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[Climate summit leader said there's 'no science' behind need to phase out fossil fuels, alarming scientists](#)

By: Laura Paddison

The president of the COP28 climate summit, Sultan Al Jaber, recently claimed there is "no science" that says phasing out fossil fuels is necessary to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, in comments that have alarmed climate scientists and advocates.

MANILA BULLETIN

[\[Opinion\] PH calls for climate justice at COP 28](#)

Many of the people and nations most affected by climate change are among the least responsible for it. Fifty-eight countries including the Philippines belonging to the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) were responsible for spearheading the Paris Agreement in 2015. This agreement seeks to limit global warming to well below two degrees centigrade by the end of the 21st century, by aiming to keep warming within the safer limit of 1.5 degrees centigrade. Latest findings show that global warming could reach this latter threshold between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate.

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By: Dexter Barro II

Camarines Sur 2nd district Rep. LRay Villafuerte commended President Marcos for his commitment to advance the Philippines' dedication to climate justice on the international stage.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH endorses climate, health declaration at COP28](#)

By: Joyce Ann L. Rocamora

The Philippines has endorsed at the Conference of Parties 28 (COP28) in Dubai a landmark declaration that acknowledges the growing health impacts of climate change on communities and countries.

THE MANILA TIMES

['Fiscal policies to help address climate change'](#)

The government's fiscal and economic policies will help address climate change, Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno said at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Marcos wants PH to host climate fund

By: Catherine S. Valente

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. called on world leaders to back the Philippines' bid to host the "Loss and Damage Fund" as he sought the prompt operationalization of the program to support developing and vulnerable countries from the impact of the climate crisis.

QC youth present climate change programs

The Quezon City government and Unicef Philippines recognized the leadership of children and youth in climate change efforts during the recent World Children's Day celebration.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Pinoy children vulnerable to climate change impacts – Unicef

By: Pia Lee-Brago

The bodies and minds of children are uniquely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change as child malnutrition in the Philippines is worsened by crop failures and rising food prices, according to the United Nations Children's Fund.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS MIRROR

Bid to tap loss-damage fund receives lawmaker's support

By: Jovee Marie N. de la Cruz and Samuel P. Medenilla

A lawmaker announced last Sunday he is "strongly" supporting the proposal of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on the immediate implementation of the "loss and damage" fund (LDF), which provides financial support to economies like the Philippines that are grappling with the severe impacts of climate change.

PHL hails deal to kick start climate Loss & Damage Fund

By: Jonathan L. Mayuga

The Philippines lauded world leaders for agreeing to operationalize a Loss and Damage Fund that will compensate and support vulnerable countries affected by climate change.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Climate Change Commission holds 'Bayanihan sa Klima' forum](#)

By: Jing Villamante

The Climate Change Commission on Thursday gathered stakeholders for a one-day discussion on how to mitigate climate change and build a climate-resilient country.

ECO BUSINESS

[Southeast Asia's voices of COP28](#)

By: Liang Lei and Hannah Alcoseba Fernandez

Meet the people pushing to protect one of the most vulnerable parts of the world to global warming at the COP28 climate talks in Dubai.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Climate talks open on 'encouraging' note for countries like PH](#)

By: Imelda V. Abaño

The Philippines has urged wealthier nations to drive more financial resources toward climate action and support poor countries that bear the brunt of climate change, despite contributing little to it, in their transition to renewable energy.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH committed to global environmental responsibility: CCC chief](#)

By: Ma. Teresa Montemayor

The approval of six additional climate adaptation projects through the People's Survival Fund (PSF) is testament to the Philippines' commitment to global environmental responsibility, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) said Thursday.

['Survival fund' to make more communities disaster-resilient](#)

By: Wilnard Bacelonia

The People's Survival Fund (PSF), recently turned over by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to local government units (LGUs), will bolster the execution of climate change adaptation programs as the country works on being disaster-resilient.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Marcos: Philippines seeks to host climate disaster fund](#)

By: Helen Flores

The Philippines intends to host the more than \$400-million fund that several countries have committed as compensation for nations bedeviled by extreme weather conditions caused by climate change.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

CNN

[Climate summit leader said there's 'no science' behind need to phase out fossil fuels, alarming scientists](#)

By: Laura Paddison

The president of the COP28 climate summit, Sultan Al Jaber, recently claimed there is “no science” that says phasing out fossil fuels is necessary to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, in comments that have alarmed climate scientists and advocates.

The future role of fossil fuels is one of the most controversial issues countries are grappling with at the COP28 climate summit. While some are pushing for a “phase-out,” others are calling for the weaker language of a “phase-down.” Scientific reports have shown that fossil fuels must be rapidly slashed to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees — the goal of the Paris climate agreement, and a threshold above which scientists warn it will be more difficult for humans and ecosystems to adapt.

Al Jaber made the remarks during the She Changes Climate panel event on November 21, which came to light on Sunday in a story published by the Guardian, and in video that CNN has reviewed. Al Jaber was asked by Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland and current chair of the Elders Group, an independent group of global leaders, if he would lead on phasing out fossil fuels.

In his response, Al Jaber told Robinson, “there is no science out there, or no scenario out there, that says the phase-out of fossil fuel is what’s going to achieve 1.5.” He said he had expected to come to the She Changes Climate meeting to have a “sober and mature conversation” and was not “signing up to any discussion that is alarmist.”

He continued that the 1.5-degree goal was his “north star,” and a phase-down and phase-out of fossil fuel was “inevitable” but “we need to be real, serious and pragmatic about it.”

In an increasingly fractious series of responses to Robinson pushing him on the point, Al Jaber asked her “please, help me, show me a roadmap for a phase-out of fossil fuels that will allow for sustainable socio-economic development, unless you want to take the world back into caves.”

Al Jaber’s presidency of the COP28 summit has been controversial. The Emirati businessman is the UAE’s climate envoy and chairs the board of directors of its renewables company, but he also heads the state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC).

A spokesperson for the COP28 team told CNN in a statement “this story is just another attempt to undermine the Presidency’s agenda, which has been clear and transparent and backed by tangible achievements by the COP President and his team.”

“The COP President is clear that phasing down and out of fossil fuels is inevitable and that we must keep 1.5C within reach,” adding, “we are excited with the progress we have made so far and for the delivery of an ambitious (global stocktake) decision. Attempts to undermine this will not soften our resolve.”

Fossil fuels are the main driver of the climate crisis and as the world continues to burn oil, coal and gas, global temperatures are soaring to unprecedented levels. This year has seen record global heat, which has driven deadly extreme weather events.

