



NEWS ROUNDUP

15 May 2023 [08:30 am]

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By: Agence France-Presse

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MANILA BULLETIN

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By: Aaron Recuenco

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By: Argyll Cyrus Geducos

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By: BLOOMBERG

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MANILA STANDARD

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By: Rio N. Araja

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By: Maricel Cruz

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By: Aliah Gumasing

MANILA, Philippines — Environment Secretary Antonia Loyzaga urged the youth to participate in the effort to solve the climate crisis.

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PARIS, France — Once trusted faces on the news, meteorologists now brave threats, insults, and slander online from conspiracy theorists and climate change deniers who accuse them of faking or even fixing the weather.

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MANILA -The expected return of El Niño in the next month or two will most likely be “moderate” but also possibly “strong,” and is seen to persist until early 2024, according to climate experts.

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By: Marc Hudson, University of Sussex and 'The Conversation

We have grown so used to many things. To the pictures of wildfires and cremated animals, to the ice sheets calving into the ocean, to the promises of world leaders that they will heed the “last chance” warning of the scientists.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Adapting supply chains to climate change](#)

By: Noemmi Lardizabal-Dadomay

FACING the harsh reality of a world plagued by frequent extreme weather events, the challenges of growing and transporting food have never been more daunting and critical to overcome. As a result, shortages are occurring and driving up prices. Unfortunately, these conditions aren't just affecting raw material production.

[\[Opinion\] Agriculture insurance in PH — quo vadis?](#)

By: Michael Rellosa

WE are all aware of the importance of agriculture in the Philippines and how our food security hinges on the well-being of this sector. Though agriculture is still considered the backbone of the Philippine economy as it employs about 40 percent of Filipino workers, it only contributes an average of 20 percent to the gross domestic product.

['Close monitoring' urged for corporates](#)

THE corporate sector warrants "close monitoring" amid tighter financial conditions and despite a healthy banking sector and reduced risks from global banking turmoil, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

RADYO PILIPINAS

[Climate Change Commission at Paete LGU pinagtibay ang ugnayan para sa pagtugon ng climate change](#)

By: Bernard Jaudian

Malugod na tinanggap ng Climate Change Commission o CCC ang sinumiteng Local Climate Change Action Plan o LCCAP at Annual Investment Program (AIP) sa local na pamahalaan ng Paete Laguna.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Laguna town lauded for climate initiatives](#)

By Jenica Faye Garcia

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) has commended Paete, Laguna's submission of Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP) for 2021-2026 and Annual Investment Program (AIP) for 2023 that outline strategies and actions to address climate change impacts.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS-CBN NEWS ONLINE

[Temperature in Singapore soars to 40-year high: officials](#)

By: Agence France-Presse

SINGAPORE -- Singapore reported its highest temperature in 40 years on Saturday, officials said, as a blistering heatwave burns through large parts of South and Southeast Asia.

Saturday's temperature of 37 degrees Celsius was the highest this year, and matches the record for a daily peak recorded in April 1983, the National Environment Agency said on Facebook.

"The current warm and dry conditions are expected to continue tomorrow," the agency said on Saturday.

"Short-duration showers are expected next week which may help to moderate the warm temperatures," it added.

May is normally one of the warmest months of the year, according to the NEA.

Some schools in the city-state have relaxed rules on uniforms over the rising mercury in recent days, according to local broadcaster Channel News Asia.

Vietnam reported a record temperature of 44.1 degrees Celsius last week, with its state electricity company warning that the national power system would come under strain this summer due to anticipated heatwaves.

Scientists say global warming is exacerbating adverse weather, with a recent report from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warning that "every increment of global warming will intensify multiple and concurrent hazards".

MANILA BULLETIN

[Germany assists LGUs in policy-making as PH urban population continues to increase](#)

By: Aaron Recuenco

Urban population in the Philippines has increased by over 50 million in the last 50 years, with the Commission on Population and Development (Popcom) saying that this would further increase to over 65 percent in two decades.

Citing data from the Manual of Operations for the Establishment of the RBIM Database System and the World Bank in 2017, Popcom said this translates to 102 million Filipinos living in cities by 2050.

The same data revealed that main destination for long-distance movers in Region 4A (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) with 27.7 percent absorption rate, followed by Metro Manila with 19.7 percent and Central Luzon with 13 percent.

The problem with migration to urban areas, according to Popcom, is that it results in strained housing, infrastructure and basic services in major cities—with 2.2 million Filipinos already living as informal settlers in cities in 2012.

The survey also revealed that change in residence most commonly involved movement from one region to another followed by movement from one city or municipality to another within the same province.

Climate-driven migration

The 2020 Sub-Committee On Internal Migration Virtual Meeting And Validation Workshop disclosed there were “lower out-migration rates to municipalities with higher levels of rainfall.

