



NEWS ROUNDUP

09 MAY 2024 [08:00 am]

- World experienced hottest April on record, climate monitor says
- Climate change: World's oceans suffer from record-breaking year of heat
- Greenpeace calls on PHL to support 'climate damage' tax on fossil fuels
- E-motorcycle inclusion on EO12 tax break sought
- Islamic charitable giving could fund Bangladesh climate adaptation
- Has the planet's climate gone haywire?
- Fair weather to prevail across PH Thursday
- From flooding in Brazil and Houston to brutal heat in Asia, extreme weather seems nearly everywhere

CCC IN THE NEWS:

- Climate Change Commission cites role of environmental journalism

AL JAZEERA

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BBC

[Climate change: World's oceans suffer from record-breaking year of heat](#)

By Matt McGrath, Mark Poynting and Justin Rowlett

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BUSINESS MIRROR

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DAILY TRIBUNE

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ECO BUSINESS

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By: Michael Lim Ubac

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PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Fair weather to prevail across PH Thursday](#)

By Ma. Cristina Arayata

Fair weather will prevail over most parts of the country Thursday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said.

THE DAILY STAR

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By: Seth Borenstein, Suman Naishadham, Sibi Arasu and Fabiano Maisonave

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CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Climate Change Commission cites role of environmental journalism](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the role of journalists and responsible journalism in promoting awareness, intensifying urgency, and advocating solutions to the escalating climate crisis and climate change.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

AL JAZEERA

[World experienced hottest April on record, climate monitor says](#)

The world experienced its hottest April on record, continuing an 11-month streak of unprecedented high temperatures, the European Union's climate change monitoring service has said.

Each month since June 2023 has ranked as the planet's hottest on record, compared with the corresponding month in previous years, the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said on Wednesday.

The exceptionally warm conditions occurred despite a weakened El Nino – the weather phenomenon that warms the Pacific Ocean and leads to a rise in global temperatures – leading the researchers to blame human-induced climate change.

April was 1.58 degrees Celsius (2.84 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than an estimate for the same month in the 1850-1900 pre-industrial period, C3S said.

While there are temperature variations associated with natural cycles such as El Nino, “the extra energy trapped into the ocean and the atmosphere by increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases will keep pushing the global temperature towards new records”, said C3S director Carlo Buontempo.

Average temperatures over the last 12 months surpassed the crucial 1.5C (2.7F) warming threshold set by the 2015 Paris climate agreement, which is calculated over decades, meaning it remains within reach.

In 2015, almost 200 governments signed an agreement to phase out fossil fuels in favour of renewable energy in the second half of the century. Last year, the United Nations said the world is not on track to meet the long-term goals of that deal, including capping global warming at 1.5C.

Weather extremes across the globe

Eastern Europe and most of Africa particularly heated up in April, C3S said, backing reports of record heatwaves that forced schools to shutter in South Sudan and saw countries like Slovakia record their highest daytime temperatures above 30C (86F) in spring.

Across the world, April marked a month of diverging extremes in the form of floods and droughts.

Parts of South and Southeast Asia, from Bangladesh to Vietnam, were struck by scorching heatwaves, while southern Brazil, the United Arab Emirates, and the East African countries of Kenya and Tanzania have suffered deadly flooding.

Pakistan recorded double the normal monthly rainfall in April, making it the country's wettest month in more than 60 years.

Much of Europe witnessed a wetter-than-usual April but southern Spain, Italy, and the Western Balkans were drier than average, C3S reported.

Meanwhile, eastern Australia was hit with heavy rains, although most of the country saw drier than normal conditions, as did northern Mexico.

Average sea surface temperatures were also unusually high, breaking records in April for the 13th consecutive month, despite the weakening El Nino, the agency said.

Warmer oceans threaten marine life, and contribute to a hotter atmosphere, making water bodies less effective in absorbing planet-heating greenhouse gas emissions.