Fossil fuel production in 2030 is expected to be more than double what would be necessary to keep global warming under 1.5 degrees, a recent report from several scientific institutions, including the UN Environment Programme, found. That report used scenarios laid out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the International Energy Agency (IEA) to reach its conclusion.

“If the IPCC and IEA do not count as science then I don’t know what does,” said Ploy Achakulwisut, climate researcher at the Stockholm Environment Institute and one of the authors on the report. She told CNN it concluded “that all fossil fuels have to be phased out especially if carbon dioxide removal and carbon capture and storage measures fail to scale.”

Carbon capture refers to a set of techniques that aim to remove carbon pollution from the the air and to capture what’s being produced from power plants and other polluting facilities. While some argue carbon capture will be an important tool for reducing planet-heating pollution, others argue these technologies are expensive, unproven at scale and a distraction from policies to cut fossil fuel use.

Scientists and climate groups heavily criticized Al Jaber’s comments.

Romain Ioualalen, global policy lead at non-profit Oil Change International, said in a statement Al Jaber’s statements during the panel discussion were “alarming,” “science-denying” and “raise deep concerns about the Presidency’s capacity to lead the UN climate talks.”

Joeri Rogelj, a climate professor at Imperial College London, said he strongly recommended Al Jaber revisit the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

“That report, approved unanimously by 195 countries including the UAE, shows a variety of ways to limit warming to 1.5°C — all of which indicate a de facto phase out of fossil fuels in the first half of the century. Will that take the world back to the caves? Absolutely not,” he said in a statement.

Mohamed Adow, director of climate think tank Power Shift Africa, said Al Jaber’s remarks were a “wake up call” to the world and COP28 negotiators. “They are not going to get any help from the COP Presidency in delivering a strong outcome on a fossil fuel phase out,” he said in a statement.

This COP summit will conclude the first global stocktake, where countries will assess their progress on climate action progress and work out how to get the world on track to limiting catastrophic global warming.

MANILA BULLETIN

[\[Opinion\] PH calls for climate justice at COP 28](#)

Many of the people and nations most affected by climate change are among the least responsible for it. Fifty-eight countries including the Philippines belonging to the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) were responsible for spearheading the Paris Agreement in 2015. This agreement seeks to limit global warming to well below two degrees centigrade by the end of the 21st century, by aiming to keep warming within the safer limit of 1.5 degrees centigrade. Latest findings show that global warming could reach this latter threshold between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate.

The foregoing Global Stocktake on the Paris Agreement has underpinned the agenda of all Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change meetings from 2015 to the ongoing COP 28 in Dubai. Stock-taking precedes Accelerated Adaptation Action in the CVC agenda. At COP 27 in Sharm El Sheikh last year, agreement was forged for establishing a Loss and Damage Fund.

This is the context of the Philippine position articulated in President Marcos' prepared speech for COP 28 in which he asked world leaders to support the Philippines' bid to host the Loss and Damage Fund. He emphasized the urgency of operationalizing this Fund so that the developing and vulnerable countries could respond concretely to the serious impact of droughts, floods and rising sea levels aggravated by climate change. Only a fortnight ago, the country marked the 10th anniversary of Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), one of the most powerful typhoons in history, that affected more than 14 million people across 44 provinces, claiming the lives of over 8,000 people, and displacing millions more.

The President pointed out that the government has focused on transformative solutions to curb the impact of climate change and address biodiversity loss and pollution. "More than just an environmental issue; for us, it is a matter of survival, of justice, and of protecting the rights of our people," he said. Hence, the Philippine Development Plan has prioritized fast-tracking climate action and establishing sustainable and livable cities.

While the government has established a People's Survival Fund that supports efforts of local government units to implement climate change adaptation programs and projects, the scale and scope of what needs to be done requires a greater magnitude of support that will be provided by the Loss and Damage Fund. As observed by the CVF: "Climate finance effectiveness has far to go, beyond a Delivery Plan for the \$100 billion of annual balanced climate finance."

President Marcos highlighted initiatives and accomplishments in developing renewable energy that now accounts for 35 percent of the country's power generation mix. Protecting the country's forests and seas is essential, too, for biodiversity. The Philippines claims to be the home of more than half of more than 50,000 species of flora and fauna. Such efforts, the President emphasized, will benefit indigenous peoples and local communities.

In the final analysis, hope is sustained by the resilience of vulnerable communities, according to Samoan environmentalist Brianna Fruean: "Our indigenous people have always lived in harmony with nature. Protecting Indigenous people and knowledge is climate justice."

[PBBM deserves credit for PH's commitment to climate justice, says Villafuerte](#)

By: Dexter Barro II

Camarines Sur 2nd district Rep. LRay Villafuerte commended President Marcos for his commitment to advance the Philippines' dedication to climate justice on the international stage.

"The Marcos administration deserves credit for consistently championing the cause of climate justice in Dubai and other forums on the global stage like COP27 (United Nations Climate Change Conference), on behalf of developing economies such as the Philippines," said Villafuerte in a statement on Sunday, Dec. 3.

The National Unity Party (NUP) president stressed that while developing countries contribute little to global warming, they often take the brunt of the catastrophic weather changes resulting from the large-scale GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions of the world's most affluent countries that are said to be its biggest carbon polluters.

Villafuerte likewise backed Marcos' proposal on the immediate implementation of the "loss and damage" (L&D) fund for developing economies and island nations reeling from the devastating impacts of global warming.

"With the Philippines being one of the countries worst hit by climate impacts plus our heightened national efforts on mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction despite our limited resources, President Marcos and his government certainly have the moral ascendancy to seek the prompt operationalization of this L&D fund and propose that the Philippines host this financial reparation on behalf of the world's developing and island-nation states most vulnerable to the unbridled heating of our planet," he said.

With the ongoing COP28 in Dubai, Villafuerte pushes for the swift approval of this proposed financial reparation.

He is hoping that this two-week climate change summit would end with a concrete plan on how to phase down the world's use of carbon dioxide-emitting coal, oil, and gas whose burning is largely responsible for climate change.

The Camarines Sur congressman, who has pushed for green initiatives in the House of Representatives, noted that Marcos is an exemplary figure on the global stage for his sustained efforts in championing the benefits of the world's most vulnerable countries.

"President Marcos and his government's sustained advocacy of urgent climate action on the international stage has cast our Chief Executive and our country as the champions

of high-risk developing economies long seeking financial and technical aid from wealthy nations responsible for heavy carbon pollution responsible for climate change,” he stressed.

