



## NEWS ROUNDUP

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- Environmentalists urge Philippines to back proposed US\$700 billion tax on fossil fuel giants to support loss and damage fund
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- Role of coops in sustainable dev't, climate resilience highlighted

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- PH highlights importance of NAPs as roadmap to resilience
- CCC: Close adaptation finance gaps for transformative climate action
- Role of coops in sustainable dev't, climate resilience highlighted

### ABS CBN

#### [Philippine GDP grows 5.7 percent in first quarter of 2024](#)

By: Arthur Fuentes

The Philippines' gross domestic product (GDP) grew 5.7 percent in the first quarter of 2024, the Philippine Statistics Authority said on Thursday.

### BUSINESS WORLD

#### [Australia backs long-term gas drilling despite 2050 climate goals](#)

Australia's Labor government on Thursday laid out a strategy to boost natural gas development even as it remains committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, highlighting demand from key Asian trade partners.

## [Untangling the Philippines' energy trilemma](#)

By: Bjorn Biel M. Beltran, Angela Kiara S. Brillantes, Special Features and Jomarc Angelo M. Corpuz

In a modern world beset by various societal, economic, and environmental issues, few challenges loom as ominously as the energy trilemma.

### **CNN**

## ['Blast-furnace heat every day': Record temperatures cancel classes, widening learning gaps across Southeast Asia](#)

By: Heather Chen and Kathleen Magramo

When temperatures in Cambodia hit a staggering 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit) in April, Sek Seila, an 11-year-old student studying in the capital Phnom Penh, was promptly sent home from school.

### **ECO BUSINESS**

## [Environmentalists urge Philippines to back proposed US\\$700 billion tax on fossil fuel giants to support loss and damage fund](#)

By: Hannah Alcoseba Fernandez

Environmentalists have called on Philippine representatives to the board of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) loss and damage fund to support a mechanism that can help collect money to cover the costs of helping vulnerable nations cope with climate risks.

### **THE PHILIPPINE STAR**

## [Below-normal rain still expected in most of Philippines this May](#)

El Niño is likely to cause drought in 47 provinces in the Philippines by the end of May, as weather bureau PAGASA forecasts below-normal conditions for most of the country.

## [School's out: How climate change threatens education](#)

By: Sara Hussein

Record-breaking heat last month that prompted governments in Asia to close schools offers fresh evidence of how climate change is threatening the education of millions of children.

## **CCC IN THE NEWS:**

### **PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY**

#### **[CCC launches Ocean Month 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.

#### **[PH highlights importance of NAPs as roadmap to resilience](#)**

The Philippines emphasized the importance of developing and implementing National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and accelerating the provision and mobilization of support for developing nations to enable countries to outline their roadmaps towards climate resilience.

### **PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY**

#### **[CCC: Close adaptation finance gaps for transformative climate action](#)**

The Philippines has called for the immediate delivery of climate finance commitments and underscored the need to close adaptation finance gaps, including through exploring innovative sources, to support developing nations’ adaptation measures.

#### **[Role of coops in sustainable dev’t, climate resilience highlighted](#)**

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) highlighted the integral function of cooperatives in ushering sustainable development and attaining effective climate action in the country during the 47th General Assembly and 22nd Leaders’ Congress of the National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO) held on May 4.

**Information and Knowledge Management Division**

## **ABS CBN**

### **Philippine GDP grows 5.7 percent in first quarter of 2024**

By: Arthur Fuentes

The Philippines' gross domestic product (GDP) grew 5.7 percent in the first quarter of 2024, the Philippine Statistics Authority said on Thursday.

This was higher than the 5.5 percent clip seen in the fourth quarter of 2023, but lower than the 6.4 percent growth seen in the first quarter of last year.

The PSA said all major economic sectors, namely: Agriculture, forestry, and fishing (AFF); Industry; and Services posted year-on-year growths in the first quarter.

Agriculture however saw a sharper slowdown in growth amid the effects of the El Niño phenomenon.

Household consumption grew by 4.6 percent while government spending grew by 1.7 percent, gross capital formation grew by 1.3 percent, exports of goods and services increased 7.5 percent, and imports of goods and services were up 2.3 percent.