BBC

[Climate change: World's oceans suffer from record-breaking year of heat](#)

By Matt McGrath, Mark Poynting and Justin Rowlatt

Fuelled by climate change, the world's oceans have broken temperature records every single day over the past year, a BBC analysis finds.

Nearly 50 days have smashed existing highs for the time of year by the largest margin in the satellite era.

Planet-warming gases are mostly to blame, but the natural weather event El Niño has also helped warm the seas.

The super-heated oceans have hit marine life hard and driven a new wave of coral bleaching.

The analysis is based on data from the EU's Copernicus Climate Service.

Copernicus also confirmed that last month was the warmest April on record in terms of global air temperatures, extending that sequence of month-specific records to 11 in a row.

For many decades, the world's oceans have been the Earth's 'get-out-of-jail card' when it comes to climate change.

Not only do they absorb around a quarter of the carbon dioxide that humans produce, they also soak up around 90% of the excess heat.

But over the past year, the oceans have displayed the most concerning evidence yet that they are struggling to cope, with the sea surface particularly feeling the heat.

From March 2023, the average surface temperature of the global oceans started to shoot further and further above the long-term norm, hitting a new record high in August.

Recent months have brought no respite, with the sea surface reaching a new global average daily high of 21.09C in February and March this year, according to Copernicus data.

As the graph below shows, not only has every single day since 4 May 2023 broken the daily record for the time of year, but on some days the margin has been huge.

Around 47 days smashed the record for that day of the year by at least 0.3C, according to BBC analysis of Copernicus data.

Never before in the satellite era had the margin of record been this big.

The biggest record-breaking days were 23 August 2023, 3 January 2024 and 5 January 2024, when the previous high was beaten by around 0.34C.

"The fact that all this heat is going into the ocean, and in fact, it's warming in some respects even more rapidly than we thought it would, is a cause for great concern," says Prof Mike Meredith from the British Antarctic Survey.

"These are real signs of the environment moving into areas where we really don't want it to be and if it carries on in that direction the consequences will be severe."

Huge impact on sea life

This human-driven ocean warming is having considerable impacts on global sea life and may even be shifting the seasonal cycle of sea temperatures, according to a recent study.

Perhaps the most significant consequence of the recent warmth has been the mass bleaching of coral globally.

These key ocean nurseries turn white and die because the waters they live in grow too hot. They are a critical element in the ocean ecosystem, home to around a quarter of all marine species.

Unusually warm seas may also have taken a direct toll on one of the most beloved ocean-going creatures in the coldest continent, the emperor penguin.

"There have been examples of the sea-ice collapsing before emperor chicks have properly fledged, and there have been mass drowning events," says Prof Meredith.

"The emperor penguin is a threatened species because of climate change, and the sea-ice and the ocean temperatures are strongly implicated in that."

In the UK, rising sea temperatures are having an impact, with a number of creatures having vanished completely from coastal locations - some barnacle species, for example.

"The problem of climate change is that it's happening too quickly for evolution to catch up with it," says marine biologist Dr Nova Mieszkowska from the University of Liverpool.

On the Welsh coast, a team from Aberystwyth University use the same technology the police use at a crime scene to track changes in the marine population of Cardigan Bay.

Collecting DNA traces from water samples, they show some invasive species are thriving, including a sea squirt that is believed to have originated in Japan and which grows like a carpet over the sea floor.

"They prevent the growth of native organisms in the areas that they colonise," says Prof Iain Barber, head of Life Sciences at Aberystwyth University. "Because they do so well in our environment, they can potentially take over huge areas of the seabed."

Species that are more invasive appear to be responding more strongly to global warming and the increasing water temperatures, Prof Barber says.

The El Niño effect

One important factor that's made the last year more impactful in seas all over the world has been the El Niño weather phenomenon, adding to human-driven emissions of warming gases.

El Niño sees warmer waters come to the surface of the Pacific. As a result, it tends to push up the global average.

El Niño kicked into gear in June 2023 - after a prolonged period of cooler La Niña conditions - and reached a peak in December, although it has since been fading away.

But other ocean basins that aren't usually affected by El Niño have also experienced record marine heatwaves - leaving scientists trying to work out exactly what is going on.