According to Villafuerte, the Marcos administration has allotted P453.11 billion for climate change adaptation and mitigation for 2023, while P889.65 million in PSF (People's Survival Fund) had been granted to local government units for climate change adaptation programs and projects.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH endorses climate, health declaration at COP28](#)

By: Joyce Ann L. Rocamora

The Philippines has endorsed at the Conference of Parties 28 (COP28) in Dubai a landmark declaration that acknowledges the growing health impacts of climate change on communities and countries.

The Philippines, through the Department of Health (DOH), joined 122 other states in endorsing the Climate and Health Declaration that will place health at the heart of climate action and accelerate the development of "climate-resilient, sustainable and equitable health systems".

The DOH on Saturday said the member countries, including the Philippines, declared support amounting to USD1 billion to push the climate health agenda further globally.

"The Philippines, through the DOH, shall remain committed to pursuing the climate health agenda," said DOH Secretary Teodoro Herbosa.

"We will be able to protect countless Filipino lives through comprehensive research endeavors to address data gaps, timely actions to address climate-related health impacts, utilization and adaptation of innovative efforts, and integrated health financing mechanisms," he added.

Other new finance commitments were announced to back up the declaration, including a USD300 million commitment by the Global Fund to prepare health systems, USD100 million by the Rockefeller Foundation to scale up climate announcement and health solutions, and by the United Kingdom of up to GBP54 million.

The declaration was issued on December 2 and joins a series of announcements made during the World Climate Action Summit to keep 1.5C within reach.

The declaration acknowledges the large benefits to people's health from stronger climate action, including reducing air pollution and lowering health care costs.

The joint action comes as annual deaths from polluted air hit almost nine million while 189 million people are exposed to extreme weather-related events each year.

COP28 is the United Nations' annual climate change conference and is considered "the world's only multilateral decision-making forum on climate change," which encourages

the participation of almost every country in the world, specifically member states of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The conference aims to discuss the crisis of climate change, such as global temperature rise, adaptation of vulnerable communities to climate change consequences, and achievement of zero-net emissions by 2050.

Herbosa and other DOH officials attended the conference joining thousands of delegates from across the globe where the announcement of the Climate and Health Declaration during the Leader's Event: Putting Health at the Center of the Climate Agenda was featured.

THE MANILA TIMES

'Fiscal policies to help address climate change'

The government's fiscal and economic policies will help address climate change, Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno said at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Organized by the World Bank Group (WBG), the Session on Fiscal Policies to Address Climate Change discussed three key issues — explicit carbon pricing, fossil fuel subsidy reform as a critical form of implicit carbon pricing, and reducing fiscal risks.

Diokno, who joined a panel discussion on supporting climate policy and investments in the Philippines, said the country has passed a series of game-changing reforms to attract sustainable investments.

In 2022, the Philippines launched its Sustainable Finance Framework, which details how the Philippines intends to raise green, social, or sustainability bonds, loans and other debt instruments in the international capital markets.

Through the Inter-Agency Task Force on Sustainable Finance or "Green Force," the Department of Finance (DoF) is building a sustainable finance ecosystem to synergize public and private sector investments.

In line with this, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and other financial regulatory agencies are developing a principles-based Sustainable Finance Taxonomy Guidelines, a tool to determine whether an economic activity is environmentally or socially sustainable.

To reduce pollution, Diokno said the DoF is advocating for the passage of the excise tax on single-use plastics (SUP) bill, which imposes a P100 per kilogram excise tax on SUPs with a four percent annual indexation beginning Jan. 1, 2026.

The government also aims to rationalize tax on mining in order to capture a reasonable share of mining revenues without restricting mining investments.

"While the mining sector contributes to global emissions, the industry is also seen as critical in reducing the same as it is expected to supply the critical minerals needed for low carbon energy technology and the transition to a net-zero economy," Diokno said.

"Now given that the Philippines is currently the largest exporter of nickel, and will become one of the largest producers of copper in the world, we are committed to implementing the new mining fiscal regime by early next year," he said.

To pursue decarbonization, the Philippines is also studying the possibility of establishing an emission trading system or carbon tax to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Diokno shared that the Philippines has been pursuing green activities and technologies under the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act, the Renewable Energy Act, and the Philippine Green Jobs Act.

Marcos wants PH to host climate fund

By: Catherine S. Valente

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. called on world leaders to back the Philippines' bid to host the "Loss and Damage Fund" as he sought the prompt operationalization of the program to support developing and vulnerable countries from the impact of the climate crisis.

In his speech delivered by Special Assistant to the President Antonio Ernesto Lagdameo Jr. at the opening of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) in Dubai on Friday, Marcos said "the Philippines will announce its intent to host the Loss and Damage Fund." "The Philippines call for the immediate operationalization of this Fund to assist developing and vulnerable countries to respond to droughts, floods, and rising sea levels exacerbated by climate change," Marcos said. "We urge partners from the private sector, civil society, partner countries and governments, and developing funding institutions to support the Philippines in this bid. You have been there for meaningful collaboration with our government to tackle the climate crises." Almost 200 nations on Friday backed the launch of the "loss and damage fund" to support countries hit by global warming.

The President highlighted the urgency of confronting climate impact, citing reports from the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change that it will severely affect vulnerable and poor communities.

Marcos said the Philippine government has put into action transformative solutions to curb the impact of climate change and address biodiversity loss and pollution.

"More than just an environmental issue; for us, it is a matter of survival, of justice, and of protecting the rights of our people," the President said.

"Thus, the Philippine Development Plan sealed the national development priorities on accelerating climate action and establishing sustainable and livable cities," he added.

The President said the government has allotted P453.11 billion for climate change adaptation and mitigation for 2023, while P889.65 million has been granted to local government units for climate change adaptation programs and projects under the "People's Survival Fund." Aside from ensuring sufficient funds for climate change mitigation efforts, the President said that the Philippines, the third largest geothermal power producer next to the United States and Indonesia, is heading for low-carbon development.

"We are on track toward achieving a 35-percent renewable energy share in the power generation mix by 2023 through policy reforms that allow more investors for offshore wind and floating solar. We need to protect our forests, our oceans and our biodiversity," Marcos said. "The Philippines, being a megadiverse country, is home to 50,000 species of flora and fauna, 50 percent of which can only be found in the country," he added.

The President told the world leaders that the Philippines is implementing all those climate responses.

"We are intensifying the protection of natural resources to restore natural ecosystems and maximize ecosystem services that will benefit indigenous peoples and local communities," he said.

"The challenges we face are huge, but so are the reasons to be hopeful," the President added.