National Statistician Dennis Mapa said the 4.6 percent growth in private consumption is the slowest quarterly figure since the 2.6 percent seen in the third quarter of 2010, excluding the shrinking of consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said the heat hurt the growth of construction and household spending.

Unemployment rate rises, underemployment dips in March

“Construction slowed down, no doubt affected by prolonged periods of extreme heat. Household spending also slowed due to elevated prices of major food items and the heat wave,” he said.

He stressed, however, that the government is working hard to address the impact of climate change.

Asked if he sees the heat still becoming a drag to the economy in the second quarter, Balisacan said, “I’ve been in government for a while...I don’t see any more serious efforts now in dealing with climate change than what we are putting today.”

“(The) key really is really innovation. We are encouraging--as you know NEDA is also spearheading the efforts to get this innovation ecosystem coming up quickly so that we can get our people, our entrepreneurs, startups, even ordinary citizens come up with solutions to our daily problems,” he said.

“On a bigger scale of course we need a lot of investment, including infrastructure development to address climate change, especially for adaptation, especially in vulnerable areas like agriculture. And we are tapping development institutions to augment our capacity there, particularly in the financing of adaptation measures,” he added.

He also noted that capital formation may have appeared slower because of the lag effects of higher interest rates.

"In terms of the capital formation, I think these are the lag effects already of relatively elevated interest rates. As you know those interest rates in the past, past 4 quarters, 5 quarters are still being felt today. So that may linger for a while," he said.

Economic managers earlier lowered the growth target for 2024 to 6 to 7 percent from 6.5 to 7.5 percent citing external factors such as global demand and trade growth, oil price movements, expected exchange rate and inflation trends.

The Asian Development Bank also sees the Philippine economy growing 6 percent this year, down from an earlier estimate of 6.2 percent.

The World Bank meanwhile said Philippine GDP will grow by an average of 5.8 percent in 2024.

## **BUSINESS WORLD**

### **[Australia backs long-term gas drilling despite 2050 climate goals](#)**

Australia's Labor government on Thursday laid out a strategy to boost natural gas development even as it remains committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, highlighting demand from key Asian trade partners.

Australia is one of the world's largest exporters of liquefied natural gas (LNG), and Resources Minister Madeline King said gas would be needed "through to 2050 and beyond" in the global shift to cleaner energy.

"It is clear we will need continued exploration, investment and development in the sector to support the path to net zero for Australia and for our export partners, and to avoid a shortfall in gas supplies," she said, launching the government's Future Gas Strategy.

Australia supplied around a fifth of global LNG shipped last year, with the largest projects run by Chevron CVX.N and Woodside Energy Group WDS.AX in Western Australia, with its biggest customers in China, Japan and South Korea.

The center-left government came up with the new strategy after facing criticism for a range of short term measures it took to boost domestic gas supply and drive down soaring energy prices in 2022 in the wake of Russia's war on Ukraine.

The plan lays out ways to reduce Australia's emissions, such as leasing more offshore acreage for carbon capture and storage, while encouraging development of new gas fields, including tightening "use it or lose it" provisions on existing leases.

It comes as Woodside and Santos battle environmentalists opposing gas projects they are developing off northwestern Australia, while smaller companies face opponents to shale gas drilling in the Northern Territory.

"The strategy also makes it clear that we can't rely on past investments to get us through the next decades, as existing fields deplete," King said in a column in the Australian Financial Review on Thursday.

"That will mean a continued commitment to exploration, and an openness to the kinds of foreign investment that have helped build the industry into the powerhouse it is today."

The announcement was welcomed by energy producers but criticized by renewable energy advocates and environmentalists.

“The Future Gas Strategy announced today promotes a reckless plan to open up new industrial gas basins that will damage land, water and communities,” Carmel Flint, national coordinator at environmental group Lock the Gate, said in a statement.

## [Untangling the Philippines' energy trilemma](#)

By: Bjorn Biel M. Beltran, Angela Kiara S. Brillantes, Special Features and Jomarc Angelo M. Corpuz

In a modern world beset by various societal, economic, and environmental issues, few challenges loom as ominously as the energy trilemma.