"The Atlantic has been warmer than usual, and this is not a pattern you normally associate with El Niño - so it's something somehow different," explains Carlo Buontempo, director of Copernicus.

This heat is still persisting in many ocean basins, including the tropical Atlantic.

Warmer seas give tropical storms extra energy, and this could help to fuel a potentially damaging hurricane season.

"There is still a large patch of warmer than usual water in the tropical Atlantic [and] this is the main development region for tropical cyclones," explains Dr Buontempo.

"We are almost a month ahead in the sea surface temperature in the Atlantic with respect to the annual cycle [...] so this is an area that has to be watched."

As well as these short-term impacts, researchers warn there will be long-term consequences that society will have to adapt to.

For example, ice-sheet melting and deep-ocean warming are likely to continue to fuel sea-level rise in the centuries to come.

"When we talk about climate change, we tend to reduce that to changes on the surface because we live there," said Angélique Melet, a researcher with Mercator Ocean International.

"However, the deep ocean is one of the aspects [of global warming] that is committing us to centuries and millennia of [climate] change."

But Dr Melet stresses that is not a reason to give up on cutting emissions.

"Depending on our actions, we can reduce the speed of that warming, and we can decrease the overall amplitude of that warming and sea-level rise."

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Greenpeace calls on PHL to support 'climate damage' tax on fossil fuels](#)

By: Beatriz Marie D. Cruz

The Philippines needs to support a tax on fossil fuel producers to help fund the mitigation of climate change impacts in vulnerable countries, Greenpeace said on Tuesday.

“It is in the best interest for the country to advocate for and champion accountability mechanisms that make those most responsible pay for the losses and damages from climate impacts,” Greenpeace campaigner Jefferson Chua said at a briefing.

The tax would be imposed in countries hosting major fossil fuel producers, Mr. Chua said.

“We all know that OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) and G7 (Group of Seven) countries are historically responsible for the acceleration of climate impacts around the world,” he said. “At the same time, countries like ours are lagging in terms of development (relative to) these other countries.”

According to a report by Greenpeace and several other organizations, a climate damages tax (CDT) “addresses the injustice of climate devastation impacting populations around the world who did not cause the climate change but are left to pay for it without the means to do so.”

“On the side of the Philippines, we really need enabling policies here that will facilitate that fund transfer,” Mr. Chua told reporters on the sidelines of the briefing.

A proposed CDT seeks to collect a fee for each ton of coal, barrel of oil or cubic liter of gas extracted by fossil fuel producers, based on a formula that determines the fuels’ carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e).

The report proposes an initial rate of \$5 per ton of CO₂e, increasing each year.

A portion of the climate damages tax will go to the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF), while the other half would be remitted as domestic dividends to fund the just transition systems in affected countries.

“We propose that the tax receipt does more than boost government income for allocation to the LDF, but also offers a domestic dividend that can be spent on climate

action nationally, helping to pay for workers to transition away from fossil fuels, towards green energy and transport,” according to the report.

Rosa T. Perez, independent climate change specialist fellow at the Manila Observatory and the National Resilience Council, said a climate damages tax could fund measures to address climate-related events like drought.

The tax would be imposed more on fossil fuel producers, compared to a carbon tax, which seeks a general pricing scheme on carbon emissions, she said.

The Loss and Damage Fund was operationalized under the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai last year.

The Philippines secured a seat on the Loss and Damage Fund Board for the 2024-2026 period.

However, only \$700 million has been committed to the Loss and Damage Fund, or 0.2% of the actual amount necessary to address climate damage globally, Mr. Chua said.

Despite this, the world’s biggest fossil fuel companies generated more than \$100 billion in profits last year, Greenpeace said.

“Like other taxes, this has advantages and disadvantages, so we need safeguards against its negative impacts... especially on vulnerable people,” Ms. Perez said.

If implemented this year, the CDT is expected to generate \$216.2 billion in global revenue, according to the report. OECD and G7 countries may contribute tax revenue of up to P55.8 billion and P41.9 billion, respectively.

