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06 MAY 2024 [08:00 am]

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By: Cai Ordinario

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DAILY TRIBUNE

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By: Raffy Ayeng

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MANILA BULLETIN

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Senate Pro Tempore Loren Legarda on Friday sought more support for efforts to build resilience in communities vulnerable to climate change.

THE MANILA TIMES

[Climate change poses risks to human health](#)

By: Ludwig Federigan

In mid-April, I attended a journalism workshop at Sunway University in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The workshop, a pre-event to the 2024 Planetary Health Summit and 6th Annual Meeting, was hosted by the Sunway Center of Planetary Health, one of Sunway University's research institutions. The center focuses on preventing the next pandemic, addressing the climate emergency, creating healthy cities and achieving sustainable food systems.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[ADB urged to boost climate financing to \\$11.5 billion](#)

By: Louise Maureen Simeon

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) needs to ramp up its climate financing to at least \$11.5 billion annually as vulnerable economies continue to take the hit of the impact of worsening climate change.

[\[Opinion\] Transition to clean energy is crucial](#)

By: Ambassador B. Romualdez

The actual start of summer in the United States is still a month away but people are already beginning to feel the heat. Many countries across the globe, particularly in Asia, are also experiencing scorching temperatures at above 40 degrees Centigrade (104 degrees Fahrenheit), prompting climatologist and weather historian Maximilliano Herrera to declare that “thousands of records are being brutalized all over Asia, which is by far the most extreme event in world climatic history.”

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[CCC launches campaign for marine ecosystem sustainability](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is launching the Month of the Ocean social media campaign “Dive Deep, Change the Tides” this May.

Oceans: Allies in deep trouble

By: Secretary Robert EA Borje

Our oceans are our mightiest and greatest allies in the battle against climate change. Responsible for generating 50 percent of all the world's oxygen and absorbing over 25 percent of all the carbon dioxide emissions, they capture an estimated 90 percent of excess heat in our climate system. Oceans are indispensable ecosystems crucial for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and maintaining the stability of the Earth's climate.

ECO BUSINESS

CCC highlights importance of cross-sectoral collaboration in achieving SDGs

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasised the importance of solid and tangible working relationships with the public, private, and social sectors in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the Global Good Governance (3G) Summit held recently.

MSN

SM advances climate action with nature-based solutions

It developed a Sustainability Management System focused on the two key policies of Climate Action and Resource Management.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Ilocos Norte town eyes solar power irrigation system to aid farmers

By: Leilanie Adriano

With climate change threatening crops, the city government of Batac in Ilocos Norte is eyeing to establish a solar power irrigation system in Barangay San Mateo, where a small water impounding dam is located.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS MIRROR

[PHL contributes \\$3M to Asian Development Fund to help with climate crisis](#)

By: Cai Ordinario

A country considered one of the most vulnerable to climate change, the Philippines, has contributed about \$3 million to the replenishment of the Asian Development Fund (ADF) to help low-income countries cope with the climate crisis.

Finance Undersecretary Joven Balbosa told reporters the amount is at the same level it contributed in 2020, the first time it contributed to the replenishment of the ADF. The Philippines used to be one of the countries that received financing from the ADF.

The ADF was established in 1974 and initially provided loans on concessional terms for ADB's Developing Member Countries (DMCs). With the merger of ADB's ADF and the Ordinary Capital Resources (OCR) in 2017, ADF "became a grant-only operation."

"We are an ADB member country. All ADB member countries, especially if it is not an ADF beneficiary, should help. We are a family of nations, that's the principle," Balbosa said.

"(Yes) we have to be mindful of our (local fiscal) needs but because we are members of a community of nations, it's just fair we contribute (to the fund)," he added.

Donors and the ADB have agreed to a replenishment of \$5 billion for ADB's Asian Development Fund (ADF) 14 and Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF) 8. The commitment was made during ADB's 57th Annual Meeting.

More than \$2.5 billion, or 51 percent, of the replenishment will be funded by contributions from donors including two new countries: Armenia and Georgia.

ADB said it will significantly increase its net income transfers to ADF, from just under \$1.2 billion in ADF 13 to almost \$1.6 billion in ADF 14, an increase of 35 percent.

The remaining \$0.9 billion will comprise transfers from earlier ADF cycles and income from liquidity investments. In parallel, ADB intends to provide \$16.7 billion in concessional loans, which have very low interest rates over long repayment periods, during the ADF 14 period.

Overall, ADB said it will be able to provide more than \$8 in grants and concessional loans for every \$1 in donor contributions.

“Grants are more important than ever as our poorest and most vulnerable members seek to reverse recent development setbacks and take urgent action to combat the climate crisis,” said ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa.

“This remarkable replenishment demonstrates ADF donors’ continued partnership with ADB to address the pressing development challenges of those most in need,” he added.

