



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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### **[OPINION] The Philippines is now a theocracy**

By Jemy Gatdula

There was a time when critical thinking meant the ability to question prevailing dogma and subjecting it to logic, reason, and experience, and perhaps consequently, this led to religion being recently rebuffed, specially when its high priests haughtily rejected thinking's demands by blithely escaping behind the notions of faith and obedience. Accordingly, many matters of faith that should have had a rightful place in public discourse are now roundly ignored.

## CLIMATE HOME

### **The problem with The Bahamas' blue carbon market plans**

By Marjahn Finlayson

The Bahamian parliament is in discussions to finalize its first-ever "blue" carbon credits via the Climate Change and Carbon Markets Initiatives Bill.

## **MANILA BULLETIN**

### **Facing the plastics crisis**

By Johannes Chua

Environment writers have been calling out the attention of authorities and our country's leaders to look into the plastic pollution crisis that is now happening. This is an inevitable outcome of a long pandemic that relied on plastics, especially single-use plastics, to protect us from an unseen enemy — the virus that causes Covid.

## **PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

### **Toward climate resiliency for the agri sector**

By: Hazel Tanchuling

Anxiety and uncertainty brought about by the increase in the prices of fuel and food heralded the administration of President Marcos Jr. Along with the lingering threat of the COVID-19 virus, these circumstances will further undermine the already precarious condition of the marginalized sectors of farmers and fishers.

## **PHYS ORG**

### **Climate change makes some volcanic plumes less effective at reducing global temperatures**

by Sarah Wild

New analysis of ash clouds created from large volcanic eruptions shows the temporary cooling effects are changed as the environment becomes hotter.

## **RAPPLER**

### **Lanao del Sur lawmakers sound alarm over PH internal displacement rate**

By Merlyn Manos

Iligan City, Philippines – Lanao del Sur lawmakers sounded alarm bells over the rate of evacuations in the country due to man-made and natural causes, saying the number of cases of internal displacement reached more than 5.6 million in 2021 alone.

## **REUTERS**

### **India approves new emissions targets to tackle climate change**

By Shilpa Jamkhandikar and Gloria Dickie

MUMBAI, Aug 4 (Reuters) - India, the world's third largest carbon polluter, has finally approved new targets for slashing planet-warming emissions, more than a year after a United Nations deadline for updated commitments.

## **THE MANILA TIMES**

### **[OPINION ] Like Al Gore, Senator Legarda may have nothing left to preach on climate change**

By Yen Makabenta

THE second vulnerability of the climate movement is the fact that by whatever name it may call itself today, it must account for the bizarre implosion of former US vice president Al Gore from reigning as the public face and oracle of climate change to being the sound of embarrassed silence on climate change today.

### **Mobilizing investments for mine development**

By Albert Gamboa

"The mining industry holds the greatest potential to be a key driver in our economic recovery and long-term growth, especially now that world metal prices are high. The Philippines, after all, is one of the world's most richly endowed countries in terms of mineral resources."

### **Torrential rains lash northeast, central Japan**

By Xinhua News Agency

Tokyo: Heavy rains have been pounding regions in northeastern and central Japan since Wednesday, with local authorities in the country's Yamagata and Niigata prefectures urging residents to seek shelter.

## **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

### **Atok-Big Wedge moving into renewable energy**

By Richmond Mercurio

Roberto Ongpin-Led Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc. Is Moving Forward With Its Plan To Expand Into Renewable Energy.

## **UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **Seven Developing Countries Take Another Important Step in the Race to Net Zero**

UN Climate Change News, 4 July 2022 –After two and a half years of virtual processes due to Covid-19 restrictions, technical experts resumed in-person meetings in Bonn for the technical analysis of developing countries' biennial update reports (BURs). It was held from 20 to 24 June 2022 and included 32 technical experts from diverse climate change-related thematic areas, representing various developed and developing countries across Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania.

## **CCC IN THE NEWS**

### **MANILA BULLETIN**

#### **Climate Change Commission's job order, contract of service workers to receive SSS benefits**

By Luisa K. Cabato

The Social Security System (SSS) and Climate Change Commission (CCC) signed a Memorandum of Agreement allowing the latter's job order and contract of service employees entitled to SSS benefits.

### **PTV News Mindanao**

#### **Philippine Climate Change Commission, giawhag ang LGUs nga mohimo og local climate action plans**

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **[OPINION] The Philippines is now a theocracy**

By Jemy Gatdula

There was a time when critical thinking meant the ability to question prevailing dogma and subjecting it to logic, reason, and experience, and perhaps consequently, this led to religion being recently rebuffed, specially when its high priests haughtily rejected thinking's demands by blithely escaping behind the notions of faith and obedience. Accordingly, many matters of faith that should have had a rightful place in public discourse are now roundly ignored.

But then along comes “wokeism.”

Supposedly, wokeism denotes a conscious “awakeness” to the plights of minorities and other forms of social inequalities. In reality, it is merely an ungrammatical descriptive of an insufferable self-righteous attitude held by people with incoherent set of mental synapses (which liberal progressives like to pose as “ideas”).

#### *THE NEW RELIGION*

But wokeism has morphed into something else. “There is a new religion. It is moving like a tidal wave through every facet of western culture, shaping and redefining society as it goes. This religion masquerades under the guise of compassion and justice, but underneath is an evil ideology that is incompatible with western values and incongruent with the Christian worldview.” That new religion is wokeism. “Although it has not been organized into any formal religious structure, it has all the functions of religious doctrine. It has a unique epistemology (theory of knowledge), an evaluation of the human condition, and a redemption narrative” with the goal of “complete dismantling and rebuilding of western culture from the ground up” (“Wokeism: The New Religion of The West,” Max Funk, October 2020).

Princeton professor Robert George once conducted an informal Twitter survey with the question, “If an established religion is one whose dogmas cannot be publicly denied or questioned without risk of becoming an outcast, being fired or disciplined at work, or losing opportunities for educational or professional advancement, what is the established religion of the US today?” 89.5% of respondents answered: wokeism.