“If President Marcos is sincere with his pronouncement in being a climate leader worldwide, he will need to heed the clamor of communities who are standing up to carbon makers,” Mr. Chua said.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[E-motorcycle inclusion on EO12 tax break sought](#)

The Tariff Commission has recommended to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) the inclusion of e-motorcycles in the tax incentives expanding the scope of Executive Order 12 series of 2023.

The commission pushed the possible inclusion of e-motorcycles under EO12, the executive issuance that gives tax breaks to electric vehicles (EVs), after taking into consideration the numerous position papers submitted by stakeholders during its public hearing on 13 March 2024.

This comes after NEDA commissioned its attached agency to hold the public hearing to pool suggestions and findings by stakeholders, along with their arguments and data-backed positions as to why e-motorcycles should get tax breaks.

The commission submitted to NEDA on 12 April 2024 its report on EO12 review talks which will subsequently be followed by several deliberations before the executive issuance gets its final update.

Since EO12 took effect in February 2023, EV industry leaders have been campaigning for the inclusion of e-motorcycles under the executive issuance, questioning its intent and demanding its inclusion once the review takes place.

Under EO12, only e-motorcycles are still subject to a 30 percent import tax, while other types of EVs got reduced or removed from tariff rates.

According to the Statista Research Department, motorcyclists will account for approximately 7.81 million registered vehicles in the country in 2022, making them the most popular vehicle type among motorists.

Think tank Stratbase ADR Institute and advocacy network CitizenWatch Philippines have been actively advocating for tax breaks for e-motorcycles since 2023, citing their benefits to the country, environment and economy, once integrated into the country's traffic.

E-motorcycles' zero emissions are one of their most emphasized traits, as the transportation sector alone is responsible for emitting 35.42 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2022, which contributes to climate change, data from Statista showed.

The Department of Energy also wants to increase the country's EV fleet by 50 percent or an additional 2.4 million units, in hopes of making the green transportation sector help cut down the country's 35.42 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2022, which contributes to climate change.

To recall, EO12 was enacted to complement the Electric Vehicle Industry Development Act (EVIDA) to create an industry for EVs in the country and help reduce carbon emissions, in compliance with the Philippines' commitment to the Paris Agreement. It modifies the tariff rates for EVs to help mainstream their use among Filipinos.

ECO BUSINESS

Islamic charitable giving could fund Bangladesh climate adaptation

Religious scholars in Bangladesh say the country should harness the generosity of Muslims around the world and use their charitable giving to help the country adapt to climate change.

They said global faith-based finance could be a crucial way to support poor countries whose needs for funds to adapt to climate change are 10 to 18-times greater than they currently receive.

“Being good to others as well as the environment is seen as integral to being a good person in Islam,” said Md Riaz Uddin, an Islamic scholar and human rights activist from Bangladesh who is the head of Boroikandi Madrasa, a religious seminary.

Riaz Uddin said there were different forms of charity that were either obligatory or voluntary for Muslims, but all could be used to support people who were destitute, or were exposed to serious risks due to climate change and natural disasters.

Zakat - giving to the poor and needy mandated by Islam - in Bangladesh alone has the potential to raise close to US\$9.8 billion, according to a study last year.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh needs about US\$9 billion a year for climate adaptation, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury said last month.

Giving zakat is mandatory for all Muslims with wealth above a certain threshold in order to support the poor, the debt-ridden, or people migrating with limited resources.

In Bangladesh, people mostly give informally and as they see fit - often handing out clothes to poor relatives, or people in the neighbourhood. Riaz Uddin said that had limited long-term impact on the lives of the beneficiaries.

Zakir H Khan, chief executive of the Dhaka-based research organisation, Change Initiative, has studied the potential of Islamic charity for financing climate action. He said that given the amount of money donated every year, better coordination would do more to help the most climate-vulnerable groups.

“Instead of using the charity money for one-off do-gooding, the money could be pooled together and used in a planned way to transform the lives of climate survivors,” Khan said.