It's a Gordian knot of competing needs and aspirations, a complex puzzle with global repercussions. On one side, the relentless demand for accessible and affordable energy to power our homes, fuel our industries, and drive inclusive societal progress. On another, the ever-present anxiety that is energy security, which is sorely needed to safeguard against disruptions to daily life, and brings to mind the precariousness of the world's finite resources. There is also the third side, the urgent call for sustainability, as the specter of climate change haunts the very livability of the archipelagic Philippines in the future.

Navigating this trilemma demands more than just technical expertise; it requires a delicate balance of innovation, policy reform, and societal engagement.

Atty. Monalisa C. Dimalanta, chairperson and CEO of the Energy Regulatory Commission, said in her keynote address at a recently-concluded BusinessWorld Insights and Project KaLIKHAsan forum that the energy trilemma comprise the "most urgent and critical issues of our time, right up there with food security and health."

Atty. Dimalanta noted that such an encompassing issue demands attention from the entire country, not simply from the government.

"Some would say, in fact, that the regulator has no role or has very limited role in the discussion of the energy trilemma; and, perhaps in the context of other countries, that is correct. In the Philippine context, however, it is my view that we all have a role to play in charting our country's energy," she said.

Atty. Dimalanta identified the various government programs that aim to address the different facets of the energy trilemma, such as the Green Energy Auction Program, the Net-Metering Program, and the revised Renewable Portfolio Standards.

"In all of these programs, the primary driver of course, is the desire to achieve an energy industry in the Philippines that is secure, despite our lack of fossil fuel resources; equitable, knowing that it is energy that is fueling our growing economy; and environmentally sustainable, because we are only stewards of these resources. We owe it to the next generation of Filipinos to leave them with a fighting chance for a better future."



## Energy sustainability

Agnes C. De Jesus, chief sustainability officer of First Philippine Holdings Corp. (FPH), discussed about energy sustainability, which she defined as striking the right balance between energy security and environmental protection towards uplifting present and future generations.

She noted that the transformation of the energy sector goes beyond changing power sources and thus lies within production, distribution, and consumption of power.

“Because transition is not just changing the type of power to renewable energy. By transformation (and energy sustainability), we mean changing the way we produce power, changing the way we distribute power, and use power,” Ms. De Jesus said in her presentation.

Her presentation added that with the rise of energy demand coinciding with the imperative to mitigate emissions, crucial steps have to be taken, among them developing low-carbon solutions are feasible and cost-effective.

Ms. De Jesus also commented during the forum’s panel discussion that investments in sensors, thermal imagers, green transformers, and carbon-capturing technologies can aid in the Philippine’s transition.

She further expressed that the country has to be practical in the transition to renewable energy (RE), citing studies from the University of Finland as well as climate analytics from November last year.

“While we want 100% [REs] and technically it’s feasible, there are certain considerations that were also listed that the government has to pay attention to and systematically work on. For example, for us to be 100% RE, we need to surge our solar [capacities]. If we don’t want gas to be our transition fuel, we need to drastically lower the costs of batteries that support solar,” Ms. De Jesus explained.

## Energy security

Presenting about energy security, Felino M. Bernardo, head of energy transition projects of Aboitiz Power Corp. (AboitizPower), defined energy security as “having dependable and affordable access for everyone.”

“In this complex process we are undergoing, there is no cheap way to go through this and we have to be deliberate around the cost. But, how we select, how we decide on the cost is by making decisions today not only for us but for generations to come. It

entails and ensures a stable energy supply that can meet the population and economy's needs while safeguarding against destruction and external shocks," Mr. Bernardo said in his presentation.

Mr. Bernardo added that several steps are being taken to ensure a secure and more sustainable energy landscape, such as diversifying energy mix; exploring cleaner and more abundant fuels; and investing in grid modernization, which is expected to incorporate a growing amount of RE and recover quickly from natural disasters.

Regarding the potential of nuclear energy for the country, Mr. Bernardo said that results from other countries show that the resource can help deliver a more affordable and secure energy source, although the Philippines still has quite a long way to develop capabilities and regulations.

"It's going to be part of the solution, definitely. Eventually, it should be part of the energy mix. It's a good source of baseload energy, dispatchable, safe, and carbon-free," Mr. Bernardo shared during the panel discussion.

Mr. Bernardo also added that distributed power through energy packets and the transformation of retired power plants with innovations can also be a solution to the transmission problem.