QC youth present climate change programs

The Quezon City government and Unicef Philippines recognized the leadership of children and youth in climate change efforts during the recent World Children's Day celebration.

"Ngayon, Para Bukas! A Call for Collective Climate Action" brought children's perspectives ahead of the COP28 in Dubai. Results from children's dialogues and surveys from the Local Conference of Youth 2023, U-Report and the Quezon City Children's Climate Change Agenda were presented to the COP28 Philippine delegation.

The young people's demands include community-centered platforms for education and participation, mental health support networks, and safe and enabling environments for Indigenous peoples and environmental defenders.

Other highlighted youth-led programs included an organization protecting Irrawaddy dolphins in Western Visayas; an initiative teaching environmental and agricultural programs to public schools; a network of young environmentalist journalists; and an advocacy group that empowers communities living around the Pasig River.

The ideas of the young "must be heard at the highest levels and taken seriously," Unicef Philippines Representative Oyunsaikhan Dendevnorov said.

Quezon City Mayor Josefina "Joy" Belmonte said that the youth's skills must be maximized "to secure the success of our climate change initiatives." Among the Quezon City government's environmental endeavors are promotion of sustainable energy, active mobility, food security, water conservation, air quality management and circular economy.

Meanwhile, Unicef in the Philippines suggested the inclusion of youth representatives in the Philippine government's interagency steering committees that make decisions on key climate change efforts.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Pinoy children vulnerable to climate change impacts – Unicef](#)

By: Pia Lee-Brago

The bodies and minds of children are uniquely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change as child malnutrition in the Philippines is worsened by crop failures and rising food prices, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund.

UNICEF Philippines said “the bodies and minds of children in the Philippines are vulnerable to polluted air, poor nutrition, and extreme heat.”

A new UNICEF report said child malnutrition in the country is worsened by crop failures and rising food prices, which is exacerbated by higher temperatures and increased rainfall linked to climate change.

As the climate changes and water supply and services are affected, children’s mental and physical health are also changing, the report warned.

One in three children – or 739 million worldwide – lives in areas exposed to high or very high water scarcity, with climate change threatening to make this worse. The double burden of dwindling water availability and unsafe drinking water and sanitation services is compounding the challenge, putting children at even greater risk.

In the Philippines, only 45 percent of school-aged children have access to an improved water source with a regular supply of water. Some 26 percent of school children drink water from unimproved sources or have no access to water in schools at all. Pervasive drought in some areas exacerbate water scarcity and threaten food security. Typhoons and flooding, which have become more frequent, damage water infrastructure.

The Philippines is also ranked 57th out of 167 countries that are likely to undergo water stress by 2040. This suggests that without intervention, between 40 and 80 percent of the country’s total water supply is expected to be depleted by that year. Urgent action is required to address and mitigate the potential impacts on water resources.

The report, a supplement to UNICEF’s Children’s Climate Risk (2021), also outlined myriad other ways in which children bear the brunt of impacts of the climate crisis. From the moment of conception until they grow into adulthood, the health and development of children’s brains, lungs, immune systems and other critical functions are affected by the environment they grow up in.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Bid to tap loss-damage fund receives lawmaker's support](#)

By: Jovee Marie N. de la Cruz and Samuel P. Medenilla

A lawmaker announced last Sunday he is “strongly” supporting the proposal of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on the immediate implementation of the “loss and damage” fund (LDF), which provides financial support to economies like the Philippines that are grappling with the severe impacts of climate change.

A statement issued by the office of Camarines Sur Rep. LRay F. Villafuerte quoted the senior lawmaker as hoping that the intricate details of funding sources and beneficiaries will be resolved by the conclusion of the annual United Nations (UN) climate summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

In addition to endorsing Marcos’s call for the swift implementation of the LDF, Villafuerte supported the idea of the Philippines hosting this fund.

The newly-established LDF garnered about \$424 million in voluntary contributions on the first day of the 28th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) from November 30 to December 12.

COP28 delegates have agreed to operationalize the much-anticipated LDF.

Climate Change Commission (CCC) Executive Director Robert EA Borje lauded the historic development since it will “compensate countries grappling with loss and damage due to climate change.”

Countries that pledged to contribute to the LDF include the COP28 host, the UAE, with \$100 million. The others were: Germany (\$100); United Kingdom (GBP60 million or \$75 million); Japan (\$10 million); and, the United States (\$17.5 million).

Historic move forward

BORJE said during his intervention during the ceremonial opening of the COP28 that “the operationalization of the LDF is a historic move forward.”

“It is proof positive of what we can do as an international community,” the Philippine delegate in the COP28 added.

Borje noted that negotiation on the details on the qualified countries and the process for application for the LDF is still ongoing.

However, Villafuerte highlighted the uncertainty surrounding guaranteed loss and damage financing beyond 2023 as the initial contributions were voluntary donations from a few countries. Villafuerte noted that the initial funds raised during COP28, totaling \$423.89 million, fall short of the \$100-billion yearly commitment pledged by rich nations at COP15 in Denmark in 2009.

Nonetheless, Borje said in Dubai that COP28 parties must “remember [that] loss and damage is at the latter end of the phenomenon spectrum.”

“We have to realize and remember the important work that also needs to be done for adaptation-mitigation efforts to be scaled up,” he added.

Earlier, Borje said such adaptation-mitigation funds will help minimize the impact of climate change on developing countries.

According to Villafuerte, the Philippines has the moral authority to push for the prompt operationalization of the LDF and propose the country as its host.

He also emphasized the need to address key issues, such as annual contributions from wealthy countries, eligibility criteria for loss and damage funding and fund administration, by the end of COP28.

Championing the cause

MEANWHILE, Villafuerte said that the Marcos administration “deserves credit for consistently championing the cause of climate justice in Dubai and other forums on the global stage like COP27, on behalf of developing economies such as the Philippines.”

The lawmaker also noted that albeit contributing little to global warming, the Philippines “unfortunately take on the brunt of the catastrophic weather changes resulting from the large-scale GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions of the world’s most affluent countries that are also its biggest carbon polluters.”

Villafuerte also cited Asian Development Bank (ADB) findings that emphasized the Philippines’s vulnerability to climate impacts due to its dependence on coastal areas and natural resources.

Villafuerte underscored the importance of effective adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures to combat intensified cyclones, flooding, and landslides predicted by the ADB.

He also noted the government's allocation of P453.11 billion for climate change adaptation and mitigation in 2023 and the grant of P889.65 million in People's Survival Fund (PSF) funds to local government units for climate change adaptation programs.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources earlier said it is hopeful the country will qualify for the LDF since the country has suffered from extreme weather incidents attributed to climate change despite contributing less than one percent of global carbon emissions.