It added that there were higher migration rates to municipalities with higher number of consecutive dry days.

“Environmental factors indirectly affect migration to or from a locality by directly affecting economic and social factors and vice-versa and that climate-sensitive infectious diseases caused by environmental factors like floods and storm surges would affect human population health,” Popcom said in a statement.

“The agency also found out that climate events and processes would affect food adequacy, nutritional status and agricultural investments,” it added.

Knowledge is power

In order to assist the local government units (LGUs) in addressing external movements of people, the German government has turned over digital knowledge portals to Popcom that would serve as tools for local policy-makers to analyze internal and external movements of people, especially in the light of climate change.

Popcom Deputy Executive Director Lolito Tacardon said the online resources on Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change (HMCCC) were from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the German Agency for International Development or GIZ.

“These can support LGUs in effective planning and policy-making in their respective areas, with particular focus on climate change-influenced migrations,” said Tacardon.

The resources, accessible via the Popcom website (<https://popcom.gov.ph>), include:

1. The Digitalized Registry of Barangay Inhabitants and Migrants (RBIM)—a demographic database of residents and migrants of implementing LGUs for analysis, which will be vital for development planning and programming;
2. The POPCOM Knowledge Portal—an open-access platform to the agency’s knowledge products on POPDEV, including HMCCC research studies.

Popcom Executive Director Lisa Grace S. Bersales explained that migration is one of the more difficult population statistics to discern, apart from births and deaths, which are available through registries.

“it would be interesting for LGUs to scrutinize and find out if the prevailing climate in their areas of responsibility can influence in the crafting of pertinent policies that would aid migrating locals, especially those which require special aid in the long term,” said Bersales.

For his part, GIZ Phils. Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Cluster Coordinator Dr. Bjoern Surborg confirmed that the HMCCC resources will provide clarity on the drivers and decision-making processes of individuals and families and households for migrating.

Tacardon said the HMCCC databases “will undergo further improvement for different population processes, including human mobility, which is the most difficult population metric to ascertain.

PBBM admin working double time to mitigate effects of El Niño

By: Argyll Cyrus Geducos

The Marcos administration is working double time to significantly reduce the risks and negative impact of the El Niño phenomenon, the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said.

The PCO, citing a three-page report submitted by the Department of National Defense to the President, said that the government had reconstituted an "El Niño team" led by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) with other member agencies.

The team is tasked to implement measures to mitigate the impact of El Niño on the country's economy, natural resources, environment, climate change, disaster response, and peace and order.

In his report, Defense Senior Undersecretary Carlito Galvez Jr. said the reconstituted team is in response to President Marcos' directive to implement a "Whole-Of-Government" and a "Whole-Of-Nation" approach to prepare for the possible impact of the extensive dry spell.

He added that the reconstituted team aligns with the President's order to revive the existing protocols and Task Force for El Niño as he emphasized that the current Expanded Roadmap for Addressing the Impact of El Niño (E-RAIN) will also be updated and enhanced.

Galvez suggested that Marcos issued a resolution indicating the adoption of the existing E-RAIN framework and, if needed, create a technical working group.

"The monitoring of resources, the recommendations of the concerned agencies, and the strategies employed by the previous administrations shall be taken as inputs to enhance the E-RAIN framework," his report read.

Galvez emphasized that the reconstituted El Niño team has agreed to update and improve the E-RAIN, specifically the areas of concern such as food security, water security, energy security, health, and public safety. He added that they have agreed to continue the existing structure of the El Niño Task Force.

The local officials will work closely with other offices and gather the necessary data to be consolidated by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) while private sectors and other organizations must be involved in adopting a "Whole-of-Nation" approach.

As part of the government's efforts to address the possible impact of El Niño, Galvez said he would visit Cagayan Valley to personally assess the situation in the region, being one of the most likely affected by the dry spell.

[Record temperatures, heatstroke cases engulf Southeast Asia](#)

By: BLOOMBERG

BLOOMBERG – Southeast Asia continues to grapple with blistering heat amid reports of record temperatures and cases of heatstroke that further add to signs of extreme weather changes.

Singapore posted its highest temperature in 40 years at 37C (98.6F) on Saturday and the warm and dry conditions will continue, the National Environment Agency said in a Facebook post.

The temperature also surpassed the previous record for May of 36.7C, recorded last year, the agency said.

In Malaysia, as many as 14 heatstroke cases were reported by the Health Ministry as of Friday, and the government expects the number of victims to increase given the hot weather, which will likely run through August, Deputy Health Minister Lukanisman Awang Sauni told reporters Saturday according to state media Bernama.

“The situation is still under control and can be accommodated in health facilities,” Lukanisman said. “Ministry facilities and hospitals are prepared to receive heatstroke victims and heat cramp victims.”