"We have to look at what we have today and optimize that before we proceed with other technologies because we already have great [plants]. We should look at options of what should we do to optimize what we have, so it's using existing power plants and converting them to be cleaner, upgrading the current transmission system by using newer technology for it to be able to carry more power to the load centers," Mr. Bernardo said.

A long-term effort

Department of Energy Undersecretary Giovanni Bacordo also joined the forum with a closing address on the current landscape and long-term goals of the country's energy sector.

"My first takeaway when I first reported to the Department of Energy way back September of 2020 is that whatever we are doing at the department now, will be felt ten years from now. It's not like building a waiting shed or a small building, which can be finished within the year," Mr. Bacordo said.

He is confident that currently, as the government puts into motion its comprehensive energy program, the Philippines can look forward towards an energy system that is inclusive, secure, and sustainable.

“The realization of the energy plan, which embeds energy transition strategies, entails both a whole-of-government and a whole-of-nation approach. The path towards energy transition is a mutual effort and this resonates with the departments’ continued engagement with government agencies, the regulators, energy stakeholders, development partners, and financing institutions,” Mr. Bacordo noted.

“Again, let me reiterate what we are doing now will be felt ten years from now. So stay with us, because the best is yet to come.”

**CNN**

**[‘Blast-furnace heat every day’: Record temperatures cancel classes, widening learning gaps across Southeast Asia](#)**

By: Heather Chen and Kathleen Magramo

When temperatures in Cambodia hit a staggering 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit) in April, Sek Seila, an 11-year-old student studying in the capital Phnom Penh, was promptly sent home from school.

Like hundreds of millions of other children in many parts of South and Southeast Asia, Sek Seila has had to cope with unprecedented setbacks due to record-breaking heat — like sudden school closures, and having lessons and activities canceled or disrupted.

School this year has been difficult, he says, adding that stifling heat and high humidity levels in poorly ventilated classrooms have been difficult to endure.

“My classroom does not have air conditioning,” Sek Seila told CNN. His class of 43 students pass around mini hand-held fans during lessons on most days to keep cool.

“It’s very unpleasant and uncomfortable,” he says. “On some days, it can even get so hot that it feels like your skin is burning.”

The hot weather has also been brutal in many South Asian countries where, science shows, climate change has brought stronger and more frequent extreme weather events, like life-threatening heatwaves — leaving nearly half a billion children exposed and vulnerable.

A dangerous heatwave hit Bangladesh in April, shutting down schools across the country — many of which were poorly equipped and lacked essential cooling resources, such as fans and air-conditioning, to support and protect students from health risks like dehydration, migraines and heat stroke. More than 33 million children were impacted as a result of the heatwave, according to groups like Save the Children and UNICEF.

The worst hit were poor children in rural areas whose families couldn’t afford devices like laptops and tablets to facilitate remote learning, UNICEF says. “It hasn’t been easy for many children in a country as hot as Bangladesh, where they have been facing blast-furnace heat almost every day,” said Sheldon Yett, a UNICEF representative for the region.

“This year was hotter than last year and we know that global warming is only going to get worse,” Yett said. “Besides serious health risks, we cannot ignore children’s

education needs, which have already been severely impacted after the Covid pandemic.”

Poorest countries suffer most

The UN and its agencies say developing countries are at the forefront of the climate crisis and bear the brunt of prolonged extreme weather like heatwaves, tornadoes and cyclones, as well as severe storms and flooding.

“Every child has a right to a safe and healthy environment,” Yett said. “We want to see schools open for children to learn but everything needs to be done in a safe way.”

Experts and educators in Cambodia and the Philippines told CNN that March and April have been extremely difficult for schools.

“We don’t allow children outside when temperatures get too hot,” said Bong Samreth, who teaches at a public school in Phnom Penh. “But it can feel just as hot and uncomfortable indoors in classrooms without fans or air-conditioning,” he says, adding that he often sees students “sweating through their uniforms” at their desks.

“We do our best to look after them, especially the young ones, and the past few months have been very trying.”

Climate change continues to impact poverty rates and schools in the Philippines, often ranked as one of the world’s most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change and where schools are still recovering from some of the longest pandemic closures.