PHL hails deal to kick start climate Loss & Damage Fund

By: Jonathan L. Mayuga

The Philippines lauded world leaders for agreeing to operationalize a Loss and Damage Fund that will compensate and support vulnerable countries affected by climate change.

The landmark deal was forged on the first day of the 28th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), setting a positive start to the global climate talks, the DENR said in a statement.

Loss and Damage Fund is one of 7 major streams being worked out by the country's 151-member delegation led by Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga.

The Philippines one with developing nations is pushing for the creation of a loss and damage fund to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change.

While carbon emission of developing countries is minuscule versus global levels, it is disproportionately affected by extreme weather events.

"The Philippines calls for the immediate operationalization of this Fund to assist developing and vulnerable countries to respond to droughts, floods, and rising sea levels exacerbated by climate change," President Marcos said in his message delivered by Special Assistant to President Antonio Lagdameo Jr.

"We urge our partners from the private sector, civil society, partner countries and governments, and development funding institutions to support the Philippines in this bid," Marcos added.

"You have been there for meaningful collaboration with our government to tackle the climate crisis."

DENR Secretary Loyzaga expressed elation over the development.

"Operationalizing the loss and damage fund is important for us, and this was a hard-fought outcome that would enable us to catalyze assistance for the irreversible impacts of climate change such as extreme weather conditions and slow-onset events which are beyond our ability to finance," said Yulo-Loyzaga, who also stood as the official representative of the President to the Climate Change Commission while concurrently serving as the head of the Philippine Delegation to COP28.

In an earlier interview, Loyzaga noted that while the Fund is a milestone for global climate action, it is important to ensure that the loss and damage fund is accessible, and can be tailored to specific needs of each country. “It is a very encouraging sign that developed countries are beginning to recognize common but differentiated responsibility and respective capacity. And we want to be at the forefront of that. The President has announced that the Philippines will pursue the hosting of the Loss and Damage Fund Board and we hope to be able to also have a seat on that Board.”

Following the adoption of the agreement to operationalize the fund, several countries pledged over USD270 million for its start-up phase. The fund is designed to receive contributions from a wide variety of sources, with the World Bank initially hosting it, subject to review after four years.

Earlier, COP28 President Sultan al-Jaber said the United Arab Emirates would commit USD100 million to the fund; Germany pledged USD100 million; the United Kingdom, USD50.5 million; Japan, USD10 million; the United States, USD17.5 million; and the European Union pledged USD225 million, which includes Germany’s contribution.

Loyzaga earlier said that what is also important is the loss and damage fund may be broadly based. “So not just the developed countries, there may be opportunities for the International Financial Organizations. There may be opportunities for private sector philanthropies to also contribute to this fund. All of this is part of what will be negotiated now in this COP.”

“We are open to broadening the sources and that’s where the use of private sector funding, the use of innovative financing from the different international financial organizations is the most important as well,” Loyzaga said.

Article 8.1 of the Paris Agreement states “Parties recognize the importance of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events, and the role of sustainable development in reducing the risk of loss and damage.”

COP28 will run from November 30 to December 12, 2023, at the Dubai Expo City.

DAILY TRIBUNE

Climate Change Commission holds 'Bayanihan sa Klima' forum

By: Jing Villamente

The Climate Change Commission on Thursday gathered stakeholders for a one-day discussion on how to mitigate climate change and build a climate-resilient country.

Held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Ortigas, Quezon City, the forum's first session under the theme: "Bayanihan sa Klima, Bagong Bansang Matatag" was attended by religious and ethnic groups.

The focus of discussion was on creating a climate-resilient nation through empowerment of communities and religious groups for the observance of Climate Change Consciousness Week.

Rev Charles Brown, Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, talked about the role of Catholic institution as a state actor in mobilizing climate change.

"Catholics, which are about 1.36 billion individuals around the world, has an influence" on mitigating the climate crisis, he said.

Also part of the forum will be the awarding of the "Philippine Resilience Award" to "Gender and Climate Change Champions."

A CEO rountable discussion was also held with top brass from big companies and experts like Ted Monroy, industry and sustainable development expert and country Representative, United Nations Industrial Development Organization; and CCC Chair Secretary Robert Eric Borje.

ECO BUSINESS

[Southeast Asia's voices of COP28](#)

By: Liang Lei and Hannah Alcosoba Fernandez

Meet the people pushing to protect one of the most vulnerable parts of the world to global warming at the COP28 climate talks in Dubai.

Southeast Asia, home to 680 million people, has a complex relationship with climate change. None of the region's nations industrialised early enough to warrant historical responsibility for climate breakdown. But Southeast Asia is nonetheless a growing carbon emitter, and one of the only regions in the world where coal is growing in the energy mix. While the archipelago is at the forefront of climate risks, individual nations differ dramatically in their ability to respond to intensifying storms, floods and droughts – Singapore, for instance, has a per-person gross domestic product nearly 80 times that of Myanmar. At COP28, nations will spar on disaster funds, the workings of carbon markets, and the role of fossil fuels – issues Southeast Asia have huge stakes in. Eco-Business is featuring five Southeast Asians who will be attending COP28.

Here's more about their work, concerns and aspirations for the negotiations in Dubai.

Robert Borje

A climate negotiator from the Philippines

Robert Borje grew up in Mindanao, the southernmost island group in the Philippines.

In a speech at a climate justice roundtable on Thursday, he shared how the 1990s was a tumultuous time of armed conflict and poverty in the Muslim region. He was not particularly conscious of climate change back then.

It was only in 2013, when he was a diplomat for the Philippines at the United Nations, that Typhoon Haiyan – the deadliest storm to smash into the archipelago – moved him to the urgency of curbing global warming.

Today, Borje is commissioner of the government body that represents the Philippines in the negotiations at COP.

It will be his second time attending COP as vice chairperson of the Philippine Climate Change Commission since he was appointed to his role in March last year. His term will run until 2027.

The Philippines is eyeing loss and damage as a key issue that it will be lobbying for, as questions over how the fund will operate, who will pay for it, who will benefit, and how it will be governed are expected to be tackled at the conference. Borje will be participating in the debate for climate finance, along with delegates from the departments of finance, energy, science and technology.

The career diplomat said the US\$9.9 million worth of local climate funds approved by the commission in October is not enough. Since 2012, the government has been mandated to direct at least US\$18 million into what is called the People's Survival Fund used for climate change adaptation initiatives.

