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#### **THE MANILA TIMES**

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By: Armando Carandang

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#### **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

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**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## ECO BUSINESS

### How does climate change affect food security?

As impacts from prolonged droughts to extreme heat worsen, climate change is threatening the world's ability to produce enough nutritious food and ensure everyone has access to it.

At COP28 in Dubai, more than 130 country leaders on Friday called for global and national food systems to be rethought to address climate change - the first such official recognition at a UN climate summit of growing worries about food security and planet-heating emissions from agriculture.

Here's how global food systems and climate change affect each other, and what might be done about rising risks:

How is climate change threatening food security?

As fossil fuel emissions heat the planet, they are driving more extreme weather - from heavy rains and droughts to heatwaves - as well as gradual sea level rise. All can affect crops, ruin farmland and make it harder for farmers to work.

A warming climate also is bringing crop diseases and pests into new locations or making infestations more severe, ruining more harvests and reducing yields.

Such problems, combined with other pressures on food systems - from growing conflict to crop export restrictions by food-producing countries and speculation in markets - mean food is becoming less affordable and more people are going hungry.

The UN World Food Programme estimates that 333 million people face "acute" food insecurity in 2023 in the 78 countries where it works - a huge boost from about 200 million prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Crop failures are not a new phenomenon, with surpluses in some regions long making up for shortfalls in others, but scientists fear stronger climate impacts could drive simultaneous failures across major global "breadbaskets", resulting in a swift rise in global hunger.

What is being done to address these threats?

Around the world, many farmers are adapting to climate extremes in a variety of ways, from digging irrigation ponds to trap floodwater and store it for dry times, to adopting new climate-smart seeds and bringing back hardy traditional crops.

But some challenges - such as more frequent and extreme heatwaves that can make it difficult for farmers to work outside - are harder to counter.

Money to help small-scale farmers - who supply about a third of the world's food - adapt to climate risks is also falling dramatically short.

In 2021, they received only about US\$2 billion, or 0.3 per cent of total international climate finance from public and private sources, according to Amsterdam-based think-tank Climate Focus.

With little outside help available, many such farmers - who have contributed little to the emissions heating up the planet - are paying the costs of climate adaptation themselves.

The Climate Focus survey of 13 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America found nearly 440 million small-scale farmer households now spend about US\$368 billion annually on adaptation costs, or about US\$838 each per year.

Analysts say efforts to shore up global food security also need to reach well beyond farms, to try to rein in speculators in food markets, discourage export clampdowns and revamp increasingly overwhelmed humanitarian aid systems.

Can we find ways to grow more food to make up for the losses?

Expanding the amount of land being farmed - or boosting the use of fossil-fuel-based fertilisers and developing new crop varieties - have long been accepted ways to grow more food.

But agricultural land expansion often comes at the expense of forests and other natural ecosystems that are critical to conserve because their vegetation absorbs and stores climate-heating carbon dioxide emissions in order to grow, helping to curb climate change.

For example nearly 20 per cent of the vast Amazon rainforest has now been lost, largely to soybean farming and cattle ranching.

Scientists fear additional deforestation could over time turn the forest into a dry savanna, imperiling rainfall for agriculture across South America - and sabotaging the world's climate and biodiversity protection goals.

Efforts to intensify the amount of food grown on a set land area have shown some success but often require large amounts of expensive fossil fuel-based fertilisers.

In recent years, however, more environmentally friendly farming methods are gaining new adherents, from the United States to India.

But food analysts say the best way to increase global supplies is not to grow more but to reduce the huge amount of food wasted each year.

While the world produces enough food for everyone, about a third of it is lost or wasted along the supply chain from field to fork, according to the United Nations, which says the average person wastes 74 kg (163 lb) of food each year.

## MANILA BULLETIN

### [Europe knows that climate action is vital to global security](#)

By: Josep Borrell and Wopke Hoekstra

“Present trends are racing our planet down a dead-end three-degree temperature rise,” United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres recently warned. He is right. Unless we act decisively – beginning at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) underway in Dubai – the threat that climate change poses to humanity will become nothing short of existential.

Already, climate change is a major risk multiplier for conflict and instability. Extreme weather events like floods and heatwaves have led to the forcible displacement of more than 20 million people each year since 2008. By 2050, more than one billion people may have insufficient access to water, and more than 200 million may be forced to migrate.