The ADF is ADB’s largest source of grants for operations in its poorest and most vulnerable developing member countries and is replenished every 4 years. ADF 14—marking the 13th replenishment since the fund’s establishment—will support grant operations during 2025---2028.

The ADF 14 replenishment is about 22 percent higher than the \$4.1 billion available in ADF 13, and will provide eligible ADB members with the largest-ever volume of ADF grants. TASF 8 will provide grants that help prepare projects, build capacity, and provide technical or policy advice.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Adopt balanced, rational carbon emission reduction strategies — PCCI](#)

By: Raffy Ayeng

The country's biggest trade group, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), has asked lawmakers and the Philippine government to adopt a balanced and rational approach on legislations and other policies and programs that impose stringent decarbonization targets on industries to reach the net-zero emission by 2050 of the Paris Agreement.

During a meeting to discuss House Bill 7705 or the Low Carbon Economy bill called jointly by the PCCI's Committees on Energy and Power, Industry and Environment and Climate Change, private sector stakeholders raised their concern on the impact to industries and to the sustainability of the economy, if the bill as it is, is enacted into a law.

"This legislation represents a bold step towards sustainability and responsibility. But it should not come at a cost to businesses and to the economy as a whole," PCCI chairman and director for Energy and Power George Barcelon, said.

He said the cost is most pronounced in the agriculture and food industry.

Decarbonization targets

While farming/food production is not directly affected, inputs to and processes and that go with food production and those along its supply chain are among those that will be required to have decarbonization targets.

"This will eventually affect the food production sector and threaten further the country's already fragile food security situation," Atty. Joseph Fabul of the Philippine Chamber of Food Manufacturers emphasized.

The cement and construction industries echoed similar apprehensions, as Cirilo Pestano of the Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines noted that the cement industry (as well as steel and construction) relies heavily on energy and power which is 40 percent of their production cost, and logistics and transportation for distribution.

Heavy price

“Compliance options will come at a heavy price. Even now, the cement industry is already suffering from cement imports from Vietnam, where production and cost of power are subsidized by their government,” Pestano said.

PCCI’s Energy Committee Officers David Chua and Carlos Aboitiz noted that the standards set forth in the proposed bill are first world standards and need to be aligned with third world realities.

The Philippines, they said, is a small country consuming small amounts of energy and produces little amounts of greenhouse gas emissions with 3 times less than the global average in carbon dioxide emissions per capita.

Barcelon stressed that attaining targets for low carbon growth will entail advances in technology.

But developing these technologies are themselves costly to the environment, he said, citing the case of a Tesla battery, which needs 12 tons of rock for Lithium, five tons of cobalt minerals, three tons of nickel ore and 12 tons of copper ore.

Anchor targets on actual data

The PCCI also urged the country’s legislators and policymakers to anchor decarbonization targets on actual data gathered from various industries and to come up with policy and/or program recommendations after undertaking a thorough cost-benefit analysis, benchmarking on what other countries in ASEAN are doing with respect to reducing their carbon emissions and identifying best practices.

Currently, there are programs already in place by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources under the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, by the Department of Energy on the Energy Efficiency and Conservation and the Renewable Energy Acts and by the Department of Transportation on the e-Vehicles Act.

ECO BUSINESS

[CCC highlights importance of cross-sectoral collaboration in achieving SDGs](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasised the importance of solid and tangible working relationships with the public, private, and social sectors in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the Global Good Governance (3G) Summit held recently.

Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, the CCC's Vice Chairperson and Executive Director, joined the summit as a panelist in the discussion on Strategic Governance for Bridging the SDGs Gap in Public, Private, and Social Sectors.

He discussed several key points including the different frameworks, programs, and policies that institutionalise Philippine commitments to sustainable development. He also stressed the significance of involving and supporting both the local government units (LGUs) and the private sector in the climate and sustainability agenda, and government approaches to monitoring and evaluating governance in bridging SDGs gap.

"The LGUs are one of the most important actors in achieving our targets for climate resiliency and smartness. After all, they are at the frontlines of climate change, which is why it's critical that we provide them capacity and technical assistance through our different frameworks and programs," said Borje.

"Likewise, partnership with the private sector is essential if we want to successfully attain all the goals and plans that we have as part of our mission to bring sustainability and climate resiliency to the Philippines. We want to make sure that we set up the private sector to succeed in their sustainability and climate change formulation, and engagement with the government," he added.

Borje stressed the integration of all SDGs into the development plans and processes of the government in its framework documents, including the Philippine Development Plan (PDP), National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (NCCAP), draft National Adaptation Plan (NAP), and Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan (NDCIP).