“What we want is a replenishment of the fund and ... a drastic improvement in the process and the procedure so that we can truly say to the entire world that the Philippines is a model when it comes to climate finance,” Borje told civil society leaders at the roundtable event.

“When I personally go out there and negotiate for unlocking of climate finance, we can tell them we are doing it in the Philippines with our limited resources, [therefore] you in the international community, developed countries have that moral obligation to do much, much better.”

Jemilah Mahmood

A humanitarian veteran from Malaysia

Dr Jemilah Mahmood has witnessed intense human suffering in her over 20 years working in disaster and war relief. So she sees the first-time inclusion of a health theme at COP28 as a “huge step forward” – given how global warming is already wrecking humanity's collective well-being.

In the coming weeks, governments worldwide are expected to endorse two declarations, one on health, and the other on relief, recovery and peace. Both documents, drafted by summit host United Arab Emirates, will call for greater political will, along with more funding and collaboration.

“People in the health sector have been pushing very hard for years for a COP to include a health theme,” Dr Jemilah said.

“I think [the effort] is timely, because we are all just coming through a pandemic,” she said, adding that the link between planetary damage and infectious diseases is now clear.

The 64-year-old, who founded the global humanitarian nonprofit Mercy Malaysia in response to the Kosovo war in 1999, and in recent years advocated for healthcare workers to focus more on climate change, also thinks the COP28 health declaration will need a stronger stance against coal, oil and gas – a late-October draft omits the term “fossil fuels” entirely.

“Unless we are really talking about reducing fossil fuels, then we are constantly going to be putting out fires,” Dr Jemilah said. She is one of over 30 signatories in an open letter by global health professionals asking for a phase-out of fossil fuels to be included in the declaration.

Dr Jemilah is the co-founder and executive director of the Sunway Centre for Planetary Health, a university think-tank that works at the intersection of public health and climate issues.

Key issues in Southeast Asia, she said, include preparing for more outbreaks of diseases such as dengue and malaria, stemming from climate shifts. Biodiversity loss is also causing food security issues, she added.

COP28 will be Dr Jemilah’s first time at the summit in-person. She will be speaking at the health, humanitarian and Malaysia pavilions. She anticipates “a bit of a circus” around the huge conference, but added that the focus must be on outcomes.

“Health workers are the most trusted people in the world and our voices must be stronger,” she said, adding that the sector needs to get better at understanding and communicating climate risks.

She also will be keeping a keen eye on the loss and damage funding negotiations, and how developed countries have been trying to avoid strong terms obligating payments, while paying homage to the recently deceased Bangladeshi scientist Saleemul Huq, widely regarded a pioneer of the global loss and damage movement.

“I ask myself, in today’s world, where is the global solidarity, to want for others what you want for ourselves?” Dr Jemilah said.

Her take-home message? “Everything we do now, no matter how small, will contribute to some change. We have no time to lose, with everything stacked against us. I think we just need to push on”.

Tual Sawn Khai

A solitary voice from Myanmar

Dr Tual Sawn Khai, 31, has seen his fair share of extreme weather. In 2015, nine million people were affected by flooding and landslides. Dr Khai’s home region, the mountainous Chin state, declared a state of emergency, and he was involved in rehabilitation and emergency response work for over six months.

“I’m a survivor, you can say,” Dr Khai, who is from the Zomi-Chin ethnic group, said of the experience.

Myanmar is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate risks – Cyclone Mocha killed 145 people and affected millions this year – but Dr Khai worries that the world is not caring enough about Myanmar’s climate vulnerability, with public attention firmly on the nation’s civil war.

Since the military overthrew the elected government in 2021, there has been no official representation from Myanmar at COP summits. It is not clear if anyone will be present at COP28 either. Both the junta and exiled government are vying for recognition at the United Nations, and hostilities have recently flared.

Dr Khai, currently a researcher at the United Nations University in Malaysia, will be at COP28 with Mountain Sentinels, a United States-based nonprofit that champions the sustainability of mountain environments and communities worldwide. His research has been focused on climate, health and migration issues.

He will be speaking about how 3 billion people rely on mountain ecosystems for food, water and livelihoods, and how mountain communities are often marginalised, while their knowledge is key to climate adaptation.

Dr Khai will also be looking for opportunities to raise awareness of what has been happening in Myanmar. Extreme heat has been ruining crops, environmentally destructive mining has increased under the military administration, and desperate farmers are turning back to opium farming, Dr Khai said. For these reasons, he doesn’t want the junta to represent the country at COP28.

There is the issue of Myanmar's dam-building ambitions too. There are 29 sizable hydropower dams in the country and dozens more are in the pipeline.

Dr Khai singled out the Myitsone Dam, a 6-gigawatt megaproject that will flood an area equalling 60 per cent the area of Singapore, as a project that needs to stop because of the environmental and social harm it will cause. Construction has been suspended for over 10 years, though there have been murmurs about it restarting.

"We need to raise awareness globally that this dam should never be built," he said.

It will be Dr Khai's first COP, an experience he is both excited and nervous about. He would also have attended COP26 in Glasgow in 2021 as a United Nations youth advocate, but couldn't get his visa approved in time.

Dr Khai has been making inquiries about compatriots attending COP28, but thus far hasn't found any other Burmese organisations going. Ground-up environmental groups are rare in Myanmar, he said, and the civic space is getting narrower for non-government organisations because they need to register with the military government.

"I think I might be the only one [from Myanmar] there," he concedes.

Ning Yiran

A youth advocate from Singapore

One of Ning Yiran's most enduring impressions of a COP conference came from watching videos of policymakers moved to tears in 2015, when the Paris Agreement climate deal was adopted after days of intense negotiations.

But the 23-year-old felt conflicted when offered the chance to witness such negotiations up close at COP28. The opportunity came via a government climate programme, which will be sending 20 youths from the city-state to the summit.

For one, there is the issue of carbon emissions flying from Singapore to Dubai – 900 kilograms for a round trip. Ning has also been reflecting on what her presence at the summit will achieve, where she does not expect to have a platform to speak.

"I'm not sure if my participation will really make a difference to COP28," Ning said.

It was ultimately the learning opportunity that convinced the youth advocate and environmental studies graduate from liberal arts college Yale-NUS to make the trip.

While in school, Ning worked with non-profit Advocates For Refugees to raise funds for a theatre group in Malaysia founded by displaced Afghans. She was part of a student movement that last year called for local universities to divest from fossil fuel firms.