The educational gap between impoverished Philippine children and those in urban areas has been widening, said child welfare and advocacy group Save the Children Philippines, adding children in rural areas, unable to attend school, have been at a particular disadvantage.

It also isn’t uncommon to see groups of up to 70 students crammed into a single classroom with just one or two electric fans for cool air circulation and ventilation, the group says.

Volunteers have also raised issues from students about insufficient clean drinking water at school, meaning they cannot keep hydrated during the day — as well as lacking shaded outdoor recreational areas.

“Classes have not been consistent,” said Benjo Basas, a social sciences teacher in Manila, adding that “almost the entire month of April” had been disrupted by massive

school closures after heat in many areas became unbearable — impacting around 7 million children.

Students were unable to concentrate during class, Basas told CNN, an especially stressful issue given that important final-term examinations were just around the corner.

Mirasol Mamat, a high-school teacher in the country's northern Pangasinan province, said dozens of students had become sick after recent heat index levels — which measure how hot it really feels outside — hit alarming highs of more than 51 degrees Celsius (124 degrees Fahrenheit).

“For some impoverished students, we will do home visits to check in on them and deliver study materials like we did during the pandemic,” she said.

Governments urged to act

Governments in South and Southeast Asia have given practical advice on avoiding heat strokes and heat exhaustion, but few have come up with long term plans to address the worsening effects of the climate crisis.

In a directive to all public schools in late-April, Cambodian education minister Hang Chuon Naron announced that school would be reduced by two hours during times of soaring daily temperatures.

Students were advised “to drink plenty of water” and to avoid staying out in the sun for too long “without sunshades or protection,” he said. Loose, lightweight and light colored clothing was also advised for students to protect them from sunburns and heat exposure.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday said his administration is looking to revert the upcoming academic year to start in June and end in March, saying it “will be better for the kids.”

Much of South and Southeast Asia experiences the hottest temperatures in April, May and June before monsoon rains bring much needed relief.

Nonetheless, as extreme weather conditions become the norm, meeting the needs of children in poor and vulnerable countries is more important than ever, experts say.

“We always say that children will inherit the world but what kind of world are they going to inherit if it's going up in ashes?” said Joy Reyes, a climate justice lawyer from the Philippines.

The impact of pollution driven by the burning of fossil fuels cannot be underestimated, climate experts say. There now needs to be “a fundamental change” among governments about how energy is generated.

“Governments have the responsibility of providing clean energy and infrastructure — it should not be left to companies or individuals,” said Glory Dolphin Hammes, CEO of IQ Air, an environmental research company that closely monitors global air quality, conditions and temperatures.

“Cleaner air, keeping climate change at bay — this needs to be the future.”

## ECO BUSINESS

### [Environmentalists urge Philippines to back proposed US\\$700 billion tax on fossil fuel giants to support loss and damage fund](#)

By: Hannah Alcoseba Fernandez

Environmentalists have called on Philippine representatives to the board of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) loss and damage fund to support a mechanism that can help collect money to cover the costs of helping vulnerable nations cope with climate risks.

Wealthier countries should implement the Climate Damages Tax (CDT) on fossil fuel companies, which could potentially generate over US\$700 billion in revenue by 2030. This money could be used as an alternative source for the loss and damage fund, according to a report released on Tuesday by nonprofits including Greenpeace, Action Aid, Climate Action Network, among others.

"It is very crucial for the Philippines to support the climate damages tax mechanism being a member of the loss and damage board. It can interject its opinion on how the fund should be operationalised," Jefferson Chua, a Greenpeace campaigner, told Eco-Business during the report's launch.

Rosa Perez, an independent climate change specialist who was also at the launch, said during the transitional committee meetings in 2022, developing countries had vied for the loss and damage fund to be supplied via public sources, and with direct access for countries in need.

The climate damage tax would be a "good alternative and innovative source" for the loss and damage fund, said Perez, who was the Philippines' representative to the loss and damage fund's transitional meetings, before its operationalisation at COP28 last year,

The Philippines secured a seat on the loss and damage fund's board at the COP28 summit, and will represent the Asia Pacific Group as a full member for 2024 and 2026.

The board held its first meeting in Abu Dhabi last month, with the Philippines represented by Mark Dennis Joven, a former undersecretary at the Philippines' Department of Finance, and Philippines Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Leila Lora-Santos.