He also emphasised the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the national plans and frameworks such as Measurement Reporting and Evaluation (MRV), Monitoring, Evaluation, Assessment, and Learning (MEAL), and Sustainability Reporting Guidelines and Sustainability Reporting for the private sector.

Discussions at the event focused on the following: Inclusivity in decision-making at all levels of governance; Methodologies and metrics for assessing the impact of governance initiatives on sustainable development goals; How effective governance structures can contribute to crisis management, build resilience, and facilitate a swift recovery in the face of unexpected challenges; The role of governance in mitigating climate change and promoting environmental Sustainability; The importance of international collaboration, diplomatic efforts, and global partnerships in achieving shared sustainable development goals; Empowering the youth in governance processes, fostering a new generation of leaders; and Strategies to promote gender equality in governance structures, ensuring representation and opportunities for women in decision-making processes.

The Global Good Governance serves as a global hub for dialogue, deliberation, and engagement aimed at fostering a deeper understanding of key issues in governance, ethics, and sustainability.

It brought together policymakers, experts, decision-makers, practitioners, entrepreneurs, representatives from the government and non-government organisations, and academicians, to introduce new knowledge, advocate for world-class solutions, and hear a diverse range of voices on the theme “Aligning Good Governance with Sustainable Development Goals.”

Organised by Cambridge IFA — a financial services intelligence house based in the UK, and hosted by the Philippines’ Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), this year’s 3G Summit aimed to explore the crucial intersection between effective governance and the achievement of SDGs.

It also delved into multifaceted topics on transparency, accountability, ethical leadership, and innovative policy frameworks that can propel society toward the realisation of SDGs while discussing the development of actionable strategies to foster alignment between governance practices and the broader goals of sustainable development.

The CCC remains steadfast in its commitment to capacitating and involving all Filipinos across sectors in the national decision-making process and efforts toward climate change mitigation and adaptation.

By pushing for inclusive and robust climate policies, initiatives, and programs, the CCC aims to bridge the gap in the SDGs in the context of cross-sectoral implementation.

MANILA BULLETIN

[Promoting planet prosperity: PH, Canada team up for climate adaptation](#)

By: Mat richter

Addressing climate change has never been more urgent than when Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report found that climate risks are emerging sooner and will worsen faster than anticipated, making adaptation more difficult with rising global temperatures.

Low-income countries and small island developing states suffer the harshest climate impacts despite minimal contribution to global emissions, the report also revealed.

To help combat the looming horrors of climate change, Forest Foundation Philippines and the Embassy of Canada to the Philippines launched Philippines-Canada Partnership on Nature-based Solutions for Climate Adaptation (PCP4NbS) on Thursday, May 2 at Makati Diamond Residences.

Nature for the future

The four-year program aims to help minimize climate impacts through nature-based solutions, which are “cost-effective actions” that seek to address environmental and social challenges in climate-vulnerable communities.

“Our ecosystem from ridge to reef should be conserved and protected as they are our life support system,” said Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga. “Through this program, we expect to craft better policies that will institutionalize the use of nature-based solutions to help build resilience while nurturing our ecosystems and creating sustainable livelihoods.”

In a mission to address significant climate change impacts by “utilizing nature effectively,” the program is said to help regenerate ecosystems and habitats to provide services to local communities and manage biodiversity better.

“The economy belongs to the environment, not the other way around. Secondly, science is needed, and partnerships are critical to delivering sound and evidence-informed solutions to the impacts of climate change. Third, partnerships need not just be between national and local government,” she emphasized.

The Government of Canada has pledged ₱332 million for program implementation to be managed by Forest Foundation Philippines. The fund will support “local organizations in

implementing community-based initiatives” in Batanes, Camarines Sur, Davao Oriental, Davao de Oro, Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, and Calamianes in Palawan.

Empowering women and livelihood

With women at the forefront, PCP4NbS will “conduct research on the 'nexus' between gender, biodiversity, and climate adaptation” to develop gender-responsive solutions and initiatives that address the climate crisis.

“We are also adding a stronger gender and inclusivity lens in this program, so supporting women and individuals in their pursuit of greater biodiversity and improved ecosystem management. The goal is to support communities in making decisions,” said Forest Foundation PH Chairperson Edwina Garchitorea.

The initiative also "identifies" livelihood opportunities in eco-tourism, agroforestry, and watershed management sectors, aiming for sustainable development and natural resource conservation.

With scorching heat becoming less tolerable each year, especially in the Philippines — a country highly susceptible to climate change, PCP4NbS serves as a timely initiative, offering a sliver of hope to the otherwise depressing events our country’s environment endures.

Ultimately, its call for community action tells that helping the environment can yield significant impacts only if we collectively do something to put out the fire searing our planet. The time to act is now.