Her undergraduate thesis examined how Southeast Asia's renewables megaprojects, such as dams and solar farms, were displacing local communities. Some of these projects have attracted Singapore's interest as potential sources from which to import low-carbon electricity. She found that while governments often talk about the economics and benefits of the green energy transition, local communities that are affected by renewables projects want to address issues such as climate justice and dignity.

"I want to attend COP28 to try to make sense of what I feel are two separate worlds that sometimes can end up in their own echo chamber," Ning said.

Ning is also planning to share her experience at the summit through social media – "so that more people can feel excited, or frustrated, with us, and also benefit from the access and experiences we get to have", she said.

She expects COP28 to be hectic and emotionally overwhelming, based on her friends' experiences at last year's COP27 where issues they cared about were sometimes dismissed by negotiators or caught up in power plays.

Meanwhile, Ning is keeping up with the latest developments. She has scrutinised United Nations climate reports, and tracked how loss and damage talks have been running overtime, with contentions in areas such as if the World Bank is fit to host a new fund.

She hopes to see the fund for helping vulnerable countries rebuild after extreme climate events fully address developing country concerns. There must also be agreement on a phaseout of unabated fossil fuels that leaves no one behind, she said.

"It is very easy to just go there and have a good time. But I want to go prepared, so that the spot I'm taking up is justified. I think that's the pressure I'm putting on myself," Ning added.

Hadi Prayitno

An Indigenous Peoples observer from Indonesia

Hadi Prayitno has been working with communities, including Indigenous Peoples in Indonesia, for over two decades. But it is only now that he will be attending a conference that will tackle the rights of vulnerable groups at the same international level as the COP.

The 41 year-old is attending the world's most important climate negotiations as the stakeholder engagement manager of United States-headquartered nonprofit Wildlife Works, which advocates for the voluntary carbon market as an effective and equitable financial mechanism to stop deforestation.

"I'm very excited and feeling lucky because the same opportunity is not provided to all people. I can learn many things from this event, even if my role is only as an observer," Prayitno says.

Colleagues who attended previous conferences described to him how the Glasgow summit in 2021 was very grand, followed by a more understated event in Egypt last year.

He does not expect too much festivity for the one he is about to attend in Dubai, but what matters to him, he says, is the opportunity to learn and exchange experiences with countries similar to Indonesia which have some of the world's biggest natural forests and communities of Indigenous Peoples, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Brazil.

"A successful negotiation will be when all parties declare loudly what they will do to respect the rights of Indigenous People and local communities," he said.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Climate talks open on ‘encouraging’ note for countries like PH

By: Imelda V. Abaño

The Philippines has urged wealthier nations to drive more financial resources toward climate action and support poor countries that bear the brunt of climate change, despite contributing little to it, in their transition to renewable energy.

More than 70,000 delegates from more than 195 countries kicked off the 28th Conference of Parties (COP28), the United Nations climate summit, on Thursday in this city in the oil-rich United Arab Emirates (UAE), with an agreement to hammer out the details of the “loss and damage” finance facility to help vulnerable countries deal with the immediate impact of climate change.

A major breakthrough on the first day of COP28 was the operationalization of a fund that would help compensate vulnerable countries, like the Philippines, to cope with loss and damage caused by extreme weather events — with an initial funding of more than \$475 million pledged by rich countries (UAE pledged \$100 million, European Union with \$275 million, the United States with \$17.5 million and Japan with \$10 million). The World Bank will initially host the fund.

Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga said: “It is a very encouraging development. The Philippines has been a leading voice for the vulnerable countries. The operationalization of the loss and damage fund is a very encouraging [step] that developed countries are beginning to recognize. But we are calling for the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities in addressing climate change.”

On Friday she launched the first-ever Philippine pavilion at COP28, together with Special Assistant to the President Antonio Lagdameo Jr., Climate Change Commission Vice Chair and Executive Director Robert Borje, Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno, Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista, Science and Technology Secretary Renato Solidum Jr., Presidential Adviser on Legislative Affairs Mark Llandro Mendoza and Presidential Adviser on Investment and Economic Affairs Frederick Go.

‘Turning point’

Loyzaga, whom President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. named as delegation head after he canceled his trip to Dubai, said the Philippines has been instrumental in pushing for the discussion of loss and damage in the past 10 years, highlighting Super typhoon Yolanda (international name: Haiyan) which claimed the lives of more than 6,000 people and damaged more than a million homes in 2013.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH committed to global environmental responsibility: CCC chief](#)

By: Ma. Teresa Montemayor

The approval of six additional climate adaptation projects through the People's Survival Fund (PSF) is testament to the Philippines' commitment to global environmental responsibility, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) said Thursday.

CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert Eric E.A Borje made the statement following President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s allocation of over PHP541 million to the PSF.

"The Marcos administration can mobilize critical domestic resources to advance adaptation measures at the local and community levels, especially at a time when risks and challenges posed by climate change demand immediate and urgent actions," Borje said.

"If countries like the Philippines can unlock public domestic climate finance, then developed countries must ramp up delivery on their commitments under the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) and the Paris Agreement."

The new projects include a PHP271.15 million grant for the Provincial Government of Mountain Province to build a Climate Field School (CFS), aiming to boost agricultural and fisheries sectors.

The Municipality of Maramag, Bukidnon, secured PHP126.40 million for drainage systems and agroforestry development, while Borongan City, Eastern Samar, received PHP117.96 million for embankment infrastructure and reforestation along the Lo-om River.

Other approved projects include a solar-powered lamp project in Cabagan, Isabela (PHP21.28 million), and mangrove rehabilitation in Catanauan, Quezon (PHP2.64 million).

A project development grant worth PHP2 million has also been recently approved for the Water Harvesting Structures Project in Besao, Mountain Province.

Established under Republic Act No. 10174, the PSF is a special fund in the National Treasury that provides long-term finance streams to enable the government to effectively address the problems of climate change through adaptation programs and projects.

The CCC reviews and evaluates project proposals submitted for PSF.

Project proposals are recommended for approval by the PSF Board with concurrence and endorsement from the majority of CCC commissioners.

Project proposals are recommended for approval by the PSF Board.

The CCC also formulates mechanisms towards transparency and public access to information, and develops guidelines to accredit local or community organizations to access the PSF.

'Survival fund' to make more communities disaster-resilient

By: Wilnard Bacelonia

The People's Survival Fund (PSF), recently turned over by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to local government units (LGUs), will bolster the execution of climate change adaptation programs as the country works on being disaster-resilient.

The PSF will help LGU adaptation activities in relation to land and water resources management, agriculture and fisheries, health, infrastructure development, and natural ecosystems, according to Senate President Pro-Tempore Loren Legarda.