Water scarcity and food shortages are fueling violent conflicts in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and other parts of the world. Of the 20 countries that are most vulnerable to climate change, 12 are mired in conflicts. Authoritarian countries are taking advantage of the turmoil, attempting to gain influence over fragile governments and secure access to raw materials. Unless our mitigation and adaptation efforts are equal to the climate crisis, these trends will accelerate and spread, with truly catastrophic results.

The European Union is doing its part to avoid such an outcome. With the European Green Deal, we are aiming, by 2030, to reduce our greenhouse-gas emissions by at least 55 percent, ensure that more than 42.5 percent of our energy comes from renewable sources, and increase energy efficiency by at least 11.7 percent. We strive to become climate-neutral by 2050.

Central to our strategy for achieving these goals is putting a price on carbon dioxide emissions. But imposing a carbon price only on EU production risks simply pushing carbon-intensive activities beyond our borders. Such “carbon leakage” would mean losing jobs in the EU without achieving any reduction in global emissions.

That is why we implemented the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which ensures that the most carbon-intensive imports are subject to a carbon price in line with that put on European goods. This is not protectionism. Rather, it is a necessary step to ensure that our ambitious decarbonization measures are helpful for the global climate.

We also want to take responsibility for the greenhouse-gas emissions caused outside the EU by our consumption of imported goods, which is why we are “greening” our trade

policy. In particular, we want to ensure that the products we import no longer contribute to deforestation – one of the greatest threats to the climate and biodiversity. We know that the requirements stemming from this EU law are causing tensions with some of our partners. We are ready to support them in implementing these measures and to address together the challenge of deforestation.

The green transition will shake up the global balance of power. For the EU, this process implies both benefits and risks. On one hand, it will reduce our dependence on fossil fuels – a dependence that, as Russia’s war against Ukraine has demonstrated, carries high political and economic costs. On the other hand, it could create new dependencies, such as on producers of critical raw materials. Avoiding that outcome – and bolstering our security – requires us to ensure diversity of supply. To that end, we must strengthen our ties with Africa, Latin America, and South Asia, developing tailor-made partnerships that allow for value-addition and job creation in our partner countries.

While Europe bears an important historical responsibility for climate change, we account for just 7.5 percent of global emissions today, meaning that the actions we take at home can have only a limited impact on the world’s climate. The only solution to climate change is a global one. At a time when multilateralism is under growing pressure, agreement on how to meet the targets set at COP21 in Paris would not only ensure a safe future for our children, but also would show that multilateral institutions can still deliver.

COP28 must shift the world into higher gear. The EU is committed to pushing for the phase-out of unabated fossil fuels and all fossil-fuel subsidies, the doubling of energy-efficiency measures, and the tripling of renewable-energy capacity worldwide. But to make this happen, we need the buy-in of the other industrialized economies, as well as China, which, despite its tremendous progress in renewables, still burns more coal than the rest of the world combined.

The green transition will succeed only if it is just and benefits all. The most climate-vulnerable countries have contributed little to climate change but risk bearing the brunt of it. While they must be part of the global race to net-zero emissions, they need and deserve greater support when it comes to climate adaptation and the green-energy transition. The EU is prepared to deliver such support – and help our partners avoid repeating our past mistakes.

The EU, its member states, and the European financial institutions are already the largest contributors of public climate finance to developing economies, having delivered €28.5 billion (\$30 billion) in 2022. Moreover, the developed economies are finally on track to meet the goal of mobilizing \$100 billion annually for climate adaptation and mitigation in the developing world. But we must think beyond this pledge, which ends in 2025.



It is time to align both public and private financial flows with the goals laid out in the Paris climate agreement, and take climate finance from billions to trillions. At the same time, the international financial institutions and multilateral development banks need to be reformed, so that they can do more to support the delivery of global public goods. And the new Loss and Damage Fund needs the appropriate financial firepower. The first substantial pledges are encouraging. Here, too, China will be an indispensable partner.

In an increasingly multipolar world, shaped by the return of great-power politics, concerted international cooperation might seem far-fetched. But in the face of such a global existential challenge, we must succeed.

## [Nuclear science offers solutions for climate change, energy needs — DOST](#)

By: Rhowen Del Rosario

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) has cited nuclear science and related studies as key to addressing climate change and ensuring a sustainable future.

DOST Secretary Renato U. Solidum Jr. emphasized the potential of nuclear technology to address global warming concerns at the start of the 51st Atomic Energy Week (AEW) on Dec. 4.

"Climate change is a problem that we all need to look into. We will be victims of global warming, so we need to act, and nuclear technology would play crucial roles in addressing our concerns on this," Solidum said.