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[Philippines, Canada Push Nature-Based Solutions For Climate Adaptation Program](#)

The Philippines, through the Forest Foundation Philippines (FFP), has partnered with the government of Canada to find nature-based solutions for adapting to climate change.

During the program launch of the Philippines-Canada Partnership on Nature-based Solutions for Climate Adaptation (PCP4NbS) in Makati City on Thursday, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga cited the critical and urgent need to build capacity for adaptation.

She said the partnership will help strengthen the resilience of Filipinos, especially rural and indigenous women, against the impacts of the interconnected crisis due to the impact of climate change, loss of biodiversity, degradation and diminishing of the green and blue forests, and pollution, on the resilience and sustainability of the country.

It will also includes the sharing of knowledge, expertise, and resources in assessing protected areas and in applying science and new tools to ensure ecological integrity.

“What decades of use, misuse, neglect, and disruption have done cannot be recovered in months. But with honest, respectful, and evidence-informed partnerships like these, we remain undaunted at the DENR,” Loyzaga said.

“These allow the DENR in this administration to know where to start and what must be done to protect our vast office –that is – 30 million hectares of land, 15 million hectares of classified forests, over 7 million hectares of protected areas, 36,000 kilometers of coastline and 2.2 (million) square kilometers of territorial seas,” she added.

Loyzaga said that while mitigation has been strategic for climate-vulnerable countries like the Philippines, there is still an urgent need to build capacity for adaptation.

Loyzaga said the Philippine government has presented the completion of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) at the 28th Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UN FCCC).

She explained that based on the NAP, inaction on adaptation within the 2030 decade is estimated to cost around PHP1.4 trillion, or about 8 percent of 2020 gross domestic product.

“Nature-based solutions are critical to our arsenal and must be rooted in the best available science as well as indigenous and local knowledge. Scaling up is part of the thematic areas that we address in the NAP, and this particular project is well within those areas,” Loyzaga added.

With these initiatives, she expressed optimism toward the protection and rehabilitation of biodiversity, critical habitats, and ecosystems amidst the impending climate hazards and the climate vulnerability of communities.

Meanwhile, the DENR has taken a whole-of-government approach in crafting new evidence-informed plans on adaptation and has shifted towards building new non-traditional whole-of-society approaches to solutions.

Loyzaga said that with the partnership, she looks forward to targeting three wins: biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, gender equality, and the resilience of communities in the context of natural resource management.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Invest in renewables, water security to address climate change](#)

Senate Pro Tempore Loren Legarda on Friday sought more support for efforts to build resilience in communities vulnerable to climate change.

In a statement, Legarda called for collective action, both at local and international levels, to address climate change through sustainable practices.

"We must prioritize sustainable practices, invest in renewable energy sources, water security, sustainable and circular livelihoods, and enact policies that mitigate and adapt to climate change's devastating effects," Legarda said.

The Philippines is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In 2022, the World Risk Index ranked the Philippines as the country with the highest disaster risk.

The recent report of Metro Manila hitting an all-time high record of 45°C heat index, Legarda said, is not just a local anomaly but a "glaring symptom of a planet in crisis."

"The warning signs have been evident for years, but now we are truly facing the era of 'global boiling' as aptly termed by the United Nations," Legarda said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres earlier said that the era of global warming has ended and the era of global boiling has arrived.

"This is not just an environmental issue; it is a matter of social justice, economic stability, and global security. The time for rhetoric and half-measures has passed," Legarda said.

Under the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of the Philippines, the country commits to a projected greenhouse gas emissions reduction and avoidance of 75 percent, of which 2.71 percent is unconditional, for the period 2020 to 2030 for the sectors of agriculture, wastes, industry, transport, and energy.

The NDC, which is a requirement for every signatory of the Paris Agreement, is a climate action plan, which is updated every five years, to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts.

THE MANILA TIMES

Climate change poses risks to human health

By: Ludwig Federigan

In mid-April, I attended a journalism workshop at Sunway University in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The workshop, a pre-event to the 2024 Planetary Health Summit and 6th Annual Meeting, was hosted by the Sunway Center of Planetary Health, one of Sunway University's research institutions. The center focuses on preventing the next pandemic, addressing the climate emergency, creating healthy cities and achieving sustainable food systems.

Planetary health, according to The Rockefeller Foundation-Lancet Commission on Planetary Health, refers to achieving the highest standard of health, well-being and equity worldwide by paying attention to the political, economic and social systems that shape humanity's future as well as the Earth's natural systems that define safe environmental limits. It emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between human health and the health of ecosystems, biodiversity, climate and other environmental factors. It recognizes that human health is deeply intertwined with the planet's health.

About 30 journalists from Asia attended, with five of them from the Philippines. The workshop aimed to enhance understanding and reporting on climate change, air pollution and human health. The connection between these issues is complex and far-reaching.