The country recently reported the death of a child from heatstroke, which prompted the Health Ministry to issue a public advisory.

Dangerous Heat

With scientists warning 2023 will likely be another year marked by dangerously high temperatures, signs of strain are emerging across Asia as the heat wave that started in April continues to blast through the region, following a pattern of increasing extreme weather caused by the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Vietnam reported its highest ever temperature of 44.2C early this month and the Philippines cut classroom hours after the heat index reached the “danger” zone.

Expectations of shrinking palm oil supplies due to the scorching heat keep investors on edge as nearly all of the world’s oil palm is grown in Southeast Asia. Thailand’s Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking also warned that the threat of an El Niño-induced drought later this year could drive up food prices.

With climate change and a looming shift in patterns toward El Niño conditions, heat waves and large storms could become more frequent or intense. Bangladesh and Myanmar are evacuating hundreds of thousands of people as Cyclone Mocha is set to make landfall Sunday, potentially causing widespread destruction to one of the most vulnerable areas in the region.

MANILA STANDARD

[Take part in climate plan, DENR chief urges youth](#)

By: Rio N. Araja

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Antonia Loyzaga has cited the important role of the youth in tackling climate change, urging young Filipinos to take an active role in crafting solutions to the ongoing climate crisis.

She made the call during an event at the DENR central office in Quezon City as part of the agency's Earth Day celebration with the theme "Invest in our Planet, Invest in our Youth."

Over 150 high school, college students, and teachers from Metro Manila attended the event.

"Invest in our youth. We are in the middle of an emergency — and that is the climate crisis. What we need to do with you, the youth, is to become part of the solution," Loyzaga said.

"Every fraction of every degree counts and we all need to work together to prevent even that fraction of a degree of increase, in terms of our temperatures," she added. She underscored the importance of participation of the youth.

"We all have the ability to make a difference, influence our country's fight against the impacts of climate change and the degradation of our environment. Today is an opportunity for us to accelerate, speed up our climate action by showcasing all of our ideas, initiatives and solutions to achieve our country's resilience on climate change and other hazards," she said.

DENR Chief of Staff and Supervising Undersecretary for Strategic Communications Marilou Erni said the event served as an avenue to gather insights from young people in terms of the environmental issues and challenges they face in their communities.

As a way forward, Erni said the DENR plans to continue holding youth-centered programs, including collaborating with the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education, for more strategic partnerships that will go beyond awareness and translating this understanding and commitment into action.

Gov't reactivates special task force ahead of El Niño period

By: Maricel Cruz

Malacanang announced on Saturday that the Marcos administration has reactivated a task force mandated to take measures to cushion the impact of the anticipated El Niño phenomenon.

Meanwhile, Rizal Rep. Fidel Nograles urged the people to continue planting trees to help mitigate the harsh effects of El Niño.

The multi-agency task force will be led by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Presidential spokesperson Cheloy Garafil said in a statement.

“The team is tasked to implement measures to mitigate the impact of El Niño on the country’s economy, natural resources, environment, climate change, disaster response, and peace and order,” Garafil said.

The reconstitution of the task force, along with the revival of El Niño were in compliance with a presidential directive for a “whole-of-government” and approach to overcome the challenges of El Niño.

Concerned government agencies, in a report to the President, have agreed to continue the existing structure of the El Niño Task Force as stated under Executive Order (EO) No. 16 issued in 2001.

Under EO 16, the task force was mandated to formulate a comprehensive disaster preparedness and rehabilitation plan for El Niño, monitor the implementation of the plan, and conduct a massive public information campaign.

The order also directed all government agencies and local government units to extend full support to the El Niño task force.

Garafil said the current Expanded Roadmap for Addressing the Impact of El Niño (E-RAIN) would also be updated and enhanced.

“An issuance of a resolution indicating the adoption of the existing E-RAIN framework is recommended, and if needed, a creation of a Technical Working Group is also suggested,” she said.

To address the 2015-2016 El Niño episode, the administration of then president Benigno Aquino III crafted RAIN, which focused on ensuring food security, health, energy security, and safety in 67 impacted provinces, plus Metro Manila.

Acting Defense Secretary Carlito Galvez, in his report, emphasized that the reconstituted El Niño team will further improve the E-RAIN, specifically in such critical areas as food security, water security, energy security, health, and public safety.

Galvez said the monitoring of resources, recommendations of concerned agencies, and strategies employed by the previous administrations should be taken as inputs to enhance the E-RAIN framework.

Garafil said local officials would work closely with other government offices and gather the necessary data that would be consolidated by the National Economic and Development Authority.

Private sectors and other organizations must be involved with adopting the “whole-of-nation” approach, she added.

