



NEWS ROUNDUP

03 DECEMBER 2024 [08:30 am]

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DAILY TRIBUNE

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By: Kimberly Anne Ojeda

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MANILA STANDARD

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By: Maricel Cruz

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PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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By: Marita Moaje

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RAPPLER

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

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The efforts to preserve Palawan's rich biodiversity earned Collado the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's Wangari Maathai Forest Champion Award 2024.

On 25 November, she also earned a Philippine Resilience Award (PRA) 2024.

"It's hard to close your eyes and pretend not to see when we know there are things in our community that we need to fix and change," she said of her inspiration in a documentary video played at the PRA awarding ceremony.

PRA was conceived by Senator Loren Legarda in 2023 to recognize local leaders who have contributed towards building sustainable and resilient communities based on metrics of leadership and governance, science and technology, and resilience outcomes and impacts.

Another PRA awardee, Mila Bogñalbal, leads the charge for resilient food systems and sustainable livelihoods in Joroan, Tiwi Albay. Through the Department of Agriculture's Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative Program, Bogñalbal has championed initiatives such as a multi-crop processing center and diversified farming.

Her resilience extends beyond agriculture — she has integrated community-based disaster risk reduction training to equip her community with the tools they need in times of disaster.

"Being resilient is about finding strength in vulnerability and hope in despair," Bogñalbal said in a speech after accepting the award during the event.

Meanwhile, SFO3 Daisy Cabauatan, the chief of the Bureau of Fire Protection in Nueva Vizcaya, has redefined disaster preparedness and environmental stewardship.

Through her NVBFP Kalikasan Warriors Project, she has united local leaders, non-government organizations and government agencies for weekly activities like clean-ups, tree planting and environmental education. Her forward-thinking programs, including Project APOY and BFP Talakayan, focus on safety practices and disaster response, instilling a culture of preparedness.

Moreover, through the River Conservation Club, Cabauatan empowers youth to become environmental stewards and leaders of tomorrow.

Collado, Bogñalbal and Cabauatan prove that resilience lies in facing challenges, finding hope amid adversity and inspiring others to rise.

The Philippines stands at the frontline of climate change, where the forces of nature — typhoons, rising temperatures and environmental degradation — pose continuous challenges. Yet, amid these trials, resilience continues to rise through changemakers who find strength in their struggles and transform their communities in the process.

MANILA STANDARD

[DSWD launches ready-to-eat food packs at climate change convention](#)

By: Maricel Cruz

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) launched on Monday its newest initiative to ensure food security during disasters and calamities through the ready-to-eat food (RTEF) packs.

Disaster Response Management Group (DRMG) Assistant Secretary and spokesperson Irene Dumlao said the RTEF contains nutritious pre-cooked meals that will form part of the DSWD's relief items, which will be distributed to affected families within 24 to 48 hours after the onset of a disaster.

"The DSWD collaborated with the Department of Science and Technology-Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI) to create ready to eat meals to fill the critical gap when traditional cooking facilities or utensils are limited or unavailable in disaster affected areas," Dumlao said.

She pointed out that the RTEF is a product of a year-long research by the DOST and its adopters. It was unveiled during a national convention on climate change mitigation held at the SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia complex in Pasay City.

Later in the afternoon, the DSWD will hold the national convention of Project LAWA (Local Adaptation to Water Access) and BINHI (Breaking Insufficiency through Nutritious Harvest for the Impoverished) to be attended by stakeholders, including local chief executives.

The national convention will serve as a platform to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and capacity building of Project LAWA and BINHI implementers at the local and national levels.

The project's accomplishments for the year 2024 will also be presented at the convention, which will be facilitated by Special Assistant to the Secretary (SAS) for Special Projects Isabel Lanada.

The projects are part of the DSWD risk resiliency initiatives aimed at building climate and disaster-resilient communities by assisting them to construct water reservoirs to meet the challenges of the dry spell and the rainy season.

"This national convention marks the culmination of Project LAWA at BINHI's 2024 implementation and the official launch of the RTEF to the nation," Dumlao said.

Projects LAWA and BINHI are designed to maintain agricultural productivity during dry periods and to manage excess water during periods of heavy rainfall associated with La Niña.

These are among the innovations in the DSWD that focus on mitigating the impacts of food insecurity and water scarcity caused by the El Niño while preparing for the potential effects of the cold event.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH hosts 4th LDF board meeting, advancing climate resilience efforts](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Philippines is hosting the Fourth Meeting of the Board of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, marking a key milestone in the country's commitment to climate resilience.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga welcomed the delegates at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City on Monday.