In the run up to COP29 in Azerbaijan this November, the board is currently finalising arrangements such as funding sources, means of access and which of the 125 developing member countries would be eligible to receive the money.

The proposed climate damages tax would be a fee on the extraction of each tonne of coal, barrel of oil, or cubic metre of gas, calculated at a consistent rate based on how much CO<sub>2</sub>e is embedded within the fossil fuel. Fossil fuel companies, which already pay royalties to the states they operate in, would pay an extra amount on the volume they extract to the loss and damage fund.

The report recommended that the climate damages tax be introduced in advanced economies which are part of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development as early as this year, at an initial rate of US\$5 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, then increasing by US\$5 per tonne each year. If implemented at this rate, the tax, would raise US\$44.6 billion for the fund in the first year, US\$90.1 billion the next and US\$119.8 billion by the third year.

By the end of this decade, the cumulative revenue collected from OECD countries through this proposed tax would be about US\$892 billion.

The environmentalists who authored the study recommended a domestic dividend of 20 per cent of this figure to be channelled to the respective OECD countries climate action plans, helping to pay for the necessary support for workers and communities to transition away from fossil fuels, towards green energy and transport.

This would still leave about US\$714 billion from OECD countries as their contribution to the loss and damage fund.

#### Loss and damage fund not for adaptation and mitigation

The loss and damage fund must be used as an emergency fund, not as a means to finance climate adaptation or mitigation, said Perez, who was also a lead author for the 2022 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report.

Adaptation refers to risk reduction measures like early warning devices, building dykes and retrofitting infrastructure, while mitigation includes development of renewable energy technology.

“[The loss and damage fund] has to be done with rapid disbursement like providing emergency cash assistance to those who lost everything during a typhoon or funding social protection programmes during severe droughts,” Perez told Eco-Business.

“It cannot be used for adaptation and mitigation activities that could be funded by other financial mechanisms, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) where it may take longer to be disbursed.”

The GCF is a mechanism that finances the adaptation and mitigation needs of poorer nations with annual pooled contributions from developed countries from the UNFCCC totalling a minimum of US\$100 billion starting in 2020.

The GCF disbursement can be a tedious process from project origination and approval of the proposal, which could take up to two years.

## THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### [Below-normal rain still expected in most of Philippines this May](#)

El Niño is likely to cause drought in 47 provinces in the Philippines by the end of May, as weather bureau PAGASA forecasts below-normal conditions for most of the country.

In an advisory released on Wednesday, PAGASA said that El Niño continues to wane, but its impacts such as hotter and drier conditions still persist. The Philippines is experiencing exceptionally hot weather, triggering school closures and health warnings.

“The rainfall forecast for the month suggests that below-normal rainfall conditions will likely be experienced in most parts of Luzon and Visayas, while near-normal conditions are expected mostly in Mindanao and the northern portions of Luzon. However, the probability for below-normal conditions is still high,” the weather agency said.

According to PAGASA, Spratly Islands, Abra, Batangas, Benguet, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Cavite, Ifugao, Ilocos Sur, Isabela, Kalinga, La Union, Laguna, Masbate, Metro Manila, Mountain Province, Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Palawan, and Rizal could be grappling with meteorological drought by the end of the month.

Drought could also affect Aklan, Antique, Biliran, Bohol, Capiz, Cebu, Eastern Samar, Guimaras, Iloilo, Leyte, Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, Samar, Siquijor, Southern Leyte, Camiguin, Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, and Zamboanga Sibugay.

Drought occurs when there is significantly below-normal rainfall conditions for three straight months.

Meanwhile, Marinduque, Quezon province, Romblon, Sorsogon, Northern Samar, Dinagat Islands and Surigao del Norte could experience dry spell, defined as three consecutive months of below-normal rainfall conditions.

Dry conditions, or two consecutive months of below-normal rainfall conditions, could affect Albay, Aurora, Bataan, Pampanga, Pangasinan, Quirino, Tarlac and Zambales.