As part of government efforts to address the possible impact of El Niño, Garafil said Galvez would visit Cagayan Valley to personally assess the situation in the region, being one of the most likely affected by the dry spell.

Last month, Marcos ordered government agencies to prepare for the possible impact of the El Niño phenomenon, which is expected to hit the country in the last quarter of 2023 or the first quarter of 2024.

Marcos also instructed various agencies to ensure “protocol-based and scientific” long-term solutions to the impending problem and come up with a campaign to generate public awareness on water and energy conservation.

According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), the probability of the occurrence of El Niño is 80 percent for June, July, and August, and 86 percent for November, December, and January although the country may experience heavy rainfall events before its impact. “We encourage our fellowmen to continue planting trees in their communities to help mitigate the effects of El Niño,” Nograles said.

“Tree planting is an excellent communal activity that has a positive effect, and I hope more local leaders will organize and engage in this activity so that we can restore our country’s greenness,” he added.

Last month, Nograles led the town of Montalban in a tree-planting activity to commemorate the town’s 152nd founding anniversary. Around 4,000 saplings were planted along the Wawa riverbank and mountainside.

More than 6,000 students, senior citizens, and women from the town participated in the activity, which also included the “Forward Nature” advocacy walk.

He underscored the need to “aggressively restore the country’s forest cover” as a measure against El Niño and long-term climate change.

“Our forests serve as a buffer against weather-related disasters. They release moisture into the atmosphere to counter droughts, and shield us against typhoons and prevent flooding,” he said.

Nograles advocates for the government and communities to be active in implementing measures that would protect against climate change.

He regularly leads tree-planting and community-cleaning activities in Montalban.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[DENR urges youth to take part in solving climate crisis](#)

By: Aliah Gumasing

MANILA, Philippines — Environment Secretary Antonia Loyzaga urged the youth to participate in the effort to solve the climate crisis.

During the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) Earth Day celebration, Loyzaga told students from different schools that they need the youth to take part in solving climate change problems.

“We are in the middle of an emergency – and that is the climate crisis. What we need to do with you, the youth, is to become part of the solution,” Loyzaga said in a statement on Friday.

“Every fraction of every degree counts and we all need to work together to prevent even that fraction of a degree of increase, in terms of our temperatures,” she added.

More than 150 teachers and students from various schools in Metro Manila attended the said event including University of the Philippines – Diliman, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, and Ramon Magsaysay High School.

“We all have the ability to make a difference, influence our country’s fight against the impacts of climate change, and the degradation of our environment,” Loyzaga said.

In the celebration, students have joined a poster making contest to share their vision of a “livable environment,” while teachers were given time to share their hopes for the department.

“Today is an opportunity for us to accelerate, speed up our climate action by showcasing all of our ideas, initiatives and solutions to achieve our country’s resilience on climate change and other hazards,” Loyzaga noted.

Earth Day is celebrated every April 22 in the country in pursuant to the Proclamation No. 1481 signed by former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in 2008.

Meteorologists not spared by climate change deniers

PARIS, France — Once trusted faces on the news, meteorologists now brave threats, insults, and slander online from conspiracy theorists and climate change deniers who accuse them of faking or even fixing the weather.

Users on Twitter and other social media falsely accused Spain's weather agency of engineering a drought, Australia's of doctoring its thermometers, and France's of exaggerating global warming through misplaced weather stations.

"The coronavirus is no longer a trend. Conspiracy theorists and deniers who used to talk about that are now spreading disinformation about climate change," Alexandre Lopez-Borrull, lecturer in Information and Communication Sciences at the Open University of Catalonia, told Agence France-Presse (AFP).

"These scientific bodies are seen as part of the establishment, so anything they say may get disputed on social networks," Lopez-Borrull added. "They are providing evidence against what the climate deniers claim, so the latter try to discredit them."

'We're watching you'

In a harsh drought and with local elections looming, Spain's State Meteorological Agency (Aemet) spoke out after its members were threatened in Twitter messages, phone calls, and emails.

"Murderers," "Criminals," "You'll pay for this," "We're watching you," the messages shouted.

They came from people who believe the widely debunked theory that airplane condensation trails are really "chemtrails" sprayed by the authorities to poison people or create weather disasters.

Some referred to the "2030 agenda," a debunked theory that global elites are plotting to subjugate people through Covid-19 and climate policies.

"Do you want us to publish your contact details and those of your family?" read one tweet aimed at an Aemet employee. "Crooks! You are destroying nature on the orders of the damned 2030 agenda," said another.

"We have seen an increase in insulting messages as a result of a thread we published about condensation trails" on April 10, Aemet spokesperson Estrella Gutierrez-Marco told AFP. "What makes no sense is that they are insulting an institution that is constantly watching out for their interests, whose aim is ... to contribute to people's safety."