And one sees that today in the Philippines: the awe and reverence with which sexual identity is held, sacrificing womanhood in the name of “sexual orientation and gender identity” particularly that of transgender ideology and same sex marriage, the infallibility of climate change based on total worship of the environment at the cost of humanity and human innovation, and of “social justice” and Marxism while immolating human rights and self-responsibility.

#### *MERE ORTHODOXY*

The influence of wokeism is such that it has rammed its way through and infiltrated government, academia, media, and even the Catholic Church (the latter seeing a number of its clergy preferring to call boycotts on a movie rather than teach about the doctrines on marriage, the family, and sexuality).

Thus, local governments and businesses are forced to contend with mob mentality and mob-inspired legislation, holding “Pride parades” or applying hugely expensive CSR measures that no way could reasonably benefit the planet (particularly so when one considers that Philippine activity is miniscule when compared to the utter environmental damage done by a country such as China), actresses forced to mouth liberal progressive dictation for fear of being “canceled”, and universities terrified of upholding the truth and even cancelling lectures on homosexuality or alternative views on 1970s Martial Law for fear of offending students.

### *THE CHURCH OF COVID*

Then, there is, of course, wokeism’s brightest sect, “COVID”: “It has converted us all, yet no one noticed. Without any conscious effort, or formal instruction, we have all become members of this newest and most widespread faith of all.

“The very orthodox ‘covidians’ entail being “strict adherents to the letter of the law. They follow the guidelines religiously, can quote UKGov [in the Philippines its IATF] rules without hesitation, are experts on what can be done when, by whom, to whom, inside or outside, with a mask, without a mask, before 10 p.m., after 10 p.m., with or without five others (preferably also Orthodox). They may get hot and bothered, even febrile, if others disagree with their approach. But don’t argue with them, they are the righteous, with the hotline to the Truth.” (“COVID is the new religion, and that is the Gospel Truth,” Pulse, December 2020)

The World Health Organization is the new Vatican, Anthony Fauci is the new pope. And covidism’s central sacrament, its modern day eucharist, is the vaccine. Vaccine has become so sacred that parents faithful to this religion would not even question the vaccine for the death of their vaccinated child, would not even permit the vaccine to be suspected as the cause of death, and instead blame everything else: COVID-19, the unvaccinated, or even God (“God’s will”). Blame everything else except the vaccine that did not even exist a year and a half ago and is still under emergency authorization.

Thus, “there is something seriously wrong with this viewpoint: the idea that woke ideology is secular. On the contrary, while many commentators have noted the quasi-religious fervor of social justice warriors, complete with foundational ‘sacred’ texts, go-to advocates (or rather, high priests), taboos and heresy trials, we propose that the time has come to treat woke ideology as being a belief system that places paramount ethical value on identity markers — race, sexual orientation and ‘gender identity.’” It operates as a religion, not least in the legal sense. (“Is Gender Wokeism the New Religion of the West?,” Heritage, July 2021)

Yet, “if their belief system is successfully enshrined at the societal level — and the winds certainly appear to favor them — it will mean the woke would have to compete on an equal basis with all other faiths, rather than claiming that their beliefs are incontrovertible facts which everyone must honor.”

### *SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE*

Indeed. Since wokeism is now a religion, acting on faith rather than science or reason, then it should be treated as such. Yes, wokeism perhaps has indeed forced its way

alongside the ranks of Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. But it should also mean that, in matters of government policy and public discourse, it must now be subject to the very same rule that liberal progressives always shriek out when women and men of faith chose to rightfully exercise their religion in public: “Keep religion out of government!”

## CLIMATE HOME

### **The problem with The Bahamas' blue carbon market plans**

By Marjahn Finlayson

The Bahamian parliament is in discussions to finalize its first-ever “blue” carbon credits via the Climate Change and Carbon Markets Initiatives Bill.

As a Bahamian climate scientist, I have sincere concerns about this bill and the precedent it will set for other small island developing states (SIDS).

Carbon credits may seem appealing to incentivize conservation funding and climate action, but are unlikely to have much impact in the long term. They are largely a dangerous distraction from actively reducing planet-warming emissions.

What The Bahamas really needs is a comprehensive plan for adaptation measures, backed by wealthy nations contributing their fair share of climate finance.

In the Caribbean, we are already experiencing more climate hazards: hotter nights, longer summers, increased drought, changing rainfall patterns and more intense hurricanes – like Hurricane Dorian in 2019.

Prime minister Philip Davis introduced the carbon market initiative in April as a means for the Bahamas to benefit from our oceans acting as a carbon sink for the rest of the world. The initiative would serve as a form of climate finance, pioneering the sale of ocean-based “blue” carbon offset credits on the voluntary market and establishing a registry to monitor national emissions.

The carbon market comes with a multitude of problems and makes the Bahamas complicit in climate colonialism.

The Bahamas has been profoundly shaped by its colonial past. Following the European genocide of the Lucayan Indigenous People, the trans-Atlantic slave trade led to increased deforestation, local food insecurity and extreme inequality that still affects the country today. Ending the slave trade caused a serious loss in national income and led to industrial exploits in selling limited natural resources such as sponges and citrus, shipwrecking, rum-running and tourism. The footprint of colonial rule has left Caribbean SIDS dependent on fossil fuels and foreign financial aid for energy production.

Its carbon market venture perpetuates these inequities. Internationally, carbon credits are often utilized and purchased by wealthy governments and corporations as an alternative to cutting emissions. This disproportionately burdens the poor and shifts the responsibility from the global north to the global south – allowing developed countries to continue deforestation and monetising land for farming or industry, while limiting these activities in less developed nations.

Rich countries and individuals have always been the biggest emitters of carbon and other greenhouse gases. Introducing a carbon market in a primarily black small island

developing state like the Bahamas may give white emitters false comfort without taking real climate action.

The climate change task force advising the prime minister has sought to address common concerns with carbon trading like the risk of double-crediting. But it is made up of conservation experts, financial managers and climate policy analysts – not physical climate scientists. That means Bahamian citizens are not getting the full picture on how continued emissions are heightening threats like storm surges and flooding.