The State of the Climate in Asia 2023, a regional report by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), revealed that Asia experienced the most weather, climate and water-related disasters in 2023. Floods and storms caused the highest number of casualties and economic losses, while heat waves had increasingly severe impacts.

According to the WMO report, Asia is warming at a faster rate than the global average, with the warming trend doubling since 1961-1990.

Floods and storms made up over 80 percent of the reported hydrometeorological hazards in Asia, according to The International Disaster Database. In 2023, floods were the leading cause of death in reported events by a significant margin.

The World Risk Report has identified the Philippines as the most at-risk country globally. Floods and storms have led to the largest economic losses as a percentage of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Climate change can worsen air pollution levels. Higher temperatures can increase the production of ground-level ozone and secondary particulate matter, both harmful air pollutants. Climate change can also impact the distribution and transportation of air pollutants, potentially increasing exposure levels.

Impact of air pollutants

Changes in weather patterns, such as more frequent and intense heat waves and wildfires, can contribute to higher concentrations of air pollutants. Efforts to mitigate climate change, such as transitioning to cleaner energy sources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, can have a positive impact on air quality.

Air pollution is a major concern, especially from sources like vehicle emissions, industrial activities and the burning of fossil fuels. These activities release harmful pollutants such as particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide and volatile organic compounds. The Carbon Majors Database revealed that 57 fossil fuel producers are directly linked to 80 percent of the global carbon dioxide emissions since 2016.

Exposure to these pollutants is associated with a wide range of health problems, including respiratory diseases like asthma, bronchitis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, as well as cardiovascular diseases, lung cancer and adverse birth outcomes. Vulnerable populations, such as children, the elderly and those with preexisting health conditions, are particularly at risk.

Climate change and air pollution together present significant risks to human health. Poor air quality worsens respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, increasing the severity of symptoms and the risk of death, especially during heat waves and extreme weather events. The World Health Organization estimates that air pollution kills 7 million people worldwide every year. In 2019, approximately 66,230 deaths in the Philippines were attributed to air pollution, making it the primary cause of death and disability related to noncommunicable diseases. Moreover, the economic cost of this issue amounts to P2.32 trillion, which is equivalent to 11.9 percent of the country's GDP.

Climate-related disasters like wildfires and hurricanes can release hazardous pollutants into the air, worsening respiratory problems and causing acute health impacts. Changes in temperature and precipitation patterns can also affect the distribution of infectious diseases, vector habitats and allergen exposure, impacting disease transmission and increasing health risks.

Climate change impacts food and water security, nutrition, mental health and overall well-being, further affecting human health outcomes. It is clear that climate change and air pollution are closely intertwined with human health, each factor influencing and exacerbating the impacts of the other.

The recent United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) adopted the COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate and Health, highlighting the immediate need to address the links between climate change and health. These intertwined challenges call for comprehensive strategies that integrate measures to mitigate climate change, enhance air quality, safeguard public health and foster environmental sustainability.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[ADB urged to boost climate financing to \\$11.5 billion](#)

By: Louise Maureen Simeon

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) needs to ramp up its climate financing to at least \$11.5 billion annually as vulnerable economies continue to take the hit of the impact of worsening climate change.

On the sidelines of the 57th ADB Annual Meeting here, non-government organization Oxfam International released a report urging the ADB to jack up its annual climate finance from an average of \$6.2 billion to \$11.5 billion.

It also called on the ADB to increase its adaptation finance from \$2.1 billion to \$3.9 billion until 2023 in order to meet its own goals.

Oxfam had analyzed ADB's climate finance portfolio for the last five years and found that the bank may have overstated its project amount financing by 44 percent.

This covered 15 climate adaptation projects, two of which are from the Philippines.

These are the Climate Change Action Program with a potential over-reporting of 30 percent and the Build Universal Health Care Program with a 49 percent possible over-reporting.

Overall, the 15 projects covered showed that actual adaptation finance could be off by 44 percent or just \$900 million instead of the reported \$1.7 billion.

Other countries included were Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Cambodia and China.

ADB is Asia's single largest multilateral provider of climate finance, accounting for 50 percent of the international climate finance in the region.

The bank has promised to deliver \$100 billion in climate finance to low- and middle-income countries by 2030, of which \$34 billion is earmarked for climate adaptation and resilience.

However, Oxfam said funding patterns for the last five years revealed only 34 percent of the commitment went to adaptation, less than the internationally agreed 50:50 balance of adaptation and mitigation funding.

“This scenario is not unique to the ADB. It illustrates a wider trend observed in global climate finance, where adaptation has traditionally received a smaller share of public climate finance globally,” Oxfam said.

“This underscores an urgent need for a strategic shift towards more balanced and adequate funding for adaptation,” it said.