Lopez-Borrull noted a "significant increase" in climate change denial — particularly among far-right supporters who see it as a leftist cause and oppose reforms aimed at curbing its impacts.

“People distrust politicians, judges, and the media, and the cost of living is rising,” he said.

“In this context, people feel alienated and end up listening to people they never listened to before, with messages appealing directly to the emotions,” he added.

Moderate to strong El Niño looms over agri sector

By: Ronnel W. Domingo

MANILA -The expected return of El Niño in the next month or two will most likely be “moderate” but also possibly “strong,” and is seen to persist until early 2024, according to climate experts.

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Preparing for El Niño: The heat is on and our health is at risk

By: Ronald Law

While the end of the COVID-19 global emergency had recently been declared by the World Health Organization albeit with emphasis on continuing vigilance and practice of public health measures to avert another major surge of cases, a new dimension of health threat is emerging and requires serious attention.

We are on the cusp of another El Niño phenomenon that on one hand can cause dry spells and droughts and on another hand can trigger floods, typhoons, and landslides.

According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration, this will happen with a very high probability soon, and its effects are projected to last until the first quarter of 2024.

Amidst our water crisis, food security issues, climate emergency, other health woes notwithstanding the pandemic, El Niño can be detrimental to the health and well-being of Filipinos in three ways:

First, extreme heat in the physical environment can cause heat-related illnesses such as heat cramps, heat stroke, and heat exhaustion. It can increase deaths due to cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, and other chronic medical conditions. It can even take its toll on our mental health.

Second, increasing temperature, precipitation, and humidity compounded by food and water issues can increase the cases and amplify the risks of infectious diseases like malaria, dengue, leptospirosis, typhoid fever, and cholera among others.

Third, El Niño can induce extreme weather events causing deadly and destructive disasters like floods, typhoons, and landslides.

Local government units, the private sector, civil society, vulnerable groups, and communities must be poised to respond to these anticipated threats which can overburden our fragile health system and hurt our economy further.

Because some health issues will emerge with the interaction of El Niño with other sectors, e.g., agriculture, water, energy sectors, it is also crucial to sit down with these key players to develop preparedness and contingency measures in order to guarantee the continuity of health services and prevent outbreaks of diseases.

As heat-related extreme events can set in, it is also important to factor in El Niño and climate change as major risk modifiers in our disaster preparedness and response plans not only for health but for other sectors as well. The complex issues and response arrangements that El Niño may bring and imply would require a multisectoral, whole-of-society approach to pull off.

On the part of the public, it is important to take the following measures:

1. Keeping ourselves informed by following the latest weather forecasts and heeding warnings coming from national and local authorities to prepare for any weather-related health risks.
2. Planning in advance for emergencies and contingencies during power outages, water crises, and food and supply chain disruptions.
3. Protecting ourselves from extreme weather conditions by wearing appropriate clothing and staying hydrated during hot weather.
4. Staying healthy by having a healthy lifestyle — balanced diet, enough sleep, and physical activity to boost our immune system and reduce risks of illness.
5. Seeking medical attention in the event of extreme weather conditions, especially for those with chronic medical conditions.

As we celebrate our COVID-19 wins and continue to keep our guard up because the pandemic is still here with us, let us also be prepared for El Niño. The next public health emergency is just around the corner and we can't afford to lose our good momentum.

PHILIPPINE CANADIAN INQUIRER

[Climate change first 'went viral' exactly 70 years ago](#)

By: Marc Hudson, University of Sussex and 'The Conversation

We have grown so used to many things. To the pictures of wildfires and cremated animals, to the ice sheets calving into the ocean, to the promises of world leaders that they will heed the “last chance” warning of the scientists.

It's hard for anyone under the age of 40 to remember a time when carbon dioxide build-up, whether it was “the greenhouse effect”, or “global warming” or “climate change” or now “climate crisis”, wasn't in the news.

The long hot summer of 1988 – 35 years ago – is held as the moment that world leaders began to mouth the right pieties.

Presidential candidate (and soon to be president) George H.W. Bush said he would use the “White House effect” to fix the Greenhouse Effect (he didn't). UK prime minister Margaret Thatcher warned of a giant experiment being conducted “with the system of this planet itself”.

Thirty-five years. But it was actually 35 years before that – fully 70 years ago this month – that the danger of carbon dioxide build-up in the atmosphere first travelled around the world.

That carbon dioxide trapped heat was uncontroversial. Irish scientist John Tyndall (possibly drawing on the work of an American, Eunice Foote) had shown that it did back in the mid-1800s.

In 1895, Swedish Nobel prize winner Svante Arrhenius had suggested that – over hundreds of years – the build-up of carbon dioxide released when humans burn oil, coal and gas might trap so much heat as to melt the tundra and make freezing winters a thing of the past.