At Cop26, prime ministers Mia Mottley of Barbados and Davis of The Bahamas advocated a real solution – SIDS receiving pledged carbon finance from wealthier nations. Climate financing for SIDS is one of the best ways to improve adaptation for nations on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

Knowing the risks and relaying concerns to the government, we must call on governments in Sids to refocus on adaptation as a means to prepare for climate hazards, instead of opening our nations to more climate hazards through carbon markets. If this carbon market is the sole venture to address climate change while improving the economy, The Bahamas will be left counting all of our carbon credit profits while our country sinks.

## MANILA BULLETIN

### Facing the plastics crisis

By Johannes Chua

Environment writers have been calling out the attention of authorities and our country's leaders to look into the plastic pollution crisis that is now happening. This is an inevitable outcome of a long pandemic that relied on plastics, especially single-use plastics, to protect us from an unseen enemy — the virus that causes Covid.

Personal protective equipment (PPE), goggles, face shields, gloves, coveralls or lab gowns, head covers, shoe covers, etc. are all made of plastic. These have become the tools to help stop the spread of the virus and to protect medical frontliners. Add to that, the use of plastic was so enormous as almost all deliveries (from our online shopping to orders from fast food outlets) sent to our homes during the lockdowns were wrapped in plastic. So, is plastic friend or foe?

As I talked to environment advocates, they too realized that it would be very difficult to totally eradicate the use of plastics, especially single-use plastics, in our economic activity. They always referred to the role of plastics during the two-year health pandemic and the rise in its demand even though people are aware of its dire consequences for the planet.

Considering this situation, the government is not standing idly, though I can observe that its reaction to the plastics crisis is tepid at best. For one, there is already a bill that would regulate and eventually phase out single-use plastics (SUPs) in the country, which passed in July 2021 in the House. With 190 affirmative votes, zero negative votes, and one abstention, the chamber passed on third reading House Bill 9147, which seeks to “regulate the production, importation, sale, distribution, provision, use, recovery, collection, recycling, and disposal of single-use plastic products.” There are still issues with regards to its passing in the Senate as there are groups who want a tougher and more comprehensive bill to regulate SUPs. Let's see what will happen soon.

A few months back, environment organization The Climate Reality Project Philippines informed me that they partnered with development studies students from Ateneo to “develop a policy note addressing single-use plastic policies in several cities in Metro Manila.”

“Despite the lack of a national policy, data from the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) showed that about 30 percent of local government units (LGUs) in the country have some form of policy to regulate the use of plastics, particularly plastic bags. These local ordinances have different scopes, different definitions of single-use plastics, and different sanctions.”

The policy note highlighted the best practices from Marikina City, Makati City, and Quezon City that could be adopted by other LGUs to improve their own plastic waste management and reduction systems. It also included recommendations directed at improving current LGU policies and enabling better anti-single-use plastic implementation.

“Following this initiative, we saw the need to create a compendium of local policies, programs, and initiatives on managing plastic waste to create a community of practice and to amplify the clamor for a national law that will comprehensively and effectively address the proliferation of single-use plastics in our communities,” said the group.

So these are the questions that we, as citizens of this land, need to ask one another: “Does your LGU have an ordinance regulating the use of plastics? Does your local grocery or market encourage you to bring bayongs or eco-bags? Do you have community recycling or upcycling facilities? How about consumer incentives programs, such as trash-to-cash or plastic waste in exchange for groceries or environmental points?”

The group believes in the power of information to change lives and help communities become greener in the process. We can’t just wait for the government to lead the way if they have bureaucratic entanglements to sort out.

This is the reason why Climate Reality launched an initiative called “Bawal Plastikan,” where they ask citizens across the country about the policies and programs against single-use plastics in their city or municipality.

“Through this campaign, we aim to have a better picture of the efforts to curtail the plastic crisis at the local level, in the absence of a national law on plastics,” said the group. “Bawal Plastikan — loosely translating to ‘no pretending/ faking’ — supports the notion that the journey toward sustainable production and consumption and circular economy must be genuine and inclusive for all Filipinos.”

Information is power, indeed. In order to truly fight for the planet, we should be armed with the right battle “gear.” The plastics crisis is looming over the horizon, and day after day, its scourge is getting nearer. We should not be caught off guard or standing idly by the wayside. It’s time to raise our voices.

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

### Toward climate resiliency for the agri sector

By: Hazel Tanchuling

Anxiety and uncertainty brought about by the increase in the prices of fuel and food heralded the administration of President Marcos Jr. Along with the lingering threat of the COVID-19 virus, these circumstances will further undermine the already precarious condition of the marginalized sectors of farmers and fishers.

The question is: Will the President's assumption of the agriculture portfolio signal a better vision for rural growth, more budget that upholds local agriculture and fisheries production, and a more competent, science-based planning and implementation of ways to slow down climate change for vulnerable sectors?

Livelihood and survival have become the battle cry of families battered by the economic lockdown due to the pandemic, and with the vicious cycle of debt and losses each year due to extreme weather events that hit them, this administration must listen hard.

Climate resilience. It is time to sternly mandate local government units (LGUs) to craft strategic and comprehensive agriculture and fisheries plan, together with their constituents and in consultation with experts, to address poverty as well as manage climate risks while promoting employment.

Climate change is a major consideration in both the comprehensive agriculture and fisheries plan (CAFP) and the local climate change action plan (LCCAP). The LCCAP addresses climate change vulnerabilities among the local population, while the CAFP is specific to the local agriculture and fisheries sectors. More importantly, the CAFP stands on the understanding that meeting the challenges of climate change is urgent and critical to the survival and development of these sectors.

In the last 12 years, Rice Watch Action Network Inc. (R1) has been assisting LGUs in LCCAP formulation and has recently rolled out assistance to develop a CAFP in LGUs.

Mandate and resources. Executive Order No. 138 was issued in 2021 directing local governments to be autonomous in delivering basic services to their constituents by the end of 2024. In the CAFP, devolution facilitates improved support for agriculture and fisheries development, as local governments provide services specific to these sectors within their jurisdiction.

Resources are guaranteed with the implementation of the 2018 Mandanas ruling, which directs the national government to increase internal revenue allocation to LGUs to finance the devolution of basic services. This presents a funding opportunity for climate resiliency and the supply chain sustainability initiatives of local governments and of farmers and fisher folk.