Clean water

Some organisations are already using zakat to adapt to climate change.

Wateraid, an international non-governmental organisation, focused on water, sanitation and hygiene, is using Islamic charitable donations to build water solutions for salinity-affected communities in countries in the global south that have large Muslim populations such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Mali.

“We raise a lot of zakat money from countries like the UK to help communities at the frontline of the climate crisis,” said Hasin Jahan, Wateraid’s Bangladesh country director.

On the southwest coast of Bangladesh for example, religious schools struggle to provide clean drinking water to students as there is little funding to address issues such as the growing salinity of the water, which is made worse by climate change.

Wateraid focuses on girls and young women in these areas whose needs are often neglected.

“Salt-free drinking water at school is a relief - and on top of that we get free sanitary pads to protect our health,” said Suraiya Khatun, a 15-year-old student in the region.

Islamic schools teach about 2.8 million children in Bangladesh. They are now seeking international religious donations to tackle growing heat, salinity, and other climate-related hazards that increasingly impact students’ health.

Religious scholars agree on climate change action

One country that has made progress in utilising Islamic charity for climate action is Indonesia - a nation that needs US\$323 billion to meet its climate targets by 2030.

Indonesia’s council of religious scholars this year issued rulings on how zakat could be used to build water facilities, or endow trusts with land or money to plant more forests.

There have been debates about using Islamic charity for meeting climate needs, but religious scholars and finance experts are converging on the conclusion that it can be used.

“We hope that people will now have clarity that the religious scholars agree that climate change is real and our scriptures teach us to protect the people’s future,” said Hayu Prabowo, chairman of the Environment and Natural Resources Body at the Indonesian Ulema Council, made up of Indonesia’s top Islamic scholars.

World Bank estimates show zakat financing could range from 1 per cent to more than 4 per cent of the gross domestic product of Muslim countries such as Bangladesh, Indonesia or Sudan - which could act as a social safety net for the poor and vulnerable.

Faith-based climate finance needs to choose the right mix of tools and technology to meet the needs of beneficiaries, said Prabowo who is also a trustee of Faithinvest, a network of impact investors from different religious groups.

For example, zakat can only be used to help poor Muslims, but other forms of giving such as sadaqah, which is purely voluntary, can support people of any faith. A third mode of funding called waqf can be provided to institutions for long-term investment.

A range of organisations, including Wateraid, are tapping into sadaqah funding, while Indonesia is using 'green waqf' endowments to create forests on degraded land.

Technology is key at every stage of the faith-based financing process, from raising money to implementing projects and ensuring trust in the process, Prabowo said.

Organisations like Wateraid are raising Zakat donations online, while Indonesian scholars are working towards using blockchain technology to allow people to see where their money is spent.

"Faith-based charity has enormous potential to drive climate action - and with more and more good examples on the ground, I hope faith-based climate finance will gain more momentum," said Prabowo.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Has the planet's climate gone haywire?](#)

By: Michael Lim Ubac

As the heat index ranges from 42 degrees Celsius to 51 degrees Celsius this summer in the Philippines, the link between global warming (more aptly called climate change) and extreme temperatures has never been more pronounced than now. Human-induced climate change is behind the collective misery of billions of people across the globe, including Filipinos who must stay indoors during noon and early afternoon to avoid heat-related illnesses.

The burning of fossil fuels (oil, coal, and natural gas) since the Industrial Revolution is the main driver of climate change, causing the planet to become warmer in certain areas and wetter in others. When summer rolls around in countries like the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, India, and Central American nations, the intensity of the infernal heat is higher. At the same time, the northern hemisphere is experiencing cold and snowy conditions even in late spring.

For instance, while the heat index in the Philippines was starting to rise in late March, snowstorms were still impacting the midwest and northeastern United States. The contrast was visible not only on the news but also on social media posts, showing people around the world struggling with wild weather swings in a variety of ways.