His work was challenged, but the idea occasionally popped up in popular journals. In 1938 English steam engineer Guy Callendar suggested to the Royal Society in London that warming was underway.

But it was in early May, 1953, at a meeting of the American Geophysical Union, that Canadian physicist Gilbert Plass – who had been corresponding with Callendar – told the gathered scientists that trouble was afoot.

Plass said that: The large increase in industrial activity during the present century is discharging so much carbon dioxide into the atmosphere that the average temperature is rising at the rate of 1.5 degrees per century.

This got picked up by the Associated Press and other wire services and appeared in newspapers all around the world (even as far afield as the Sydney Morning Herald). Plass's warning also popped up in Newsweek on May 18 and in Time on May 25.

The fact that the world was warming was already uncontroversial among scientists. But the emphatic connection with carbon dioxide made by Plass, as opposed to competing theories such as orbital wobbles or sunspot activity, was newsworthy.

Plass had become interested in the question of carbon dioxide buildup while working for the Ford Motor Company. He looked at how carbon dioxide actually functions in the real world, not just at sea level (without getting too technical. Many scientists had dismissed Arrhenius's earlier work on the basis of false confidence that carbon dioxide worked the same there as in the stratosphere).

Plass kept working on the issue, with technical and popular publications through the rest of the 1950s. In 1956, he had an academic article on "the carbon dioxide theory of climate change" published in the Swedish scientific journal *Tellus*, and also a popular article in the *American Scientist*. And he was present at the first major meetings to discuss carbon dioxide build up.

Meanwhile, the carbon dioxide theory started getting more coverage among science journalists. One, George Wendt, wrote up the findings in the then well-regarded *UNESCO Courier*, and this got excerpted in the *Irish Times* in 1954, the same year that British journalists started mentioning it.

In 1957 the then-new magazine *New Scientist* mentioned it. By the end of the 1950s, anyone who read a newspaper could have been aware of the basic idea.

Throughout the 50s and 60s US, Swedish, German and Soviet scientists were examining the issue. In 1965 President Lyndon Johnson even namechecked carbon dioxide build-up in an address to Congress.

By the end of the 1960s international collaboration was beginning, though there was caution still. For instance, in April 1969 the American scientist Charles Keeling, who had been measuring atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations at a Hawaiian observatory, revealed that he had been asked to change the title of a lecture from, "If carbon dioxide from fossil fuels is changing man's environment, what will we do about it?" to "Is carbon dioxide from fossil fuel changing man's environment?"

For climate historians like me, the 1970s are a fascinating period of intense measurement, modelling, observation and thinking which, by the end of the decade, produced a working consensus that there was serious trouble ahead. In effect, Plass had nailed it.

When Plass spoke out, the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide was at about 310 parts per million. Today, they're 423 or so. Every year, as we burn more oil, coal and gas, the concentration climbs and more heat is trapped.

By the time Plass's warning is 100 years old, the concentrations will be much higher. There's a very good chance we will have gone over the 2°C warming level that used to be regarded as "safe".

THE MANILA TIMES

[Adapting supply chains to climate change](#)

By: Noemmi Lardizabal-Dadomay

FACING the harsh reality of a world plagued by frequent extreme weather events, the challenges of growing and transporting food have never been more daunting and critical to overcome. As a result, shortages are occurring and driving up prices. Unfortunately, these conditions aren't just affecting raw material production. Transportation infrastructure is being severely impacted, leading to delays in deliveries and a surge in demand for scarce goods. Amidst the disruptions caused by harsh weather, retailers are taking on an important responsibility to minimize the impact and make sure that necessary products are accessible to those who require them urgently. In a recent interview, Donald "DJ" Felbaum, head of Sales for the Philippines at Relex Solutions, shed light on the distinct challenges the Philippines faces due to climate change and discussed potential strategies that retailers could adopt to maintain a steady flow of in-demand products.

Relex Solutions, a supply chain leader known for enhancing inventory optimization and demand forecasting through data-driven insights, is assisting retailers in managing the challenges posed by floods and droughts. Felbaum mentioned that their approach to fresh produce optimization, weather forecasting integration, and supplier collaboration reduces waste and emissions while ensuring that essential goods are available during natural disasters. With the Philippines being an archipelagic country, long lead times are common. However, Relex's close collaboration with suppliers enables a prompt response to these challenges, bolstering supply chain resilience. By streamlining supply chain management and addressing climate change-induced disruptions, Relex promotes sustainability and resilience for businesses in the Philippines.