Sustainable supply chains for small farmers. In developing the CAFP, the analysis of supply chains is geared toward the fair distribution of income and benefits among stakeholders, particularly producers. A review of the supply chain allows communities

to plan how they can restructure and influence the chain to boost the income of farmers and fisherfolk.

Food supply chains are largely affected by climate change. In creating sustainable and more beneficial supply chains for small farmers and fishers, other factors that affect them as producers are identified. It is not only income but also processes that ensure the continuity of production and the protection of people's health and that of the environment.

A supply chain analysis should show how climate and nonclimate factors affect actors at different stages. Rice, for example, has suffered because of extreme changes in temperature, drought conditions, and excess amounts of rainfall from strong tropical cyclones. Additionally, the rice tariffication law has lowered farmgate prices, swelled incomes for wholesalers and international traders, and only marginally decreased rice prices for consumers. The Ukraine-Russia war also increased the cost of production inputs, such as fertilizers and fuel. This analysis brings in factors and problems that must be addressed, and solutions that would urgently identify, improve, and institutionalize the benefits for farmers.

For R1, this avenue for participatory and science-based CAFP process at the LGU level is an important step to save the agriculture and fisheries sectors, which have long been neglected but are critical to the nation's survival.

## PHYS ORG

### Climate change makes some volcanic plumes less effective at reducing global temperatures

by Sarah Wild

New analysis of ash clouds created from large volcanic eruptions shows the temporary cooling effects are changed as the environment becomes hotter.

On 15 June 1991, the Mount Pinatubo volcano in the Philippines erupted with a cataclysmic explosion so violent that the volcano collapsed in on itself. Its gas and ash cloud reached about 40 km into the air, and in the weeks that followed, the cloud entered the stratosphere and spread around the globe. During the next year, the average global temperature dropped by about 0.5 degrees Celsius.

A volcano is an opening in the Earth's crust that allows hot, molten rock to escape to the surface. It also allows gas and ash to escape from the high-temperature interior of the earth.

Volcanic eruptions play an important role in cooling the planet. The sulfur gases from the volcanic plumes combine with other gases in the atmosphere, and these aerosols scatter solar radiation, reflecting it into space. But scientists are concerned that climate change could make eruptions less effective at reducing global temperatures. This feedback loop, in which climate change could hinder or amplify the ability of volcanic eruptions to combat rising temperatures, is currently not included in future climate scenarios.

The VOLCPRO project set out to investigate two different types of eruptions to see if global heating would compromise their cooling effect.

Thomas Aubry, a researcher at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) fellow on VOLCPRO, wondered whether an eruption like Mount Pinatubo would have had the same cooling effect were it to happen a hundred years later in a world where global temperature rise—through the effects of climate change—continues unchecked.

#### *High intensity eruption*

The first type of eruption, similar to Mount Pinatubo, is known as a high-intensity eruption. This type emits plumes of ash and particles that reach 25 km or higher into the atmosphere, and contains billions of tons of sulfur gases. Relatively rare, an eruption of this powerful type arises every few decades—Mount Pinatubo was one of the largest eruptions the world had seen in a century.

The second type is smaller, but more frequent. "We were wondering how climate change will affect these two different types of eruptions, the small ones versus the big ones," said Aubry.

The VOLCPRO team modeled historical eruptions showing their influence on climate, and then simulated what would happen if those same eruptions took place in the future, when the climate has changed and global temperatures are hotter.

Their simulations relied on the U.K. Met Office's advanced climate model. "Inside that (U.K. Met Office) model, we added another model that can simulate the rise of a volcanic plume and how high this volcanic column can rise depending on, for example, the wind condition during eruption day, or the temperature in the atmosphere on the day, and so on," Aubry said.

For the large eruptions, they found that the cooling would be amplified by global warming, "which is kind of good news," said Aubry. "More global warming, more volcanic cooling."

In a warmer atmosphere, the plumes of high intensity eruptions will rise even higher, allowing the tiny volcanic particles to travel further. This haze of aerosols will cover a wider area, reflecting more solar radiation and amplifying these volcanoes' temporary cooling effect.

The opposite was true of the smaller, more frequent volcanic eruptions. In those cases, the hotter temperatures thwarted the cooling effects from the eruptions.

However, before they push to have their findings included in scientists' global climate change projections, Aubry wants to investigate other volcanoes and other models to reinforce their results.

VOLCPRO focused on tropical volcanoes, as eruptions around the equator tend to affect climate globally because the volcanic particles spread to both hemispheres easily. By including volcanoes closer to the poles, the researchers will be able to determine how other eruptions respond to higher temperatures. They also want to include more climate models, not just the U.K.'s, to make sure that their findings are robust.

### *Volcanic ash*

Meanwhile, Elena Maters, a former MSCA fellow now based at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom, is working to figure out what happens to volcanic ash in the atmosphere and how it influences cloud formation and, ultimately, climate.

Volcanic ash promotes ice formation in the atmosphere, which ultimately replaces water in clouds. Clouds are one of the biggest question marks in climate research, and the more we understand how they are formed and behave, the more precise our models.

"The common assumption is that liquid water will turn to ice below zero (degrees)," Maters explained. That is not always the case and small droplets can remain as liquid down to around minus 35 degrees Celsius. But particles in the atmosphere create "catalytic surfaces that make it easier for water molecules to form an ice crystal."

Mineral dust, from sand originating in desert regions around the world such as the Sahara and Gobi deserts, is the dominant source of solid particles in the atmosphere. However, there are many other sources, including volcanic ash.

The INoVA project sought to determine the extent to which volcanic ash aids ice formation.

"On a yearly average, there's about 10 times less volcanic ash (than mineral dust) in the atmosphere," Maters said. "But you can have big eruptions that can quickly, in a matter of hours to days, release huge amounts of particles, and this has been neglected in a lot of climate modeling and even in cases that look at the impacts of volcanoes."

### *Ice formation*

As part of INoVA, Maters and colleagues investigated the efficacy of volcanic ash in promoting ice formation. They compared this to the ubiquitous mineral dust, testing to see which types were the most successful.