She emphasized the importance of the meeting in advancing global climate resilience and addressing the urgent needs of vulnerable nations.

“It is a moment of pride for the Philippines to host this fourth meeting of the Board, and the first in our country since our selection as the host country of the Board. This meeting is particularly significant as it comes at an important stage in the Fund's establishment and operationalization,” Lozaga said during her opening remarks.

She highlighted that the meeting underscores the Philippines' commitment to supporting climate-vulnerable nations while strengthening its leadership in the global fight against climate change.

Loyzaga pointed to recent steps that demonstrate the country's dedication, including the signing of Republic Act No. 12019 (Loss and Damage Fund Board Act) by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. in August, granting juridical personality and legal capacity to the Board.

She also mentioned the signing of the Host Country Agreement (HCA) during the recent COP29 (United Nations Climate Change Conference) in Baku, Azerbaijan.

“The decades-long journey to establishing the Fund was long fought and firmly grounded in the quest for resilience by the most vulnerable countries,” she said, adding that as a climate-vulnerable nation, the Philippines has a personal stake in the success of the Fund.

“Given the historically unprecedented series of six successive extreme weather events between October and November this year, the Philippines is in fact a living laboratory for current and future risk and a test case for the powerful impact of this war,” Lozaga continued.

“Our cumulative loss and the devastation can serve as a baseline not only of what climate-vulnerable developing countries will endure in these uncertain and

unpredictable times but also of our capacity to recover, given adequate and timely access to the right resources,” she added.

Loyzaga stressed that the Philippines is committed not only to the survival of its communities but also to the thriving of all nations through investments in risk-responsive social services and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Over the course of the meeting, she noted that discussions would focus on refining the Fund’s operational systems.

This includes operationalizing a bottom-up, country-led approach to strengthen national responses to loss and damage, enhancing governance mechanisms, and ensuring the effective allocation of financial resources where they are most needed.

Loss and Damage Fund Board co-chair Jean-Christophe Donnellier expressed gratitude to the Philippine government for hosting the meeting.

He acknowledged the swift action taken by Marcos in enacting provisions that grant the organization legal capacity to operate in Manila.

Donnellier announced that the total pledge to the Loss and Damage Fund has now reached USD731 million.

The contributions came from the governments of Australia, Luxembourg, Sweden, New Zealand, and the Walloon region of Belgium.

RAPPLER

Countries fail to reach agreement in UN plastic talks

Countries negotiating a global treaty to curb plastic pollution failed to reach agreement on Monday, December 2, with more than 100 nations wanting to cap production while a handful of oil-producers were prepared only to target plastic waste.

The fifth United Nations Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5) meeting intended to yield a legally binding global treaty in Busan, South Korea, was meant to be the final one.

However, countries remained far apart on the basic scope of a treaty and could agree only to postpone key decisions and resume talks, dubbed INC 5.2, to a later date.

“It is clear that there is still persisting divergence,” said Inger Andersen, executive director of the UN Environment Program.

The most divisive issues included capping plastic production, managing plastic products and chemicals of concern, and financing to help developing countries implement the treaty.

An option proposed by Panama, backed by more than 100 countries, would have created a path for a global plastic production reduction target, while another proposal did not include production caps.

The fault lines were apparent in a revised document released on Sunday by the meeting’s chair Luis Vayas Valdivieso, which may form the basis of a treaty, but remained riddled with options on the most sensitive issues.

“A treaty that ... only relies on voluntary measures would not be acceptable,” said Juliet Kabera, director general of Rwanda’s Environment Management Authority.

“It is time we take it seriously and negotiate a treaty that is fit for purpose and not built to fail.”

A small number of petrochemical-producing nations, such as Saudi Arabia, have strongly opposed efforts to reduce plastic production and have tried to use procedural tactics to delay negotiations.

“There was never any consensus,” said Saudi Arabian delegate Abdulrahman Al Gwaiz. “There are a couple of articles that somehow seem to make it (into the document) despite our continued insistence that they are not within the scope.”

China, the United States, India, South Korea and Saudi Arabia were the top five primary polymer-producing nations in 2023, according to data provider Eunomia.

Entranched divisions

Had such divisions been overcome, the treaty would have been one of the most significant deals relating to environmental protection since the 2015 Paris Agreement.

The postponement comes just days after the turbulent conclusion of the COP29 summit in Baku, Azerbaijan.