Last April 27, Metro Manila recorded a temperature of 38.8 degrees Celsius in Pasay, breaking its previous record of 38.6 degrees Celsius set on May 17, 1915, in Manila. But the heat index (the “feels like” temperature that we actually experience) shot up to 45 degrees Celsius on April 27, with similar blistering temperatures recorded in Palawan, Camarines Norte, Albay, Iloilo, and Agusan del Norte.

CBS 42 News reported that 70 countries or territories broke heat records within the first five days of May this year. The planet has endured 13 months of record-breaking hot ocean temperatures, in addition to the natural warming caused by El Niño. According to CBS, climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe stated that “Climate change is loading the weather dice against us in every part of the world. What this means is that it is increasing not only the frequency and severity of many weather extremes, but also that the risk of compound events is increasing.”

Storms and flooding. The planet's warming causes extreme climate events such as record heat and rainfall, resulting in torrential rains during the monsoon season in the Philippines. We felt one of the strongest impacts of climate change when Super typhoon

“Yolanda” barreled through Eastern Visayas in 2013, drowning Tacloban in a storm surge that killed over 6,300 people. Yolanda was the strongest storm to hit land at the time, destroying 1.1 million houses and affecting 14 million people in the Visayas. Don’t forget Tropical Storm “Ondoy” in 2009, which dumped a month’s worth of rain in just 12 hours, flooding Marikina, Rizal, and around 80 percent of Metro Manila. And the list goes on.

A few weeks ago, heavy rainfall inundated the United Arab Emirates, northern parts of Oman, and parts of Saudi Arabia. The rainfall in Dubai on April 15 surpassed its daily rainfall records for the last 75 years. What caused this excessive precipitation in a hyper-arid region? The World Weather Attribution (<https://tinyurl.com/2sczpd7c>) has quickly assembled scientists from across the globe to solve the puzzle.

Based on their observations, “the event was 10-40 percent more intense than it would have been had it occurred in an El Niño year in a 1.2 [degrees Celsius] cooler climate,” the scientists noted. While they observed the absence of a trend in their model results, “we have no alternative explanation for a trend in observations other than the expectation of heavy rainfall increasing in a warmer climate.”

So how can we slow down climate change or lessen its effects?

Stopping oil use, deforestation, or livestock production all at once won’t result in a sudden stabilization of the world’s climate because of climate forcing, among other factors. According to the United States’ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), “If all human emissions of heat-trapping gases were to stop today, Earth’s temperature would continue to rise for a few decades as ocean currents bring excess heat stored in the deep ocean back to the surface. Once this excess heat radiated out to space, Earth’s temperature would stabilize.”

The most optimistic prediction for the climate to stabilize, if there is no further human influence, will happen after 40 years, according to one scientist at the University of Michigan.

But we can slow the rate and limit the amount of global warming by reducing human emissions of heat-trapping gases and soot (“black carbon”), NOAA said. To do so, it is necessary to limit temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, which can be achieved by reducing oil and gas production (and oil consumption) in rich countries by 74 percent by 2030 and reducing our carbon footprint.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Fair weather to prevail across PH Thursday

By Ma. Cristina Arayata

Fair weather will prevail over most parts of the country Thursday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said.

"Most areas in the country will continue to experience warm, humid, generally fair weather," PAGASA forecaster Rhea Torres said.

Localized thunderstorms are likely in the afternoon or evening, Torres added.

She said cloud clusters were monitored in Northern Luzon, and these could cause scattered rains.

PAGASA forecast the frontal system to bring scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Batanes and Cagayan.

Moderate to heavy rains in those areas could result in flash floods or landslides, PAGASA warned.

Meanwhile, at least 25 places are expected to experience danger level heat index, peaking 45 degrees in Dagupan City, Pangasinan; Virac, Catanduanes; and Roxas City, Capiz.