Volcanic ash is mostly glass, with a sprinkling of minerals like feldspars and iron oxides. The composition of the ash depends on the make-up of the magma roiling underneath, and the speed at which it is explosively ejected from the volcano, among other things.

Previous studies compared only a handful of ash types, said Maters, whose research focuses on volcanic ash reactivity and chemistry. "You can't measure two or three samples and then make a conclusion for all volcanic ash and volcanic eruptions worldwide. They vary hugely in the glass composition, the proportion of glass to minerals, the types of minerals, and so the experiments I did were trying to get to the bottom of the range of efficacy of volcanic ash from different types of eruptions," she said.

Maters took nine ash samples with a range of compositions and used them to create nine synthetic samples through melting and rapid cooling. She compared these 18 samples to identify which properties make volcanic ash more active in creating ice. In another study with a group at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology in Germany, Maters and colleagues analyzed another 15 volcanic samples to identify their ice-making properties.

She suggested that the most ice-active component in volcanic ash is alkali feldspar, a mineral composed of aluminum, silicon and oxygen commonly found in the Earth's crust. "Now, having this understanding of which minerals in ash are good at nucleating (forming) ice," said Maters, "you might be able to predict when a volcano erupts whether that volcano, based on its magma composition, could produce ice-active ash."

While her work was previously very laboratory-based, the COVID pandemic has forced her into modeling, she joked. She is now investigating the 2010 Eyjafjallajökull volcanic eruptions in Iceland to see how that introduced ice-forming particles into the atmosphere, and how those particles compared to the abundance of mineral dust.

The study will examine how volcanic ash has a role in ice formation when we actually plug it into the atmosphere. It will compare it to other types of particle, such as mineral dust and asks the question, "Does it matter?"

As better climate models are developed, "It's a proof of concept to demonstrate that explosive eruptions could be important to include," said Maters.

## **RAPPLER**

### **Lanao del Sur lawmakers sound alarm over PH internal displacement rate**

By Merlyn Manos

Iligan City, Philippines – Lanao del Sur lawmakers sounded alarm bells over the rate of evacuations in the country due to man-made and natural causes, saying the number of cases of internal displacement reached more than 5.6 million in 2021 alone.

Lanao del Sur 1st District Representative Ziaur-Rahman Adiong and Lanao del Sur 2nd District Representative Yasser Balindong called on the government to take steps in reducing the risks of displacements, and to help the victims who were forced to flee their homes.

Of the more than 5.6 million cases documented in 2021 by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, some 140,000 families remained displaced by year-end, the congressmen noted.

Adiong said on Wednesday, August 3, that more than 100,000 cases of internal displacement were due to conflict and violence. Of that number, some 20,000 people remained displaced as of December 2021.

Adiong and Balindong come from an area in Mindanao with the most number of internally displaced families as a result of the 2017 Marawi Siege that destroyed communities in the predominantly Muslim city and turned them into virtual ghost towns.

In a May 2020 report, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), counted some 120,000 people living in permanent and temporary shelters outside Marawi City.

The government's Task Force Bangon Marawi (TBFM) said it registered 49,785 displaced families from 96 Marawi villages as of April 2022.

The congressmen, however, said that the data they culled showed that there were about 85,335 people or roughly 17,000 families from Marawi still displaced after five years.

Mindanao alone, according to Adiong, saw more than 800,000 households displaced due to various reasons in the last two decades.

"Their experiences are made more difficult by poverty and a host of calamities across the island," he said. "We cannot ignore the reality these numbers represent, especially when one person displaced is one person too many."

Adiong and Balindong on Wednesday, August 3, filed a House bill that seeks to oblige the government to support the internally displaced, and help them return and rebuild their communities, integrate into local communities that have received them, or resettle in other areas where they can be safe and secure.

Aside from conflict and violence, the lawmakers noted that the country is geographically disadvantaged because it sits along East Asia's typhoon belt and the Pacific Ring of Fire, making it at the receiving end of the effects of climate change.

The earthquake in Abra on July 27 alone, noted Adiong, forced at least 45,000 people to flee their homes and camp out in open spaces or seek refuge in the homes of their relatives and friends.

As of Wednesday, he said, there were more than 3,000 people in 38 evacuation centers after the earthquake.

The congressmen called on Congress to pass a law that would entitle every internally displaced person to a maximum P10,000- reparation from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and help the victim with his return, integration, or resettlement elsewhere.

Their proposed measure also seeks to entitle the internally displaced to mandatory non-monetary reparation services from the DSWD, Department of Health, Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, among other agencies, in collaboration with the Commission on Human Rights.

Marawi civic leader Samira Gutoc, who chairs advocacy rights group Ako Bakwit, said the internally displaced should be entitled to more, as she noted that the cost of monthly housing, education, and health care alone would require over P10,000 each.

Gutoc said those displaced as a result of the 2017 fighting in Marawi alone lost more than their money and homes.

"They lost valuable documents, their identification, their genealogy. Many of them lost their identities. These are things money can't buy," Gutoc told Rappler.

## REUTERS

### **India approves new emissions targets to tackle climate change**

By Shilpa Jamkhandikar and Gloria Dickie

MUMBAI, Aug 4 (Reuters) - India, the world's third largest carbon polluter, has finally approved new targets for slashing planet-warming emissions, more than a year after a United Nations deadline for updated commitments.

On Wednesday, the Indian federal cabinet approved the new national emissions pledges, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced these goals last year at United Nations climate talks in Glasgow, but they had not been formalized.

The new NDC will commit India to reducing the emissions intensity of its GDP by 45% from its 2005 level in the next 7 years - a 10% increase over its previous 2016 pledge.

India will also aim to meet half of its energy demands from renewable sources, such as solar and wind, by 2030. This, too, is a boost over its previous target of 40%, which the government said it had achieved in December 2021.

India's commitment to reducing emissions is more than its expected fair share and a welcome step, said Sanjay Vashist, Director, Climate Action Network South Asia, a network of not-for-profit organisations.