As such, the global organization is calling for a transformative shift in the ADB’s adaptation finance strategies.

Oxfam maintained that the ADB must improve the accuracy and transparency of climate finance reporting and realign financial flows with the needs of the region’s most vulnerable communities.

This is especially true as the region has been warming faster than the global average.

Further, the study showed that the majority of climate adaptation funding by ADB or about 93 percent of the \$10.5 billion in the last five years was allocated as loans and only six percent as grants.

“Loans provided at market rates should not be counted as climate adaptation finance.

These loans are a climate debt trap for countries in Asia. They are forced to pay for climate damages that they did so little to cause,” Oxfam said.

[Opinion] Transition to clean energy is crucial

By: Ambassador B. Romualdez

The actual start of summer in the United States is still a month away but people are already beginning to feel the heat. Many countries across the globe, particularly in Asia, are also experiencing scorching temperatures at above 40 degrees Centigrade (104 degrees Fahrenheit), prompting climatologist and weather historian Maximilliano Herrera to declare that “thousands of records are being brutalized all over Asia, which is by far the most extreme event in world climatic history.”

In Thailand, government authorities said at least 30 people have died of heatstroke, with incidents of death also reported in India, Myanmar and Bangladesh. Health authorities are on the alert for reports of hospitalizations due to heatstroke and other heat-related illnesses. Vietnam has issued warnings on the risks of forest fires.

In the Philippines, millions of students are shifting to online learning as face-to-face classes in all school levels across the country are being suspended due to extreme heat, with high blood pressure, dizziness and fainting reported among students and teachers. The Department of Agriculture said the sweltering heat exacerbated by the El Niño phenomenon has caused P4.39 billion in damages to the agriculture sector due to the resulting dry spell, devastating the livelihood of farmers and fisherfolk in 11 regions, with many local government units declaring a state of calamity.

In the United States, weather experts have warned that triple-digit temperatures experienced last summer could happen again. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, majority of the US could see above normal temperatures this summer with several states, including Washington, DC, getting hotter than usual.

The World Meteorological Organization said, “Asia is warming faster than the global average,” with many countries experiencing extreme heat events in 2023. Aside from droughts and heatwaves, countries also suffered the impact of floods and storms that have been increasing in severity over the years.

WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo clearly stated, “Climate change exacerbated the frequency and severity of such events, profoundly impacting societies, economies and, most importantly, human lives and the environment that we live in.”

More than ever, there is no doubt that extreme weather changes are caused by climate change, with fossil fuels, namely coal, oil and gas, being the biggest contributors to global climate change and accounting for over 75 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions and nearly 90 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions, according to the United Nations.

A report published at the NASA Earth Observatory website said total emissions in 2023 is estimated at 40.9 billion metric tons, with both 2022 and 2023 seeing record increases in carbon dioxide from fossil fuels. “The rise in heat-trapping carbon dioxide – and other greenhouse gases – is the primary reason for the planet’s soaring temperatures,” the report said.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has been urging leaders of developed countries to fulfill their commitments and do more to address the threats of climate change. Although the Philippines is not a top carbon dioxide emitter, it is at the top of the most climate-vulnerable countries list, according to the 2023 World Risk Index.

“This glaring disproportion between our share of responsibility and our vulnerability reflects an injustice that must be corrected. Developed countries must do more. And they must do it now,” the President said during his address to the Australian Parliament last February.

Clearly, the transition to clean and renewable energy sources has become even more crucial than ever to mitigate the impact of climate change and cope with the increasing energy requirements of the country.

During the historic trilateral summit between the Philippines, Japan and the US, a key commitment was to increase their cooperation towards the transition to clean energy.

“Our three nations seek to expand trilateral cooperation in the Philippines on the deployment of clean energy technologies, including renewable energy projects such as solar and wind, to support energy requirements in the Philippines and help ensure a just energy transition,” the Joint Statement read.

While there are major challenges that we will face in the future, emerging technology will play a big part in developing solutions, among them nuclear. The 123 civil-nuclear cooperation agreement between the US and the Philippines will pave the way for climate and energy transition goals while securing the Philippines’ energy future. We are also optimistic that in the next five to 10 years, we will be seeing small nuclear modular power plants being deployed in the Philippines for much safer and cleaner energy.

AI or artificial intelligence will also play a major role in revolutionizing the energy sector. The US government is poised to invest trillions of dollars in energy infrastructure, with AI

enabling better design structures, efficient monitoring, optimized generation and demand that can bring about billions of dollars in savings annually.

An interesting piece of news came out recently about a Filipino engineer who developed a thermal insulating powder that when applied as coating or paint, can reportedly reduce room temperatures by 30 to 60 percent. Apparently, the engineer was inspired by NASA's technology in developing the coating for space shuttles. If this is something viable, then we should look into it and perhaps use this to paint the walls of classrooms to help insulate our children from suffering in the heat.