He stressed that while the Philippines may not be a major contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions, the country will still be affected by pollution and its associated health impacts.

"The protection of the environment will also utilize nuclear technology. While the Philippines may not be a major contributor to greenhouse gases, we need to address air pollution from a health perspective, not just the climate. This is because we will not only be affected by rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns but also air pollution," he said.

The DOST chief further emphasized the importance of nuclear science and research studies for developing alternative energy sources, particularly in the form of nuclear power—where this clean energy source could significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"Nuclear technology can also be used to develop new crop varieties that are resistant to heat and require less water, ensuring food security even in a changing climate," Solidum added.

Beyond its applications in medicine, agriculture, and industry, Solidum also sees the renewed focus on nuclear power as a new opportunity for the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute.

The DOST added these includes "mastering nuclear technology as a potential power source for economic development but also ensuring its safe, secure, and responsible use."

"This is the reason why the country's science department has its full support for the efforts of the Nuclear Energy Program Inter-Agency Committee, as well as the establishment of a unified, independent regulatory body for ionizing radiation sources through the bill for the Philippine National Nuclear Energy Safety Act pending in Congress," Solidum said.

### **[Opinion] PH at COP28: At the forefront of the battle vs climate change**

It doesn't take a scientist to conclude that we live in one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. Stronger rains, more intense floods, longer dry spells have significantly impacted our archipelagic nation, especially our coastal communities and agricultural sector, resulting in the loss of lives and billions of pesos in damages during natural calamities.

It is for this reason why the Philippine delegation at COP28, or the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Dubai, which will conclude today, Dec. 12, 2023, has highlighted the country's qualifications to host the "Board of Loss and Damage Fund."

The Philippine delegation, led by Environment Secretary Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, also added that the country not only seeks to host but also expresses its desire to secure a seat in the inaugural Board of the Fund. She said that the Philippines is most qualified "for not only being a living testament to the effects of climate change, but also with its abiding interest in promoting equitable and just rules in the governance of the global commons."

"We are already host to UN entities, international and regional organizations, providing us the institutional capacity, expertise, and partnerships to ensure the successful hosting of the Board. We stand ready to offer our knowledge grounded in our long history and culture of human resilience," said Yulo-Loyzaga.

The "Loss and Damage" mechanism, according to the United Nations, aims to identify ways to address and support those who suffer from climate change impacts, especially in developing countries that are more vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change such as the Philippines. The discussions often revolve around establishing a financial mechanism, known as the "Loss and Damage Fund," to provide support for adaptation and recovery efforts in regions experiencing the most severe consequences of climate change.

It is also defined in Article 9 of the Paris Agreement, which states, "developed nations are required to fulfill their prior commitments under the Convention by giving developing states financial support for their efforts to mitigate climate change and adapt to it."

"Our commitment to multilateralism, strengthened international cooperation, and global solidarity remains steadfast, recognizing that no single country can tackle the complexities of climate change alone," the Secretary said.

“In our country, we have taken concrete actions by implementing policies and initiatives to reduce emissions by catalyzing investments in our rich sources of renewable energy, enhancing resilience, advancing right-skilling and social protection, especially for the most vulnerable, to achieve a just transition, and mainstreaming climate considerations into our development plans and budgets.”

Before concluding the national statement at COP28, Yulo-Loyzaga urged world leaders to “start moving forward with courage, unity, and determination toward a more resilient, equitable, sustainable, and prosperous global community.”

She also asked them to set aside differences for the sake of the planet and all peoples. “A sustainable and resilient future for the generations to come can only be secured through collective actions.”

With the conclusion of COP28, there are criticisms that it is “all talk, no action” but with the progress on the “loss and damage” mechanism, one bright spot is paving the way for international cooperation. And the Philippines is leading the way, even offering its expertise and experience to fight climate change one step at a time.

After all, no one benefits if one country succumbs to the effects of climate change, because in the grander scheme of things, we all live on just one planet.

## PAGEONE

### [Pinoy Photographer Leads International Exhibit Concerning Climate Change](#)

Intending to raise awareness of the effects of climate change worldwide, a Filipino photographer got the first spot in the recent #CreateCOP28.

On December 6, Pinoy photographer Gab Mejia shared on his Facebook account that he received the top spot for the international photography exhibition that has collaborated with different art partners and the United Nations.

In his artwork titled “Passage of Storms,” the artist has demonstrated the situation of the Philippines during Super Typhoon Rai, locally known as ‘Odette,’ that hit the country in 2021.