"The ambition shown by India is the role expected from all developed countries that have so far worked only to shift the responsibility of Greenhouse gas reductions on developing countries," he told Reuters.

Under the 2015 U.N. Paris Agreement, parties are required to update their long-term climate goals every five years and are urged to show greater ambition as the impacts of climate change worsen.

"The decision on enhanced NDCs demonstrates India's commitment at the highest level for decoupling of economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions," a government statement said.

The updated NDC will now be submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

India, which falls only behind China and the United States in emissions, is the last of the world's five largest emitters to produce new targets.

The government has also said it will aim for net zero emissions by 2070 - 20 years later than what climate scientists say is needed. [read more](#)

India was condemned at the 2021 U.N. climate summit for its attempts to water down language on reducing reliance on coal.

## THE MANILA TIMES

### **[OPINION ] Like Al Gore, Senator Legarda may have nothing left to preach on climate change**

By Yen Makabenta

#### **Second of a series**

##### *First word*

THE second vulnerability of the climate movement is the fact that by whatever name it may call itself today, it must account for the bizarre implosion of former US vice president Al Gore from reigning as the public face and oracle of climate change to being the sound of embarrassed silence on climate change today.

Gore, who at one time stood just a few hundred votes from the US presidency, is arguably the biggest success and alternately the biggest failure of the church of global warming and the climate movement.

From a classroom in Harvard where he first heard the theory of global warming from one professor, to the campaign trail where he grafted the climate as a political slogan, Gore shot to prominence as an environmentalist and climate crusader. He started evangelizing against man-made global warming (anthropomorphic global warming or AGW). AGW was only the pet teaching of a corps of believers and fanatics, but after Gore started preaching and because of his political influence, AGW became a fad.

##### *Climate prophet*

On Oct. 12, 2007, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced the award of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize, in two equal parts, to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, founded in 1988) and Al Gore (b. 1948) "for their efforts to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change."

In Oslo on Dec. 10, 2007, the presentation was made with a speech by Ole Danbolt Mjøs as chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, followed by Nobel lectures given by Dr. Rajendra K. Pachauri, representing the IPCC, and Al Gore. In his lecture, Pachauri thanked those contributing to the IPCC:

"I pay tribute to the thousands of experts and scientists who have contributed to the work of the panel over almost two decades of exciting evolution and service to humanity."

Gore responded with a speech rich with sentiment and sound bites:

"I want to end as I began with a vision of two futures — each a palpable possibility — and with a prayer that we will see with vivid clarity the necessity of choosing between those two futures, and the urgency of making the right choice now.

"The future is knocking at our door right now. We have everything we need to get started, save perhaps political will, but political will is a renewable resource.

**READ: Inconvenient facts about climate change theology and the climate agenda**

So, let us renew it, and say together: "We have a purpose. We are many. For this purpose, we will rise and we will act."

Buoyed by the Nobel prize and his rising popularity, Gore embarked on a new trajectory, presenting himself as a prophet on the climate and the planet. He ventured into predictions about the last days and the end of the world.

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The problem with prophecies is that people do not forget, they come around to collect when the predictions come due. The prophet is then exposed as having no clothes.

In 2007, Gore boldly told his supporters that the world had until Jan. 27, 2016 to end its addiction to fossil fuels or that it would come to an end. Gore did not specify what householders might expect to happen on that day, but he was clear that this would be the end.

The claim was part of the marketing campaign for his hit documentary "An Inconvenient Truth," which he maintains was not a cheap attempt to make money off the green frenzy. Although, by sheer coincidence, it did make him a pile of cash.

Shortly before the film's release, Gore warned the day would see "a true planetary emergency." Once again, he offered few details of the problems people might face on their weekly visit to Walmart.

He went on to tell the press: "If you accept the truth of that, then nothing else really matters that much... We have to organize quickly to come up with a coherent and really strong response, and that's what I'm devoting myself to."

*Failed prophecies*

After making multiple climate predictions, none of which came true, journalists started asking questions about Gore's failed prophecies, and his silence on many issues in the UN climate agenda.

In 2010, Mark Landsbaum of the Orange County Register asked aloud: "Where's Al Gore now that global warming is cooling off?" He wrote:

"It seems we're not the only ones to wonder why Al's been kind of on the silent side. Fox News reports (you decide): "...in the last three months, as global warming has gone from a scientific near-certitude to the subject of satire, Gore — the public face of global warming — has been silent on the topic.

"The former vice president apparently finds it inconvenient even to answer calls to testify before the US Senate..."

Oklahoma Sen. James Inhofe — a prominent skeptic of global warming theory and the Republican leader of the Senate's environment and public works committee — had issued a request for Gore to come testify on global warming. Inhofe said he wanted Gore to appear because "it will be interesting to ask him on what science he based his movie," a film the senator considers "science fiction." Gore did not respond.

In a Dec. 14, 2009, speech at the Copenhagen Climate Conference, Gore suggested the possibility of the Arctic losing some or all of its ice in the summer months within five to seven years, citing researchers associated with the Naval Postgraduate School.

Gore said there was a 75 percent chance that ice in the Arctic could be gone during at least some summer months within five to seven years. Reports indicate that he misrepresented the details of the research.

Dr. Rajendra Pachauri who received the Nobel prize jointly with Gore for IPCC died in February 2020.

Al Gore has survived and still enjoys his prize. But for many years now, he has been absent from various international climate summits and conferences, and he has avoided speaking on the subject of climate change or a climate emergency. It appears that he has learned to keep his trap shut on anything concerning the climate and the future of the planet. He realized that there is nothing left for him to say or preach on the two issues.

The same fate could befall Sen. Loren Legarda in her frenetic efforts to fan climate anxiety or fright among our people and within the government.

The senator was ecstatic when she heard President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. speak a few words about climate change and renewable energy in his State of the Nation Address on July 25.

But President Marcos is hardly the sort to qualify or register as a climate fanatic. Serious Filipino politicians are far more attuned to the weather, or the political weather, which can easily change overnight.

Senator Legarda's climate advocacy calls for the expenditure of plenty of public money on actions to avert the effects of climate changes or disasters.