At Baku, countries set a new global target for mobilizing \$300 billion annually in climate finance, a deal deemed woefully insufficient by small island states and many developing countries.

The climate talks were also slowed by procedural maneuvers by Saudi Arabia – which objected to the inclusion of language that reaffirmed a previous commitment to transition away from fossil fuels.

Some negotiators said a few countries held the proceedings hostage, avoiding compromises needed by using the UN's consensus process.

Senegal's National Delegate Cheikh Ndiaye Sylla called it "a big mistake" to exclude voting during the entire negotiations, an agreement made last year during the second round of talks in Paris.

"This outcome underscores the complexity of addressing plastic pollution on a global scale and the need for further deliberations to achieve an effective, inclusive and workable treaty," said Chris Jahn, council secretary of the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA), representing plastic makers.

"There is little assurance that the next INC will succeed where INC-5 did not," environmental group GAIA said.

Plastic production is on track to triple by 2050, and microplastics have been found in the air, fresh produce and even human breast milk.

Chemicals found to be of concern in plastics include more than 3,200 according to a 2023 UN Environment Program report, which said women and children were particularly susceptible to their toxicity.

Despite the postponement, several negotiators expressed urgency to get back into talks.

"Every day of delay is a day against humanity. Postponing negotiations does not postpone the crisis," said Panama's delegation head Juan Carlos Monterrey Gomez on Sunday.

"When we reconvene, the stakes will be higher."

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Philippines sets Guinness record for bamboo planting](#)

By: Sheila Crisostomo

The Philippines has made it to the Guinness World Record for the most number of people simultaneously planting bamboo in multiple locations in October.

A total of 2,305 people participated in the event, organized by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and Kawayanihan Circular Economy Movement, across 19 locations in Mindanao and Leyte.

Science and Technology Secretary Renato Solidum Jr. said the event aimed to raise awareness about the bamboo tree's role in promoting a circular economy, climate resilience and sustainability as he stressed the importance of environmental protection for future generations.

"The initiative emphasizes reusing, recycling and reducing environmental impact to combat climate change," the DOST said in a statement.

According to the DOST Forest Products Research and Development Institute, bamboo is a versatile material for sustainable structures, furniture and musical instruments.

Recently, the DOST showcased bamboo innovations – chair, table and bed for disaster relief, octagonal jointing system for construction, and pellets for heat and power generation – during the National Science, Technology and Innovation Week in Cagayan de Oro City.

The event, themed "Siyensya, Teknolohiya at Inobasyon," highlights the role of science and innovation in economic growth and sustainability.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS WORLD

[House committee approves tax perks section of decarbonization measure](#)

By: Kenneth Christiane L. Basilio

A House of Representatives committee approved on Monday the tax incentive package contained in a bill seeking to regulate the low-carbon economy.

The House ways and means committee approved the tax incentives section of the bill, to be granted to companies developing “innovative technologies” that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

“Investments in emerging low-carbon technologies by Covered Enterprises shall be eligible for income tax holidays and enhanced deductions on research and development expense... in accordance with CREATE More Act,” according to the amended version of the unnumbered substitute bill’s Section 35.

Covered enterprises are “large enterprises and medium-sized enterprises whose emissions exceed a specific threshold set by the Climate Change Commission,” according to a copy of the bill obtained by BusinessWorld. Power generation, transport, industrial processing, agriculture, and waste management industries fall under this category.

The House climate change committee approved the unnumbered substitute bill in August.

The Philippines aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75% in 2030, in line with commitments made under the 2021 Paris Agreement.

The country loses 3% of its economic output annually due to climate change, reinsurance company Swiss Re Group has said.

Companies covered under the proposed law are required to prepare their decarbonization plan, complete with “specific, measurable, and time-bound carbon reduction pathway... towards 2050,” according to the bill.

The decarbonization plan should include projected greenhouse gas emissions and a “comprehensive strategy” for reducing emissions, according to the bill.

Companies should also include emission reduction strategies within and beyond their value chain, including improvements to their production processes and transitioning towards renewable energy sources for their power needs.

They could also invest in technologies that support decarbonization efforts or by purchasing carbon credits from projects that offset greenhouse gas emissions, according to the bill.

How bamboo meets construction needs

By: Edg Adrian A. Eva

Rizome PH, a sustainable materials company in Cagayan de Oro City, converts bamboo fiber into structural materials for constructing houses and buildings.