“Coastal communities in the Philippines build and rebuild after every passing of a storm, only to be capitalized by a recurring system of disaster and loss, a creation of messianic myths upon their respective leaders as their sole constituents, indebted in these so-called gods with votes and loyalty who “rebuild” their homes,” Mejia said.

The artist uses his documentary to showcase how the communities were built and rebuilt after every storm, noting the country’s geographical location.

Mejia’s documentary has received the top spot for the said competition considering its illustration of the “long-lasting impact” of super typhoons on Filipinos.

With this achievement, the photographer not only made a name for himself but also for the country, leading him to express his gratitude to individuals who supported his documentary.

“Most days, I dream that we do not even need to get to share these dire stories of our islands, but these are the conversations and narratives we continue to confront, and we shall forward these stories that deserve justice for our archipelago amid this climate crisis,” Mejia said on his Facebook post.

The said documentary was included in the artworks that were exhibited in New York City that started on December 8. #CreateCOP28 is a program that focuses on empowering climate justice and raising awareness with the United Nations to give voice to the marginalized communities that are commonly affected by climate change.

## SUNSTAR

### [Tell it to SunStar: Solar panels in campuses](#)

As the international climate negotiations wrap up on Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2023, we submitted a position paper to the Commission on Higher Education (Ched) and the Department of Education (DepEd) on Monday, Dec. 11, asserting the need for the education sector to play a leading role in Philippine efforts to mitigate global climate change.

We called on education agencies to issue a directive to all school owners and administrators to install solar panels in their campuses.

As the youth, we will inherit a world ravaged by extreme weather and rising temperatures from previous generations.

We thus have the biggest responsibility to act, and advocate action, against climate change, and we need to work with our educational institutions to win this fight.

In our position paper, we advocated to “solarize our schools,” or to transition all schools from relying on fossil fuels to shift to solar energy and other renewable forms.

We emphasized the urgency for government agencies and educational institutions to lead in mitigating the impacts of climate change as national emission targets fall short of what is needed to avert climate change.

We cited the successful efforts of the local government of Makati City and Catanduanes State University that have installed solar panels in their campuses.

With the amount of sunlight that the Philippines receives, it is a no-brainer for us to start ramping up our reliance on solar energy in particular.

Besides building awareness and educating the general public, schools in particular could benefit immensely from being powered by the sun that they are constantly exposed to, especially during the summer months.

Apart from decreasing the reliance on fossil fuels, the shift would lessen the exorbitant fees paid by students upon enrollment.

Schools’ energy costs tend to be passed along to students through tuition and other fees, and as energy costs rise, so does tuition.

Renewables have been proven to be cheaper than fossil fuels time and time again, so this shift would secure our futures not only in terms of the climate, but in terms of our own financial prospects.

We vow to continue to fight for a greater role for the youth in addressing the climate emergency, noting that the Philippines remains to be among the most vulnerable to climate change.

This climate emergency is literally going to kill us all if we do not act now, and solarizing our schools is only the first step to educating the youth, increasing our role in reducing emissions to stay under the 1.5°C threshold before the impacts of climate change become irreversible.



## THE MANILA TIMES

### PH climate trend alarming – expert

By: Armando Carandang

A climate change expert said there is an alarming trend in the Philippine climate as manifested by an increase in hot days and a decrease in cold nights.

Loren Joy Estrebillo, an expert from the Impact Assessment and Applications Section of the Climatology and Agrometeorology Division at the DoST-Pagasa, also highlighted the variations in rainfall patterns that impacted different regions.

She said that while there was a slight decrease in the number of tropical cyclones entering the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR), she noted an increase in their intensity.

Estrebillo made the assertion during the observance of the Global Warming and Climate Consciousness Week 2023 in Region 1 (Ilocos) where the DoST regional office in collaboration with the DZAG Radyo Pilipinas Agoo took a proactive stance by conducting the 35th episode of the weekly program "Tekno Presiyensya: Siyensya ken Teknolohiya para kadagiti Umili" on November 23.

The said weekly program was done via Facebook live which aimed to raise awareness and understanding of critical climate issues among the public.

In her presentation, Estrebillo navigated through the intricate topic of global warming, unraveling the complexities of the greenhouse effect and its direct correlation with human activities.

The greenhouse effect was explained, distinguishing between the natural and human-enhanced processes. Emphasizing the impact of fossil fuel combustion, she revealed the heightened human-enhanced greenhouse effect contributing to global warming.

The discussion also focused on the extensive ramifications of climate change, including water scarcity, disruptions in food production, threats to health and well-being, impacts on urban infrastructure, and effects on biodiversity and ecosystems.

