December 1 for Dubai. He is scheduled to land at Dubai's World Central International Airport at around 8.25 pm. A welcome ceremony will take place.

Pope Francis, who is both a global religious leader and head of state, will address the participants of the summit on December 2 at Expo City.

The pope will also hold a series of private bilateral meetings in the afternoon.

On Sunday, December 3, the Pope will inaugurate the "Faith Pavilion" at 9 a.m. He will also deliver an address on this occasion.

The Faith Pavilion will be hosted by the Muslim Council of Elders in collaboration with the COP28 Presidency, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the Holy See, and a coalition of faith-based groups.

According to the UNEP website, the pavilion "will be a dedicated space for different faiths, traditions, and perspectives to come together to achieve a better future for planet Earth and humanity. The Pavilion will provide an opportunity to connect with religious representatives and activists dedicated to environmental protection and climate justice, while engaging new audiences on innovative solutions to the climate crisis."

The pope is scheduled to depart Dubai for Rome after a farewell ceremony at 10:15 a.m. He is expected to arrive at Rome's Fiumicino Airport at 2:40 p.m.

In 2015, Pope Francis issued his encyclical "Laudato Si" ('Praised Be' in English), the first papal encyclical to deal with the environment. The encyclical with the subtitle "on

care for our common home", critiques consumerism and irresponsible development as the cause of environmental degradation. It calls all people of the world, regardless of religious beliefs, to take "swift and unified global action."

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Gov't needs climate fund support](#)

By: Adrian H. Halili

Acknowledging government limitations, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) is calling for more private sector investments for climate action projects, an official said over the weekend.

“The government simply cannot do it alone,” Robert E.A. Borje, vice-chairman of the CCC told reporters on Saturday. “So (the private sector) needs to invest also. It also becomes a good business sense because they need to adapt.”

However, he said government should be able to provide the incentives and the support needed so that companies would invest in these projects, making them “as strong and as climate adaptive as possible.”

Mr. Borje said the CCC is “almost done” with the national adaptation plan which aims to reduce the impact of climate change, create long-term support mechanisms for climate change technologies, and facilitate the adaptation of climate change measures into policies, programs and activities.

By next year, the CCC will work on the implementation plan of the Nationally Determined Contribution, a climate action plan to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts.

“Moving forward it is important that there is enough funding for these two, and that is the next step,” Mr. Borje said.

Meanwhile, the CCC is also planning to conduct a climate roadshow. “We will go to the different, key, local government units along with other stakeholders para pag-usapan ang ano pa ang dapat gawin pag dating sa adaptation (ng climate initiatives),” he said.

CLTV 36

Pagtanim ng bakawan, malaking tulong para malabanan ang epekto ng climate change: CCC

By: JM De Jesus

Pinag handaan ng mga opisyal ng Climate Change Commission (CCC) kasama ang Pampanga 4th district Representative na si Anna York Bondoc Sagum ang pag usad ng Barangay Consuelo, Macabebe ngayong biyernes Nov 10, ininspeksyon nila dito ang Mangrove Reforestation Project na inumpisahan ng Department of Environment Natural Resources na matatagpuan sa Macabebe at iba pang stake holders at ng iba pang nagtanim nung 2018.

Sabi ni Secretary Robert Borje ng Climate Change Commission maraming benefits sa Mother Earth at sa namahay ang mga tinanim na bakawan. Jinustify ng 40 anyos na si Jun Domingo na naninirahan sa Barangay Consuelo at ang pangigingisda kanyang pang kabuhayan, dumami raw ang kanilang mahuhuling isda simula ng natanim ang mga bakawan .

Para naman kay 4th District Representative Dr. Anna York Bondoc, marami pa syang dapat gawin para umayos ang sitwasyon ng mga matagal ng nakatira sa lubog na lugar. Handa naman daw magbigay ng pondo ang CCC para sa mga climate change project ng Macabebe LGU.

MANILA BULLETIN

Gov't officials, biz leaders, youth attend climate change forum

By: Jel Santos

Amid the threat of global warming, a forum seeking to foster multi-stakeholder collaboration in implementing critical strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation was conducted on Saturday, Nov. 11, in Pasay City.

CLIMACTION, a pre-COP 28 initiative, convened government officials, business leaders, agricultural stakeholders, and the youth sector to discuss the implementation of the Philippine National Adaptation Plan (PNAP) and the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs).

The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report underscores the pressing need for a 43 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 to curb the devastating impacts already witnessed worldwide. The Philippines, being among the most vulnerable nations, has experienced an increased frequency of severe weather events, resulting in substantial loss of life and property.