“This will also support the improvement of the monitoring, controlling, and prevention of diseases triggered by climate change, the establishment of forecasting and early warning systems, and strengthening institutional development for local governments, preventive measures, planning, preparedness, and management of impacts relating to climate change,” Legarda said in a statement.

Established under Republic Act 10174 in 2012, the PSF had an initial capitalization of PHP1 billion to finance adaptation programs and projects of LGUs and accredited local and community organizations.

The approval of the six new climate adaptation projects worth over PHP541 million brings the total number of PSF-funded projects to 11 climate adaptation initiatives and six projects for Project Development Grants, amounting to a combined PHP889.6 million.

Included in the projects are Mountain Province, which received a grant worth PHP271.15 million for the construction of a Climate Field School for Farmers; Maramag town in Bukidnon, PHP126.40 million for the installation of drainage and early warning systems as well as the development of the agroforestry industry; Borongan City, Eastern Samar, PHP117.96 million for the installation of embankment infrastructure and reforestation for enhanced flood control of the Lo-om River; Cabagan, Isabela, PHP21.28 million for an irrigation project; Catanauan, Quezon, PHP2.64 million for a mangrove rehabilitation project; Besao, also in Mountain Province, PHP2 million for the water harvesting structures project.

“There is no substitute for national and local government programs and budgets that are climate change-adaptive. The PSF allows us to pole-vault toward ensuring disaster and climate change resilient communities,” Legarda said.

The passage into law of RA 10174, which she authored and sponsored, was "a triumph for the Filipino people and an affirmation of the nation's commitment to building communities resilience to disasters."

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Marcos: Philippines seeks to host climate disaster fund

By: Helen Flores

The Philippines intends to host the more than \$400-million fund that several countries have committed as compensation for nations bedeviled by extreme weather conditions caused by climate change.

President Marcos voiced his administration's intention for the country to host the "Loss and Damage Fund" in a speech delivered for him by Special Assistant to the President Antonio Lagdameo Jr. at the opening of the Philippine Pavilion, themed "Together Today for Tomorrow," at the Dubai Exhibition Center Friday afternoon (Dubai time).

The event was part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), which runs until Dec.12.

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The Chief Executive said his administration has carried out transformative solutions to mitigate the impact of climate change and address biodiversity loss and pollution.

"More than just an environmental issue, for us, it is a matter of survival, of justice and of protecting the rights of our people. Thus, the Philippine Development Plan sealed the national development priorities on accelerating climate action and establishing sustainable and livable cities," he said.

The Philippine government has allotted P453.11 billion for climate change adaptation and mitigation for 2023, while P889.65 million has been granted to local government units for climate change adaptation programs and projects under the People's Survival Fund, he said.

Low carbon development

The President likewise noted the Philippines is heading toward low-carbon development.

"We are on track towards achieving a 35-percent renewable energy share in the power generation mix by 2023 through policy reforms that allow more investors for offshore wind and floating solar. We need to protect our forests, our oceans and our biodiversity," Marcos said.

The Philippines, he said, remains as the third largest geothermal power producer in the world, next to the US and Indonesia.

"The Philippines, being a mega-diverse country, is home to 50,000 species of flora and fauna, 50 percent of which can only be found in the country. We are intensifying the protection of natural resources to restore natural ecosystems and maximize ecosystem services that will benefit indigenous peoples and local communities," he added.

In an interview with Filipino journalists here on Friday, Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said the approval of the Loss and Damage Fund – long being pushed by developing nations most affected by climate change – is one of the biggest achievements of this year's conference. Loyzaga heads the Philippine delegation to COP28.

"There was an expectation that they (countries) would start with \$200 million, but they raised yesterday over \$400 million in pledges and more to come," Loyzaga said after leading the opening of the Philippine Pavilion inside the Dubai Exhibition Center.

The official stressed the fund would not only help vulnerable countries recover from natural disasters but would also enhance their resilience to climate change.

"As far as the Philippines' leadership is concerned, we're very much recognized for the loss and damage fund," Loyzaga told Filipino journalists.

"We hope to be able also to have a seat on that (Loss and Damage Fund) board in order for us to further pursue the representation of vulnerable countries," she said.

COP28's host country, the United Arab Emirates, has committed \$100 million to the fund. Germany has also reportedly pledged \$100 million, while the European Union promised \$275 million. The US and Japan pledged \$17.5 million and \$10 million, respectively.

In 2022, the Philippines topped the World Risk Index, which measures countries' disaster risk from extreme natural events and the effects of climate change.

In a speech on Wednesday at Malacañang, the President underscored the significance of COP28 to the Philippines, one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change.

"But we must also take the lead when it comes to the global move and the global aspiration that those most vulnerable communities around the world will somehow be assisted by the developed countries when it comes to these measures to mitigate and to adapt to climate change," he said.

Climate justice

In a statement, Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda yesterday lauded the deal reached during the COP28 climate change summit in Dubai for the setting up of a loss and damage fund.

"This is a welcome development of a decades-long battle on loss and damage as we continue our call for climate justice and demand the developed countries to deliver on their commitments in the Paris Agreement," Legarda said in a statement.

She said the development was made possible after countries like the Philippines supported it when it was discussed in last year's COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

"I am aware our Philippine delegation has been working hard on putting the loss and damage agenda on the table since last year's conference and pushing towards the establishment of the Fund in the ongoing negotiations with G77, the COP28 presidency of the United Arab Emirates and other stakeholders," Legarda said.

She said more industrialized countries should take the lead in putting up the fund for countries like the Philippines, which have a low contribution to greenhouse gas emission but are most vulnerable to drought, rising sea level and strong typhoons.

"Our stand is that developed countries most responsible for climate change must do more for countries least responsible," Legarda said.

“To pursue climate justice is to exact accountability from the most responsible for the climate crisis based on the developed countries’ historical responsibility for emissions,” she added.

In her taped speech delivered yesterday during the High-level Dialogue with the COP28 Philippine delegation in Dubai, Legarda thanked the Climate Change Commission and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for presenting the country’s plan to reduce greenhouse gas emission by 75 percent, as part of the Philippines’ obligations to the Paris Agreement.

“In order to minimize the scale and intensity of climate impacts, we must adapt to – as well as leapfrog to – low-carbon systems and transform our ways of living for the better. The Philippines has, for far too long, been the face of loss and damage and climate risk and vulnerability,” Legarda said.

The Paris Agreement was adopted as a legally binding treaty on climate change during the COP21 in Paris in 2015.

It aims to keep “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and “to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.”

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