It truly takes a Filipino to be innovative in finding ways to survive this sometimes-cruel world. We are a good people – and we certainly don't deserve to be pushed around by bully nations. We are naturally kind and hospitable; we are much appreciated by many nations worldwide, and surely our resilience will help us survive the many challenges that we face, both internally and externally.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[CCC launches campaign for marine ecosystem sustainability](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is launching the Month of the Ocean social media campaign “Dive Deep, Change the Tides” this May.

Anchored in this year’s ocean month theme “Develop a sustainable and equitable blue economy,” the campaign aims to inform, educate and inspire action among Filipinos and the global community to address ocean-related issues and to cultivate a deep appreciation for the ocean’s role in climate action.

Using carousel posts, infographics, and reels, the campaign will highlight the ocean’s contributions to climate regulation, oxygen production, carbon sequestration, biodiversity support, food security and weather patterns.

Additionally, it will address the challenges of pollution, acidification, habitat and biodiversity loss and overfishing. Real-life accounts from fisherfolks will illustrate the tangible impacts of these issues, along with actionable tips for adopting ocean-friendly habits to promote sustainability.

“Oceans are the lifeblood of our planet, and also our frontline against climate change. Our actions today will determine the health of our oceans tomorrow. We all have a role to play in ensuring their protection and sustainability,” said CCC vice chairperson and executive director Robert E.A. Borje.

Throughout the month, the CCC will engage audiences across multiple platforms, namely, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with a variety of informative content.

This campaign aligns with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, which focuses on conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development, as well as SDG 13, which urges to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Through Presidential Proclamation No. 57, s.1999, the month of May is designated as Month of the Ocean. This emphasizes the responsibility of the Philippine government and the Filipino people to promote sustainable ocean practices and raise public awareness about the importance of our oceans.

Oceans: Allies in deep trouble

By: Secretary Robert EA Borje

Our oceans are our mightiest and greatest allies in the battle against climate change. Responsible for generating 50 percent of all the world's oxygen and absorbing over 25 percent of all the carbon dioxide emissions, they capture an estimated 90 percent of excess heat in our climate system. Oceans are indispensable ecosystems crucial for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and maintaining the stability of the Earth's climate. Beyond their role as climate regulators, oceans provide a myriad of ecological services deeply intertwined with our health, livelihoods and the survival of billions of animals and plants thriving underwater.

Covering 71 percent of the planet's surface, oceans support 90 percent of the world's biosphere — zones on the planet where organisms are able to live. Around 226,000 marine plant and animal species have been discovered, representing only a small fraction of the estimated 700,000 marine species believed to exist in total. Furthermore, oceans are home to diverse marine habitats such as coral reefs, which support 25 percent of all known marine life.

Oceans serve more than just as climate regulators. They facilitate a magnitude of activities such as trade and commerce, tourism, food production and ocean-based livelihoods. This holds especially true for an island nation like the Philippines.

Surrounded by the West Philippine Sea and the Luzon Sea, some of the world's major bodies of water — the Philippines boasts majestic and diverse underwater and coastal life. According to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the country's waters contain more than 1,600 species of fish, 600 species of invertebrates and 500 species of corals.

However, this biodiversity is under threat from various anthropogenic or human-induced activities, including illegal fishing, irresponsible waste management, land reclamation and oil spills, exacerbating the degradation of our ocean health at an alarming rate.

In a 2022 report by BFAR, it was revealed that 27 percent to 47 percent of all the fish caught during 2019 were from illegal fishing activities. The Philippines faces four main types of illegal fishing, including the use of dynamite, cyanide, modified Danish seine (locally known as hulbot-hulbot, liba-liba, buli-buli or zipper) and the illegal intrusion of commercial fishing vessels into municipal waters. These methods not only target fish but also indiscriminately destroy nearby coral reefs and other underwater habitats.

Another issue plaguing waters and the Philippines is pollution. According to the United Nations Development Program and World Bank statistics, the Philippines produces around 2.7 million tons of plastics annually. Sea Circular, a coordinating body of the UN Environment Program monitoring ocean health in Asia, reports that 0.28 to 0.75 million tons of plastic enter the oceans annually from coastal areas of Manila Bay alone. Plastic wastes and organic and chemical pollutants, coupled with rising sea temperatures, promote growth of algae in uncontrollable scales. Algae blooms can be toxic to marine life and have detrimental effects on local fishing and tourism industries.

Damages due to oil spills in 2023 reached P4.93 billion.