Estrebillo also noted the contribution of warming conditions to rising sea levels, particularly affecting islands in Mindanao and the western coasts of Central and Western Visayas.

DoST-Pagasa's Climate Information Risk Analysis Matrix (Cliram) was introduced as a tool to assist local government units (LGUs) in integrating climate change projections into their local action plans.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### [Philippines among beneficiaries of Canada's climate finance – UNDP](#)

By: Helen Flores

Canada yesterday clarified the Philippines would be among the developing countries to benefit from its total \$5.3-billion climate finance commitment.

The STAR earlier reported that the Philippines and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) have secured \$5.3 billion in climate finance commitment from Canada.

The story titled, "Philippines gets \$5.3 billion climate finance commitment from Canada," was published on Dec. 7.

"We would like to clarify that the \$5.3-billion is Canada's total international climate finance commitment, and not just dedicated to the Philippines," according to a statement sent by a UNDP staff to The STAR yesterday.

Canada has doubled its international climate finance from \$2.65 billion (2015-2021) to \$5.3 billion (2021-2026).

The Presidential Communications Office earlier said the Philippine government and UNDP are working with Canada to reduce the climate finance gap through nature-based solutions projects to be funded under a \$5.3-billion climate finance commitment.

Global Affairs Canada Climate Finance executive director Andrew Hurst earlier said Canada has increased its support for the Philippines in promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience with consideration for gender equality. The collaboration and finance commitment will run until 2026, he said.

Hurst announced Canada's increased support for the Philippines in the ongoing 28th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Dubai.

He said the project aims to address a number of persistent issues through a single intervention or in an integrated way. "That includes trying to reduce poverty, trying to address gender inequality... trying to support communities that are often dependent on nature for their livelihoods while also looking to conserve and sustain biodiversity," Hurst said.

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

## [Philippines urged to demonstrate capacity to host climate damage fund](#)

By: Gaea Katreena Cabico

Campaigners welcomed the Philippines' bid to host a fund aimed at helping vulnerable countries cope with the costly and damaging impacts of climate change, but they challenged the government to demonstrate its capability to oversee the initiative.

Environment Secretary Maria Yulo-Loyzaga, who heads the Philippine delegation to COP28 climate talks in Dubai, said that the Philippines is most qualified to host the board of the loss and damage fund. The country is also seeking a seat on the fund's inaugural board, which supervises and governs the mechanism.

Yulo-Loyzaga stressed that the Philippines is a "living testament to the effects of climate change" and has "abiding interest in promoting equitable and just rules in the governance of the global commons."

COP28 opened last week with the formal establishment of the loss and damage fund long sought by climate-vulnerable nations such as the Philippines. The World Bank will initially serve as the interim trustee and host of the fund.

Joy Reyes, a climate justice lawyer, lauded the government's bid to host the fund as it shows the country's leadership in the loss and damage as well as climate justice agenda. The Philippines was one of the strongest voices during the 2013 climate talks in Warsaw, Poland that led to the adoption of an international mechanism on loss and damage.

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"There must be a cost-benefit analysis that the government can present to show its capacity. More importantly, it has to prove that it can practice what it preaches across all levels," he told Philstar.com.

“The government has to reflect justice-related principles in both substantive and procedural ways at the domestic level as much as the global level. That includes genuine and meaningful engagements with Philippine civil society groups, who are among the strongest when it comes to loss and damage-related engagements, in decision-making,” he added.

In pushing for the country’s bid to host the loss and damage fund, Yulo-Loyzaga said the Philippines will ensure the voices and experiences of the climate-vulnerable nations are heard and considered.

She also said the Philippines’ hosting of the loss and damage fund is similar to the country’s hosting of the Asian Development Bank and the regional headquarter of the World Bank.

Early in the Dubai meeting, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., in a message delivered by Special Assistant to the President Antonio Lagdameo Jr., called on the private sector, civil society, governments, and development funding institutions to support the Philippines’ bid to oversee the fund.

#### Pledges

Following the adoption of the agreement to operationalize the fund, several countries committed \$726 million as of Friday.

However, the amount still falls short of the \$100 billion per year that developing nations—historically the least responsible for greenhouse gas emissions—have said is necessary to cover losses from climate disasters.

“Now is the time for the Philippine delegation to urge those who have not yet provided pledges to give genuine and tangible commitments that communities can access,” Jefferson Estela, coordinator of Loss and Damage Youth Coalition, said in a briefing Monday.

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