Felbaum cited their forecasting and replenishment (F&R) system, which efficiently manages forecasting and replenishment, accounting for extreme weather, product availability, consumer demand and agricultural produce. The highly granular forecasts help meet localized demand by considering unique characteristics of each location, such as religious preferences affecting bacon popularity in Davao versus Manila. The system also adjusts the supply chain accordingly to ensure optimal product distribution.

To minimize the impact of climate change on their supply chains and maintain a steady stock of in-demand products, Felbaum suggests that Philippine retailers could adopt strategies and technologies that cater to Filipino consumer behavior, focusing on product and process. Filipino consumers typically buy as needed, rather than in bulk. Utilizing AI and machine learning for forecasting and replenishment, Relex captures product-location level nuances with minimal human intervention. The system recognizes trends in purchasing behavior and adjusts accordingly, enhancing

efficiency. The process component involves adopting effective processes and suitable technology to better serve customers. Ensuring product availability when needed benefits both customers and retailers.

Relx Solutions' highly adaptable system has proven to be effective in meeting the varied needs of different retailers. This AI-driven solution could analyze consumer behavior patterns, such as the frequency of tomato purchases, and provide valuable advice to retailers on avoiding spoilage. The system recognizes patterns, such as increased demand following a storm, and adjusts inventory levels accordingly. It could also identify slow-moving items, such as expensive furniture sets, and prevent overstocking. On the other hand, it tracks fast-selling items to ensure retailers maintain an adequate supply. Ultimately, the system provides invaluable insights into consumer behavior, helping retailers optimize their inventory and enhance customer service.

Various companies, including Coles in Australia and Prince Retail Group of Companies in the Philippines, use Relx Solutions. Coles, a prominent supermarket chain operating in Australia is recognized for its emphasis on sustainability and commitment to minimizing its environmental footprint. Prince Retail operates in many remote locations in the Philippines that are prone to calamities and harsh weather conditions. Felbaum explains that their F&R solutions could aid in combating this problem by supplying valuable data to farmers and processors. This could assist in making better decisions regarding production and processing, which may result in reduced waste and more profitable opportunities. Through the adoption of advanced technologies and partnerships with suppliers, companies could enhance their capability to handle disruptions in the supply chain and satisfy their customers' needs effectively.

Recognized as a leader, Relx scored top marks in 11 different criteria in The Forrester Wave for Retail Planning. As an industry leader in 31 categories, their rankings are based on evaluations from over 600 software vendors and testimonials from more than 300 retailers.

[Opinion] Agriculture insurance in PH — quo vadis?

By: Michael Rellosa

WE are all aware of the importance of agriculture in the Philippines and how our food security hinges on the well-being of this sector. Though agriculture is still considered the backbone of the Philippine economy as it employs about 40 percent of Filipino workers, it only contributes an average of 20 percent to the gross domestic product. For the longest time, societal neglect of the sector has worsened the poverty situation. Farmers in rural areas have remained among the poorest group in the Philippines since 2006. A report from the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) shows that agriculture is the primary source of income for poor rural people, and the only source for many of the poorest households with most of them depending on subsistence farming and fishing. Figures from the Philippine Statistics Authority show that farmers had a poverty incidence of 31.6 percent while fisherfolk had 26.2 percent.

If one overlays the effects of climate change and the exacerbation of natural catastrophic events that it may bring, such as typhoons, floods, drought, pests and diseases, it does not augur well for this sector at all.

According to Dr. Celia Reyes, a senior research fellow at the state think tank Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), agricultural or crop insurance has proven itself to be an effective risk management tool that can significantly reduce poverty among agricultural households given that it covers against the very risks that plague the sector, i.e., typhoons, floods, drought, pests and diseases. Currently, the only insurer that lends its capacity to provide agriculture or crop insurance is the state-owned Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. (PCIC). The PCIC has valiantly provided cover where it was needed most, but recent studies have shown that the majority of farmers and fisherfolk have still not availed of insurance protection due to various reasons.

A recent study by the World Bank recommends the entry of the private sector into this sphere. Not only can capacity be added, but the efficiencies of the private sector and its connections to the international reinsurance market can be harnessed to provide a more inclusive product that can address a wider range of agricultural activities. We can go beyond the traditional protection for grains such as rice and corn and cover high-value crops such as cacao, coffee, sugar, vegetables, livestock and even fish farming. New technologies can aid distribution, payment of premiums and claims, underwriting and claims surveying, as well as capacity building. We can possibly include the entire agriculture ecosystem from farm to table in a seamless coverage and use the enlarged scope and homogeneity of risks as leverage to help keep premium prices reasonable. Parametric products that lend themselves well to this sector can be further refined, sliced and diced to make it available to previously unserved/underserved markets.