She needs to watch more keenly what is happening in other countries where climate policies, once thought essential for survival, are now coming undone.

(Third part on Saturday, Aug. 6, 2022)

## **Mobilizing investments for mine development**

By Albert Gamboa

"The mining industry holds the greatest potential to be a key driver in our economic recovery and long-term growth, especially now that world metal prices are high. The Philippines, after all, is one of the world's most richly endowed countries in terms of mineral resources."

Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno made the above pronouncement on Wednesday during the additional listing of Philex Mining Corp. common shares. The Philippine Stock Exchange listing, he said, sends a strong signal to the mining industry that the country's capital markets are viable instruments for fast-tracking the development of large minerals development projects.

Philex had a stock rights offering (SRO) last month and raised a total of P2.65 billion in new equity from the listing of the additional 842 million common shares. Proceeds will be mobilized for the development of Philex's Silangan underground copper-gold mine in Surigao del Norte.

Located in the Caraga region of northeastern Mindanao, the Silangan project is considered one of the biggest copper-gold mines in the Philippines. Philex plans to mine it in two phases, with the first having a mineable ore reserve of 81 million metric tons to be mined for 22 years at a rate of 4 million tons per year. It is targeted to start operations in the first quarter of 2025.

Philex's SRO listing, Diokno said, means more jobs will be created, resulting in the reinvigoration of local economies and the generation of additional revenue contributions to the government. He believes this offering demonstrates the mining industry's confidence in the country's promising economic growth prospects.

Based on Department of Finance (DoF) estimates, the Silangan project will generate some P8.5 billion in excise taxes alone during its entire mine life. "We recognize that apart from boosting local development, mining is a strong magnet for investments that can propel our economy into a higher growth trajectory," the DoF chief said.

In turn, the national government expects the minerals development sector to strictly adhere to responsible and sustainable mining practices. Diokno urged industry players to strike a balance between protecting the environment, uplifting local communities and supporting the government's socioeconomic agenda. "This is a nonnegotiable condition so we can guarantee the sustainability of the industry and the strong economic growth of its host communities," he said.

Meanwhile, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) has welcomed the appointment of Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). COMP is an industry association comprising most of the country's large-scale metallic minerals development companies.

COMP Chairman Michael Toledo said the mining industry was prepared to work with Yulo-Loyzaga in her advocacies, particularly disaster risk reduction and response,

sustainable development goals, and climate change protection. "COMP is for all efforts to foster and promote responsible minerals development in the Philippines," he added.

Toledo pledged the chamber's support to the DENR in weeding out illegal miners and curtailing irresponsible mining practices that have tarnished the industry's reputation for so long. He also anticipates meaningful engagement with the government's economic team led by Diokno to help buttress the country's post-pandemic recovery initiatives.

## **Torrential rains lash northeast, central Japan**

By Xinhua News Agency

Tokyo: Heavy rains have been pounding regions in northeastern and central Japan since Wednesday, with local authorities in the country's Yamagata and Niigata prefectures urging residents to seek shelter.

The Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) previously issued a Level 5 alert — the highest on the East Asian nation's disaster warning scale — for six towns in Yamagata, but has since downgraded it.

The emergency warning for Niigata, however, remains in effect, it said.

Authorities in Yamagata said the bursting of the banks of the Mogami River led to extensive flooding. About 30,000 people in the prefecture have been urged to evacuate by Wednesday night, according to Japan's Fire and Disaster Management Agency.

Houses were flooded, cars submerged, roads inundated and water supplies cut off in some of the affected towns and cities, local media cited officials in both prefectures as saying.

A bridge in Yamagata reportedly collapsed and a car was swept away in the deluge, according to media reports.

Another prefecture, Fukushima in the country's northeast, also saw heavy floods, media reports said, with local authorities saying homes and roads had also been flooded.

The East Japan Railway Co. said it would suspend its Shinkansen bullet train service throughout Thursday between Fukushima and Yamagata's Shinjo due to the downpours.

JMA said more heavy rain was expected in the southern Tohoku region and Niigata through Thursday noon. It also issued a notice of record hourly rainfall for the central prefectures of Ishikawa and Fukui.

The Ishikawa government has warned of landslides in four cities in the area, local media reported.

Weather officials have urged people there to watch out for landslides, swelling rivers and flooding.

Scientists say climate change is intensifying the risk of heavy rain in Japan and elsewhere, because a warmer atmosphere holds more water.

Strong rain in 2021 triggered a devastating landslide in the central resort town of Atami that killed 27 people.

And in 2018, floods and landslides killed more than 200 people in western Japan during the country's annual rainy season.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### **Atok-Big Wedge moving into renewable energy**

By Richmond Mercurio

Roberto Ongpin-Led Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc. Is Moving Forward With Its Plan To Expand Into Renewable Energy.

The board of Atok-Big Wedge has given the green light for the proposed change in the company's articles of incorporation, which will pave the way for the listed mining firm's planned venture into the renewable energy space.

Atok-Big Wedge, in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, said its board of directors unanimously approved the amendment of the company's primary purpose to go into renewable energy.

The company said it would submit the foregoing amendment to its articles of incorporation for the approval of at least two thirds of the stockholders through written assent.

Atok-Big Wedge earlier announced plans for a major expansion into renewable energy in a bid "to participate in the climate change effort that the entire world is presently focusing on."

The company's first project would be a 500-megawatt wind power project on Patnanungan Island, a 750-hectare property which is 22 nautical miles from Balesin island and is owned by its sister company Alphaland Corp.

It earlier said it was in discussions with a major power company in China.

Atok-Big Wedge is one of the oldest mining firms listed in the PSE, having been incorporated in the early 1930s.

The company owns Tidemark Corp., which in turn owns 20 percent of Forum Energy PLC, which has a 70 percent stake in Service Contract 72.

## UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

### **Seven Developing Countries Take Another Important Step in the Race to Net Zero**

After two and a half years of virtual processes due to Covid-19 restrictions, technical experts resumed in-person meetings in Bonn for the technical analysis of developing countries' biennial update reports (BURs). It was held from 20 to 24 June 2022 and included 32 technical experts from diverse climate change-related thematic areas, representing various developed and developing countries across Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania.