Heat indices or what the temperature feels like to the human body when relative humidity is combined with the air, ranging from 42°C to 44°C are likely in the following areas:

Puerto Princesa City, Palawan
Aborlan, Palawan
Cuyo, Palawan
Laoag City, Ilocos Norte
MMSU, Batac, Ilocos Norte
Bacnotan, La Union
Dumangas, Iloilo
Guiuan, Eastern Samar
NAIA
Clark Airport
Cubi Point, Subic Bay, Olongapo City

San Jose, Occidental Mindoro
Legazpi City, Albay
Sinait, Ilocos Sur
Iba, Zambales
CLSU Muñoz, Nueva Ecija
Masbate City, Masbate
CBSUA-Pili, Camarines Sur
Catarman, Northern Samar
Mambusao, Capiz
Dipolog, Zamboanga Del Sur
Iloilo City, Iloilo

PAGASA said that under danger level or 41°C to 51°C heat indices, heat cramps, and heat exhaustion are likely.

Continued exposure could also cause heat stroke.

Meanwhile, moderate to strong winds and moderate to rough seas will prevail over the northern and western sections of Northern Luzon.

Elsewhere, winds will be light to moderate with slight to moderate seas, PAGASA said.

THE DAILY STAR

[From flooding in Brazil and Houston to brutal heat in Asia, extreme weather seems nearly everywhere](#)

By: Seth Borenstein, Suman Naishadham, Sibi Arasu and Fabiano Maisonnave

In sweltering Brazil, flooding killed dozens of people and paralyzed a city of about 4 million people. Voters and politicians in India, amid national elections, are fainting in heat that hit as high as 115 degrees (46.3 degrees Celsius).

A brutal Asian heat wave has closed schools in the Philippines, killed people in Thailand and set records there and in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Maldives and Myanmar. Record temperatures — especially at night when it just won't cool down — have hit many parts of Africa. Flooding devastated Houston, and the United States as a whole just had its second highest number of tornadoes for the month of April.

In a world growing increasingly accustomed to wild weather swings, the last few days and weeks have seemingly taken those environmental extremes to a new level. Some climate scientists say they are hard pressed to remember when so much of the world has had its weather on overdrive at the same time.

“Given that we've seen an unprecedented jump in global warmth over the last 11 months, it is not surprising to see worsening climate extremes so early in the year,” said University of Michigan environment dean Jonathan Overpeck. “If this record pace of warming continues, 2024 will likely be a record year of climate disasters and human suffering.”

When the world is warmer, it is likely to have more extreme weather and climate events, including record heat and rainfall, scientists say. And climate change is also changing weather patterns, leading to rainy and hot systems stalling over areas and the jet stream meandering, said Alvaro Silva, a climate scientist at the World Meteorological Organization.

Adding to the stronger effects of human-caused climate change is a now-weakening El Nino — a natural warming of parts of the central Pacific that changes weather worldwide — that came on the heels of a three-year La Nina, its cool counterpart, Silva said.

Scientists also pointed to 13 straight months of record hot oceans as a potential factor in the weather extremes.

This all comes as the world just finished its 11th record-breaking hot month in a row, the European climate service Copernicus reported Wednesday.

The average global temperature of 59 degrees Fahrenheit (15 degrees Celsius) in April beat the old record from 2016 by a quarter of a degree (0.14 degrees Celsius). Copernicus' data set goes back to 1950, while other climate monitoring agencies go back to 1850 but have yet to report April calculations.

Last month was 1.58 degrees Celsius (2.84 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the pre-industrial late 19th century. The world in 2015 adopted a goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times, but it mostly applies to being that warm for a decade or more, not a month.

While several factors play a role in this recent spate of extremes, "climate change is the most important one," Silva said.

The trouble is that the world has adapted to and constructed cities designed for 20th century temperatures and rainfall, but climate change brings more heat and downpours, said Andrew Dessler, a Texas A&M University climate scientist.

"We're departing the climate of the 20th century right now and we just can't handle these events," Dessler said. "So they're getting slightly more extreme, but they're passing our ability to handle them."

Texas Tech climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe, chief scientist for the Nature Conservancy, said more extremes in more places are overlapping.

"Climate change is loading the weather dice against us in every part of the world," Hayhoe said. "What this means is that it is increasing not only the frequency and severity of many weather extremes, but also that the risk of compound events is increasing."