Secretary Robert Borje of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the significance of public-private partnerships in shaping climate policies aligned with low-carbon, climate-smart, and sustainable development pathways.

“The government cannot do it alone so we need a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach and that includes the business sector, they need to invest also becomes a good business sense kasi (because) businesses also need to adapt and what is important is that our government is able to provide the incentives and the support needed so that our businesses become strong have the adoptive capacity and they are able to invest also in making their companies and organizations as strong or as climate adaptive as possible,” he said in an ambush interview.

Asked about the upcoming COP 28, Borje said: “We’ve been participating in the preparatory meetings towards COP 28 and we still are trying to push as much as we can the interest of the Philippines on key issues particularly loss and damage and the loss and damage fund and the need to improve adaptation and reflect the progress in the global but most importantly the things that we have done well and even the things that we have not done well so we are able to reach out.”

Meanwhile, the private sector, represented by Nestlé Philippines, acknowledged its responsibility to align climate and sustainability goals with PNAP and NDC, with a focus on mitigating GHG emissions towards achieving net-zero targets.

GMA Network, in partnership with Nestlé PH and the CCC, demonstrated its commitment to environmental advocacy by deepening efforts to raise awareness about the country's plastic waste problem and promoting the reduce, reuse, and recycle mantra.

Kais Marzouki, chairman and CEO of Nestlé Philippines, emphasized the imperative of collective action and partnerships across sectors in addressing climate change.

“With our collective will and the synergy of our strengths, we can overcome the challenges to the Earth’s climate and even improve it. Then life on the planet will survive and thrive into the future,” he stated.

The forum served as a crucial platform for dialogue on climate action and collaboration within the country as the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference approaches.

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PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[UST, Climate Change Commission seal pact for climate innovation, sustainability](#)

The University of Santo Tomas (UST) and the Climate Change Commission (CCC) have agreed to solidify their commitment to drive climate innovation and sustainability.

As the lead government agency mandated to coordinate and monitor climate-change programs in the Philippines, CCC has teamed up with UST—one of the country’s top educational institutions—to strengthen efforts in addressing the impacts of climate change, while enhancing the climate resilience of local communities.

Through lectures, seminars and workshops, the CCC-UST partnership will facilitate knowledge exchange and capacity-building to enhance climate literacy, as well as nurture future leaders in the field of climate science.

The linkage will also be a platform for sustainable entrepreneurship, fostering tie-ups and initiatives that will promote environmentally conscious business practices.

“Through capacity building and education, CCC and UST will collaborate to create educational programs that equip our youth with the knowledge and skills needed to raise awareness about climate change and empower them to take action toward a more sustainable future—making that all-important link between technological development, innovation, research and development from the academic community to the local communities,” Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje of CCC said during the signing of the agreement in mid-October.

“Our key areas of collaboration include research, knowledge-sharing, and expert exchanges through academic lectures, seminars, training workshops, and even short courses,” UST rector and president Fr. Richard Ang said. “We can make a big difference in climate-change mitigation and adaptation strategies through our joint efforts.”

After the cooperation-agreement signing, the commission gained insights into UST’s restoration efforts and witnessed the dedication of its experts in preserving historical library collections, which falls under non-economic loss and damage.

Non-economic loss and damage is a term referring to the intangible and irreplaceable cultural, historical, and social heritage that are lost or damaged due to climate-change impacts.

“Our partnership with UST can go beyond research and development. It can also include preserving our cultural heritage in the face of climate challenges,” Borje said. “Witnessing the restoration efforts first-hand [boosts our determination to safeguard our historical collections and ensure] they will be seen by generations to come.”

The collaboration brings together the commission’s expertise in policy formulation and program implementation, plus the university’s renowned faculty and research community.

Both institutions endeavor to drive transformative climate actions, support local communities, and foster a more sustainable future for all.

SUNSTAR

[LOOK: Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Borje and fourth district Representative Anna York Bondoc led the ocular inspection of mangrove plantations along the Pampanga River in Barangay Consuelo, Macabebe.](#)

By: Princess Clea Arcellaz

Borje said mangroves are considered as among the best nature-based solution against climate change. "It provides an area for growing native species and at the same time gives protection against water surges and tidal waves," he said.

Bondoc said the ocular inspection aims to assist CCC in updating their action plan for Masantol and Macabebe town to solve their persistent flooding caused by several factors, including climate change.

"We have to be consistent in our efforts to address the impacts of climate change in our towns in the fourth district. This action plan presented by CCC is a holistic approach since it also involves the Department of Public Works and Highways and Department of Environment and Natural Resources. This can serve as basis in crafting our climate change-resilient programs and infrastructure projects," she said.

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