“The bamboo grass, with the application of science and technology, is being turned into beams, columns, and panels,” Christopher Ua-o, head of manufacturing at Rizome PH, told reporters during a factory visit in Cagayan de Oro on Nov. 28.

“Basically, you create a building with a wood finish that looks beautiful, but you didn’t cut down any trees,” he added.

Mr. Ua-o also said that the bamboo materials developed by Rizome PH have passed durability and suitability tests conducted by the Department of Science and Technology-Forest Products Research and Development Institute and Washington State University.

“Our tagline is strong like steel, tough like concrete, beautiful as wood,” he said.

Rizome PH’s bamboo building materials include slats, veneers, panels, laminated veneer lumber, and strand lumber, designed to meet the structural and aesthetic requirements of house and building projects.

Mr. Ua-o said that bamboo is a sustainable material because it is a fast-growing grass that can be harvested within a year and regrows after being cut, helping to preserve forest trees. In contrast, trees take 10 to 20 years to mature.

The company aims to revive the timber industry without cutting any trees by using bamboo, a sustainable grass, he noted.

Using bamboo in construction helps store carbon, and as bamboo regrows, it absorbs more carbon dioxide and releases oxygen, he added.

According to the Climate Change Commission, bamboo captures over five tons of carbon dioxide per hectare annually, storing more carbon than most tree species and making it an effective tool in combating climate change.

Mr. Ua-o said that Rizome PH, having built a one-story structure so far, also targets to construct high-rise buildings using bamboo products to demonstrate the material’s strength and sustainability.

GMA NEWS

[\[Opinion\] Small steps forward in Philippines' global climate leadership](#)

By: John Leo Algo

After what we observed at the 2024 UN climate negotiations (COP29), it looks like the Philippines' leadership in global climate governance is starting to trend in the right direction once again.

While the negotiations on a new global finance goal to support the climate actions of developing nations ended in an alarmingly disappointing note, the efforts of the country's negotiators and staff deserve praise for holding their ground for most of the conference in a way that others did not.

The Philippines was one of the strongest voices calling for loss and damage (L&D) to be part of the new global finance goal (known in short as the NCQG). This is not only aligned with the country's position as host of the Board of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD); it also comes on the heels of Filipino communities being hit by six storms in under a month.

Unfortunately, the urgency of scaling up L&D finance was only acknowledged in the final decision text, being viewed as not on the same level as adaptation or mitigation. This is just the tip of the iceberg of how uneventful COP29 ended up being in terms of spurring meaningful progress for global climate action.

It is painfully obvious that the climate COP process requires a significant overhaul, as developed countries are exploiting outdated parts of global treaties to avoid accountability and giving the finance and support owed to nations like the Philippines.

Yet that does not discount the significance of the multilateral approach itself; as all countries are affected by the climate crisis but in different ways and with varying resources to respond, they all should fairly and equitably participate in the global decision-making process.

The outcomes of last year's climate talks in Dubai, including the supposed beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era and the creation of the FRLD that were hailed as significant victories, all seem like a distant memory. Negotiations on almost every major issue discussed in Baku ended up with no progress or being delayed until next year, with a main exception being on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement that concerns carbon markets.

While climate COPs keep ending up with delayed progress, the impacts of the climate crisis do not due to the pollutive actions of developed countries and fossil fuel corporations. It is a reality that we were reminded of yet again recently, despite the denial of some local industry talking heads.

With this context, the Philippine government is placed in strategic positions to set the tone for global climate policies that could also boost its national strategies. Aside from the FRLD, government officials also have a presence in the governance of key global climate bodies such as the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Committee, and the Warsaw International Mechanism.

It is also seeking sources of finance outside of public finance. This is why it is high on using carbon markets to urgently deliver this support, which is good news for most of domestic businesses and a cause for concern and skepticism by the non-government (NGO) sector.

Did we improve from last year?

The lack of guarantees for social and environmental safeguards is one of the main issues for NGOs and community representatives in a few dialogues with Philippine government officials, including some that took place at the sidelines of COP29.

This becomes an even bigger concern with the low global finance goal set in Baku; with not enough from public finance by developed countries, expect the Philippine government to lean harder on using carbon markets to access much-needed support for implementing adaptation and mitigation projects.

The discourse on carbon markets is bound to continue at the national and local levels for at least the next few years, with the non-government sector remaining firm on the inclusion of said safeguards that protect human rights and the well-being of communities and ecosystems.