In just the first five days of May, 70 countries or territories broke heat records, said climatologist Maximiliano Herrera, who tracks temperature records across the world.

Nandyala and Kadapa in India's southern state of Andhra Pradesh set an all-time high at 115 degrees (46.3 Celsius), Herrera said.

Nitin Gadkari, a federal minister, fainted during campaigning in the western Indian state of Maharashtra.

“Heatwaves in India are by far the deadliest type of extreme weather events. At the same time, they are the type of extremes most strongly increasing in a warming world,” said climate scientist Friederike Otto in a statement earlier this week.

This week in Southeast Asia, “it was the hottest May night ever,” Herrera posted on X (formerly Twitter). Parts of Thailand didn't drop below 87.6 degrees (30.9 Celsius).

In late April, parts of northern Thailand hit 111 degrees (44 Celsius), while Chauk township in Myanmar's hottest region hit a record 118.8 degrees (48.2 Celsius).

Many African nations are also facing scorching heat. Herrera said it hit 117.5 degrees (47.5 Celsius) in Kayes, Mali. The capital of Niger had its hottest May night and Burkina Faso's capital had its hottest night for any month. In Chad, in north central Africa, temperatures were expected to linger above 114 degrees (45.6 Celsius) all week.

The deadly heat wave felt across West Africa last month was linked to human-caused climate change, according to scientists at the World Weather Attribution group.

In Mexico's Ciudad Altamirano, the temperature neared 115 degrees (46 Celsius) with record heat all over Latin America, Herrera said. Bolivia had its hottest May night on record and Brazil its hottest day in May.

The record-setting Brazil heat that stifled huge cities such as Sao Paulo also kept a rainstorm from moving over the country's south, turning it deadly, according to Francisco Aquino, a climatologist at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul.

There also was a massive influx of humidity from the Amazon's so-called flying rivers, or air currents that carry water vapor, Aquino explained. “These caused clouds to generate extreme rainfall,” he said.

The Southern State of Rio Grande do Sul is reeling from the worst flood on record, with at least 90 people dead, nearly 204,000 displaced and 388 municipalities impacted, according to local authorities

In Porto Alegre, a metropolitan area with over 4.4 million inhabitants, the waters took over downtown, the international airport and several neighborhoods. Authorities said it will take days for the water level to recede.

Houston is still trying to dry out after days of heavy rainfall that required more than 600 people to be rescued from flooding across Texas, including 233 people in Houston. Just northeast of Houston, about 23 inches (58 centimeters) fell.

Meanwhile, April brought the heaviest rains ever recorded to the United Arab Emirates, flooding portions of major highways in the desert kingdom and Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest hub for international travel.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Climate Change Commission cites role of environmental journalism](#)

By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the role of journalists and responsible journalism in promoting awareness, intensifying urgency, and advocating solutions to the escalating climate crisis and climate change.

In a press release Wednesday, CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje said climate change demands transformative actions and that the media could play a vital role towards positive change.

"In an era marked by these challenges, the role of journalism in promoting awareness and advocating for sustainable solutions cannot be overstated. You – journalists – have the power to discuss difficult issues and tell the public the warning signs of a planet in distress," Borje said in his World Press Freedom Day message during a recent online community hangout and story festival hosted by Climate Tracker Asia.

He urged journalists to use their platform and bring the reality of climate change into focus which could pave the way for actions.

A UNESCO study published this month reveals that 70 percent of environmental journalists have suffered work-related attacks, threats, and pressure.

The United Nations (UN) said reporters around the world "face challenges in seeking and publishing information about environmental issues, including climate change, pollution, deforestation, supply chain problems, illegal mining, and animal trafficking".

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said there is an unprecedented environmental emergency that poses an existential threat to the present and future generations which should be relayed to the public, and journalists and media workers have a key role in informing and educating them.

The UN said disinformation and misinformation about environmental issues can lead to a lack of public and political support for climate action, effective policies, and the protection of vulnerable communities affected by climate change.

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