There are admittedly many ways in which a public-private partnership in agriculture insurance can help address the issues and there is a willingness on the part of the private sector to assist the PCIC perhaps first as co-insurers or re-insurers until it gets its feet wet and hones its underwriting skills in this area. The government itself, through its various agencies, recognizes this and is starting to open its doors to the private sector. Meanwhile, the private sector, given its strengthened financial capacity as it hurdles the last leg of its capital build-up program where each insurer is supposed to have a minimum net worth of P1.3 billion, is willing to use its capital and involve itself in new areas where its capacity and expertise is needed. Together, nation-building and food security may be bolstered. More work is needed as there are only less than a handful of commercial insurers which have signified their intent to delve into agriculture insurance. We need more if we are to successfully address the growing protection gap vis-à-vis the threats that climate change brings and hopefully help address our food security as well.

'Close monitoring' urged for corporates

THE corporate sector warrants "close monitoring" amid tighter financial conditions and despite a healthy banking sector and reduced risks from global banking turmoil, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said.

In a statement issued following the close of a visit to the Philippines, the IMF said that regulators need to "strengthen the resolution framework for financial institutions and the insolvency regime for corporates."

Credit growth is expected to stay healthy, however, and the IMF urged the government to allow regulatory forbearance measures to lapse "as scheduled".

"Enhanced Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism effectiveness and completion of the Philippines' Action Plan with the Financial Action task Force are critical to improve the business environment and encourage foreign direct investment," it added.

The IMF's statements came as it noted that the Philippines had achieved one of the strongest economic recoveries from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

It expects the country to grow by 6.0 this year, moderating from 2022's above-target 7.6 percent, given continued challenges from high inflation and global headwinds.

"The main downside risks to the outlook continue to be persistently high core inflation, depreciation pressures amid tighter global conditions, geoeconomic fragmentation, and balance sheet impacts related to higher borrowing costs," it said.

It noted the need for structural reforms to raise productivity and said the country's ratification of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership "will help reap the benefits of the demographic dividend and should be complemented by strengthening existing social protection schemes and enhancing labor market flexibility to facilitate resource reallocation."

"Addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation through a green growth strategy could also help develop new growth engines for the economy," it added.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

RADYO PILIPINAS

[Climate Change Commission at Paete LGU pinagtibay ang ugnayan para sa pagtugon ng climate change](#)

By: Bernard Jaudian

Malugod na tinanggap ng Climate Change Commission o CCC ang sinumiteng Local Climate Change Action Plan o LCCAP at Annual Investment Program (AIP) sa local na pamahalaan ng Paete Laguna.

Personal na inabot ni Paete Mayor Ronald Cosico ang kopya ng kanilang LCCAP at AIP kay Vice Chairperson at Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje, nakasaad sa LCCAP ang mga estrahiya at aksyon ng Paete LGU para tugunan ang epekto ng climate change sa kanilang komunidad, imprastraktura at ekonomiya. Nakalatag sa AIP ang mga programa at proyekto ng lokal na pamahalaan para sa climate action dahil sa pagpasa ng LCCAP maaring makatanggap ng technical assistance ang Paete LGU kabilang ang tulong mula sa People's Survival Fund.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Laguna town lauded for climate initiatives](#)

By Jenica Faye Garcia

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) has commended Paete, Laguna's submission of Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP) for 2021-2026 and Annual Investment Program (AIP) for 2023 that outline strategies and actions to address climate change impacts.

"The CCC will continue to support the town of Paete in implementing climate change actions and ensure stability, not only of Paete, but of the country," CCC Vice Chairman and Executive Director Robert Borje said in a statement.

Paete is one of the local government units (LGUs) that is regularly affected by climate change impacts such as typhoons, floods and landslides.

By submitting its LCCAP to the CCC, the LGU is now eligible for technical and financial assistance, including access to the People's Survival Fund (PSF), a domestic funding mechanism that supports the implementation of climate resilience and adaptation programs of local communities.

"Climate change is one of the threats facing our community. With LCCAP, we can take concrete steps to adapt and mitigate its effects," Paete Mayor Ronald Cosico said.

To further boost Paete's climate change initiatives, the CCC will connect the LGU with relevant development partners.

The LCCAP forms part of the LGUs' strategies and actions to address climate change impacts on communities, infrastructure and economy, while the AIP contains the programs, activities and projects of LGUs including climate action. Additionally, it is a key deliverable of the LGUs to the CCC, as mandated by Republic Act 9729 or the "Climate Change Act," and Department of the Interior and Local Government Memorandum Circular 2021-068.

The LCCAP is also in pursuant to the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 to "boost multi-stakeholder partnership in building and translating knowledge to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction" such as capacitating the LGUs to utilize risk information for developing, implementing and monitoring relevant policies and programs.

As of April 17, 2023, 82.57 percent or 1,416 out of 1,715 LGUs have submitted their LCCAPs to the CCC.

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