Lebanon, Malawi, Mauritius, Montenegro, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova and Trinidad and Tobago constitute the seven countries that were involved in this 22nd session of the technical analysis (TA22). The technical analysis marks the first step of the International Consultation and Analysis (ICA) process which seeks to increase the transparency of mitigation actions and their effects, based on the information submitted by developing countries through their BURs.

For Malawi, Mauritius and Trinidad and Tobago, it was their first BUR submission, the third for Moldova and Montenegro, and the fourth for Lebanon and the Republic of Korea.

Some key mitigation actions in the participating countries

The countries through their BURs have demonstrated rapid adoption and implementation of emission reduction strategies, policies, regulations, programmes and projects across the sectors of energy, Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU), industrial process and waste.

Malawi, for example, has been actively engaged in afforestation and reforestation. Since 2011, the country has planted over 50 million trees each year. This effort will increase Malawi's carbon sinks.

The Republic of Moldova, through its Low Emission Development Strategy 2030, has also outlined a massive agenda towards afforestation. This includes 3,800 ha afforested annually, 12,000 ha of planted protection forest belts, and 10,000 ha of planted forest energy crops. The goal is to unconditionally increase, by 2030, the country's carbon sequestration capacity to 62% and GHGs sequestration up to 76% compared to 1990.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is particularly targeting to offset the power required from fossil fuel generation by implementing the production of blue and green hydrogen for e-fuel conversion. The measure is currently ongoing and aimed at decarbonizing the energy, industrial and transportation sectors, which are heavily dependent on fossil fuel. It will incorporate a greater percentage of biofuels in the country's energy mix and replace 3,194 TJ of natural gas per year by 2050.

Montenegro, on the other hand, seeks to phase-out coal and curtail operations of coal-fired thermoelectric power plants in Pijevija no later than 2030 and ensure a just

energy transition in the Pijevija coal region. The associated emission reduction potential of such action is 2.5 Gg CO<sub>2</sub>eq.

In Lebanon, the combination of the decreasing cost of solar photovoltaic (PV) and increasing cost of oil has created a considerable incentive for industrialists and retailers to reduce their diesel consumption by investing in solar photovoltaic systems. It is estimated that such an increase in electricity generation from PV has avoided 125,561 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq of emissions during the 2016-2018 period, which is equivalent to 41,853 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq. per year.

The Republic of Korea is leveraging a market mechanism by introducing an Emission Trading System in order to manage greenhouse gas emissions from industrial and development sectors in a cost-effective manner and to promote low-carbon industries. The mechanism consists of three phases, with Phase I occurring between 2015 and 2018. The volume of allowances traded within the period was 86.2 million tCO<sub>2</sub>eq.

In addition to measures in the energy sector to foster transition to renewable energy, Mauritius is implementing projects in the transport sector such as the Metro Express Project, which is the first Light Rail Transit system in Mauritius, with a length of 26 km, seeking to serve as an alternative means of transport and considerably reducing carbon emissions as well as relieving traffic.

Although much progress has been achieved in accelerating mitigation efforts and reporting in developing countries, participating countries highlighted the need for financial and technical support and resources to scale-up measures to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

#### Adoption of improved inventory methodologies

The technical analysis also reiterated that developing countries are advancing in their efforts to improve transparency of their data by adopting more up-to-date methodologies from the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories. All seven countries that participated in the TA22 used the 2006 guidelines.

#### Capacity-building needs of the countries

During the technical analysis, the experts engaged in interactive consultations with the Parties to identify and confirm their capacity-building needs, which include enhancing national technical and institutional capacity with respect to data collection, selection of methodology to be applied, reporting of F-gases, as well as reporting and categorizing the information on types of support received with internationally comparable indicators.

Parties also need capacity building in tracking the progress of results achieved for mitigation actions, including the capacity to use common quantitative and qualitative indicators for each individual mitigation action, and reporting on methodologies and assumptions used for mitigation actions. The capacity building will help the Parties to enhance transparency in reporting their climate actions in the future and especially to prepare for the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) to be implemented under the Paris Agreement.

Following the week of technical analysis, the team of technical experts are elaborating a summary report for each participating country, which will be made available on the UNFCCC website.

## CCC IN THE NEWS

### MANILA BULLETIN

#### **Climate Change Commission's job order, contract of service workers to receive SSS benefits**

By Luisa K. Cabato

The Social Security System (SSS) and Climate Change Commission (CCC) signed a Memorandum of Agreement allowing the latter's job order and contract of service employees entitled to SSS benefits.

In an announcement by SSS, the said CCC government employees will receive sickness, maternity, disability, retirement, funeral, and death benefits through the state-run pension fund's KaltaSSS-Collect Program.

"Under the program, contract of service and job order workers will be classified as self-employed members of SSS. Government contract of service and job order workers are not covered by the Government Service Insurance System due to their employment status," SSS added.

The CCC will serve as an authorized Coverage and Collection Partner of SSS and will take charge of the collection and remittance of the monthly contributions of its job order and contract of service workers through a salary-deduction scheme, SSS said in the statement.

Moreover, these employees may avail loans offered by SSS such as salary loan, calamity loan, and others.

SSS said that they will also be given additional coverage from the Employees' Compensation Program for work-related contingencies.

"We salute CCC for taking time to give their job order workers the social security protection that they really deserve. We hope that other government agencies will be further inspired to imitate the effort of CCC's leadership in securing the future of each of its employees and ensure that they have something to lean on in time of emergencies," said SSS President and Chief Executive Officer Michael G. Regino.

The ceremonial signing was held on July 14 at the SSS Main Branch in East Avenue, Diliman, it was witnessed by Regino, SSS Cooperatives and Informal Sector Department Concurrent Acting Head Carlo C. Villacorta, CCC Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, and CCC Strategic Partnership Division Chief Alexis D. Lapiz.

**PTV DAVAO**

**Philippine Climate Change Commission, giawhaq ang LGUs nga mohimo og local climate action plans**

**[News report in Bisaya: Philippine Climate Change Commission, urged LGUs to create local climate action plans]**

**-END-**