Dredging, the process of mining sediments and silts from the ocean floor, and land filling, or the construction of new landmasses from the dredged materials, further compound the underwater trouble. Ongoing constructions in the South China Sea put the country's marine biodiversity at risk. According to a report from the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, approximately 4,500 acres of coral reefs have been destroyed during these construction projects, resulting in the loss of habitat for numerous marine species.

Oil spills, a well-known threat in the Philippines, also cause significant damage to our oceans. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, damages due to oil spills in 2023 reached P4.93 billion or 53.1 percent of the total damages from human-induced disasters, which totaled P9.29 billion. These spills contaminate ocean waters, posing a threat to marine life and human health as a substantial portion of our diet comes from the sea.

Given the immense ecological and socioeconomic value of oceans, urgent action is needed to reduce further degradation. This reality is particularly harsh for certain countries. The Philippines, being a hotspot for natural disasters, with over 60 percent of its population residing in coastal areas and relying on the ocean for their livelihoods, is disproportionately affected by the degradation of our oceans.

Sustainable management practices, international cooperation and heightened public awareness are crucial in safeguarding our ocean health and resilience. Additionally, individual efforts, such as reducing or refusing plastic use, conserving water and supporting sustainable seafood practices, are instrumental in preserving our oceans for future generations.

The health and well-being of our planet, our lives, livelihoods and our future hinges on our ability to protect our greatest ally in our fight against climate change — the oceans.

Together, we must commit to preserving the health and integrity of our oceans, recognizing that their well-being is interlinked with our own.

As our allies, the oceans have been protecting us against the effects of climate change all along. Now that the oceans are in deep trouble, we need to do our utmost effort to protect them in return. Our lives depend on it.

MSN

SM advances climate action with nature-based solutions

It developed a Sustainability Management System focused on the two key policies of Climate Action and Resource Management.

Philippines' SM Group continues to back the promotion of a low-carbon economy through nature-based solutions across its operations.

Timothy Daniels, consultant and head for investor relations and sustainability at SM, said the group has developed a Sustainability Management System focused on Climate Action and Resource Management policies to mitigate climate change effects and manage natural resources responsibly.

These initiatives were shared during an educational forum hosted by the Carbon PH Coalition on 11 April. SM is a founding member of the coalition and actively participates in advocating for environmentally supportive policies, including the review of House Bill 7705 promoting a low-carbon economy.

Daniels noted the Philippines' vulnerability to climate change despite its low global greenhouse gas emissions.

“We only contribute 0.3% percent of global greenhouse gas emissions and yet we are among the top 3 most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change,” he pointed out.

Additionally, Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Borje stressed the importance of public-private collaboration in achieving decarbonization goals.

SM Prime Holdings, Inc., the property arm of the group, recently entered a joint venture with GUUN Co., a Japanese environmental solutions company, to reduce landfill impact and develop waste management infrastructure.

Meanwhile, SM Retail Inc.'s Green Finds program promotes a circular system, introducing sustainable manufacturing and encouraging a green lifestyle among producers and consumers alike.

The Philippine Geothermal Production Company (PGPC), a portfolio investment of SM, also contributes to renewable energy goals by operating two steam fields producing around 300 megawatts of steam converted into electrical energy.

“We cannot exist in isolation and we are part of a grander ecosystem,” said Daniels.
“We are aligned with Carbon PH in its vision to address climate change through practical solutions and policy advocacy.”

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Ilocos Norte town eyes solar power irrigation system to aid farmers

By: Leilanie Adriano

With climate change threatening crops, the city government of Batac in Ilocos Norte is eyeing to establish a solar power irrigation system in Barangay San Mateo, where a small water impounding dam is located.

Batac City Mayor Albert Chua confirmed this on Friday as representatives of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) conducted a field validation of the city's various infrastructure projects for funding by the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP).

He said the proposed solar power irrigation system is a big boost to increase the productivity of farmers as it will maximize water collection and storage to augment water supplies and increase the likelihood of growing high-value crops during the summer.

"The solar irrigation system will be a big help to our farmers. Irrigation is always a challenge in Batac that is why we continue to dredge our water ways and construct more farm reservoirs to address water shortage especially during summer," he said.

The proposed solar irrigation project is located in an area overlooking the national highway connecting Batac to Banna town.

Chua said the location is feasible for the proposed project because it has continuous water supply even during summer time.

"We have checked on other areas and the site is the most feasible for solar irrigation to benefit farmers in rain-fed areas for them to save on fuel. To help achieve food sufficiency, the Marcos administration has been pushing for a nationwide solar-powered irrigation program which include Batac City in Ilocos Norte as one of the pilot sites," he said.

"We are grateful to our governor for recommending Batac as one of the field validation sites of the CCC. We hope that this will materialize soon," he added.

Apart from constructing solar irrigation system, the city government is also urging its farmers to plant drought-resistant crops as response to climate change.

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