Nonetheless, there has been one small improvement in the consultation held this year in preparation for COP29. For the first time in years, government agencies presented the draft positions it would carry at the negotiating table before the conference itself. Positions on the likes of adaptation, mitigation, finance, and just transition were presented to non-government representatives, an improvement in transparency and in compliance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Climate Change Act.

Based on the series of government-NGO dialogues last year during the Dubai negotiations, the process is underway for institutionalizing a platform for inputs of civil society and community representatives to be accounted for in national climate governance. This is an initiative of the Climate Change Commission, as part of its mandate as an autonomous and independent lead in coordinating climate policies and programs by government agencies.

Of course, there remain significant inclusivity issues that need to be addressed. These issues are rooted in factors such as the working dynamics between government agencies, the pro-business outlook of the agency higher-ups and much of the policy direction, and mistaken perceptions about the NGO sector.

More open dialogues with Philippine negotiators and consultations set not just days before succeeding climate conferences must also take place, aligned with the Climate Change Act and the imperative of a “whole-of-society” approach.

With 2025 set to be a defining year for global and Philippine climate action, it is a must for the government to match its seemingly growing leadership at the global level with decision-making mechanisms at the domestic level to ensure that no one is left behind.

There is a lot of room for improvement, but for the first time in years, there are signs that we may be ready to go in the right direction.

MANILA STANDARD

Marcos seeks united front to deal with challenges of climate change

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. called on Filipinos to act and work together on addressing the pressing challenges posed by climate change during the highlight event of the Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week (CCC Week).

President Marcos, who also serves as the chairperson of the Climate Change Commission, expressed confidence that through unity and shared commitment, Filipinos can rise to the challenge and secure a brighter tomorrow for generations to come.

“We are continuously called to press on so that the next generations can still enjoy the lush and bountiful Philippines that we have inherited,” the President said in his message last week.

Marcos cited the importance of having a collective vision for a sustainable future. “As we commit to building a Bagong Pilipinas, let our vision be vivid. We want the Philippines that is well taken care of. We want a nation that will remain unshaken no matter the situation. Most importantly, we want to have a people that truly appreciate the abundance of our lands and our seas,” he said

Marcos said CCC Week was a platform to inspire change and appreciate the country’s rich natural resources. “May this week pave the way for such an appreciation so that we can act accordingly and adapt to the changing demands of both nature and our citizens,” he said.

He called on all sectors of society—government offices, educational institutions, civil society, the business community, and local government units— to intensify efforts toward localizing the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and building a more sustainable and resilient Philippines.

“Together with deeds both big and small, let us stay on our mission for a safer, greener, brighter future for all,” he said.

Marcos noted the role of the Climate Change Commission, saying its leadership and collaborative efforts empower communities to adapt, build resilience and pave a sustainable for all Filipinos.

CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje echoed the President's vision on climate solidarity in his closing remarks.

"This gathering is more than a recognition of partnerships, it is a rallying call for action. Climate action and adaptation is a whole-of-nation, a whole-of-society, and a whole-of-world endeavor, and there is much at stake," said Borje.

The Annual Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week held from 19 November 19 to 25 aims to raise public awareness on the importance of climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, in line with the government's long-term vision for sustainable development and climate resilience.

This year's theme, "Aksyon at Adaptasyon ng Makabagong Henerasyon," emphasized the importance of collaborative action in realizing the nation's climate goals and promoting sustainability.

The CCC, under the leadership of President Marcos, remains steadfast in advancing national policies on climate resilience to build adaptive capacity across sectors and communities.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH preps 1st climate report, boosts transparency efforts](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is stepping up efforts to improve climate transparency as it prepares the Philippines' first Biennial Transparency Report (BTR).

In a statement on Monday, CCC Vice Chair Robert Borje highlighted the agency's collaboration with the Capacity Building Initiatives on Transparency - Global Support Programme (CBIT-GSP) to hold writeshops aimed at building institutional capacity.

"This training is crucial for strengthening key agencies' ability to meet requirements under the Enhanced Transparency Framework," Borje said.

The BTR will showcase the country's progress in implementing its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and addressing the climate crisis.

It's also a key commitment under the Paris Agreement, with developing countries required to submit their first BTR by December 31, 2024.

Key government agencies, including the Departments of Energy (DOE), Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and Transportation (DOTr), have participated in workshops focusing on greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, Common Reporting Tables (CRTs), and data gaps.

The CCC's BTR Technical Working Group will continue coordinating with agencies to ensure the report's timely submission.

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