PAGASA added that “slightly below-average to warmer-than-average surface air temperatures are expected across the country:

Metro Manila: 23.0°C to 38.3°C

Mountainous areas of Luzon: 15.2°C to 29.0°C

Rest of Luzon: 19.0°C to 40.8°C

Visayas: 21.4°C to 37.5°C

Mountainous areas of Mindanao: 16.1°C to 36.3°C

Rest of Mindanao: 21.4°C to 38.3°C

The weather bureau said the easterlies, high pressure areas, localized thunderstorms, intertropical convergence zone, low pressure areas, and up to two tropical cyclones may affect the country this month.

A transition toward the southwest monsoon may also happen in May.

PAGASA said that La Niña, a cooling climate pattern, has a 60% chance of developing from June to August.

## School's out: How climate change threatens education

By: Sara Hussein

Record-breaking heat last month that prompted governments in Asia to close schools offers fresh evidence of how climate change is threatening the education of millions of children.

The arrival of seasonal rains has now brought relief to some parts of the region, but experts warn the broader problem remains, and many countries are poorly prepared to handle the impacts of climate change on schooling.

Asia is warming faster than the global average, and climate change is producing more frequent, longer, and more intense heatwaves.

But heat is not the only challenge.

A warmer atmosphere holds more moisture, which can result in heavy rains and flooding.

This can damage schools or put them out of commission while they are used as shelters.

Hot weather can also drive wildfires and spikes in air pollution, which have caused school closures everywhere from India to Australia.

"The climate crisis is already a reality for children in East Asia and Pacific," the UN children's agency UNICEF warned last year.

Mohua Akter Nur, 13, is living proof of that claim, sweltering in a one-room home in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka after her school closed.

Intermittent electricity means she cannot even rely on a fan to cool the cramped dwelling.

"The heat is intolerable," she told AFP last month.

"Our school is shut, but I can't study at home."

Poorest hit hardest

April marked the 11th straight month of record global heat, and the pattern is clear in Bangladesh, said Shumon Sengupta, country director for NGO Save the Children.

"Not only are the temperatures higher, the duration of the high temperatures is much longer," he told AFP.

"Previously, few areas used to have these heatwaves, now the coverage of the country is much higher," he added.

Schools across much of Asia are simply not equipped to deal with the growing consequences of climate change.

Bangladesh's urban schools can be sturdy, but are often overcrowded, with little ventilation, said Sengupta.

In rural areas, corrugated metal roofs can turn classrooms into ovens, and electricity for fans is unreliable.

In Bangladesh and elsewhere, students often walk long distances to and from school, risking heatstroke in the process.

But closing schools comes with serious consequences, "particularly for children from poorer, vulnerable communities who do not have access to resources such as computers, internet and books," said Salwa Aleryani, UNICEF's health specialist for East Asia and the Pacific.

Those children "are also less likely to have better conditions at home to protect them during heatwaves".

They may be left unsupervised by parents who cannot afford to stay home, and school closures put children at higher risk of child labour, child marriage and even trafficking, said Sengupta.

'Wake up to this'

Climate change also threatens schooling indirectly.

UNICEF research in Myanmar found that crop shortages caused by rising temperatures and unpredictable rain caused families to pull children from school to help with work or because they could no longer afford fees.

Some wealthy countries in the region have taken steps to protect children's education in the face of a changing climate.

In Japan, fewer than half of all public schools had air conditioning in 2018, but that figure jumped to over 95 percent by 2022 after a series of heatwaves.

Not all impacts can be mitigated, however, even in developed economies.

Australian authorities have repeatedly closed schools because of wildfires, and research has found long-term impacts on learning among students whose communities were worst affected.

Developing countries in the region need help to invest in upgrading infrastructure, said Sengupta, but the only real solution to the crisis lies in tackling the root cause: climate change.

"It's very important for government and policymakers to really, really wake up on this," he said.

"The climate crisis is a child crisis. Adults are causing the crisis, but it's children who are impacted the most."

## CCC IN THE NEWS:

### PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

#### [CCC launches Ocean Month 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.

Climate change greatly affects our oceans, leading to rising sea levels, coral reef degradation, and an increase in severe weather events. These changes have profound impacts, not just on our ecosystems and biodiversity, but also to our communities.

In response to these challenges, the CCC is committed to promoting nature-based solutions, enhancing climate finance, and working towards resilience.

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.

Stay tuned to our social media accounts for the upcoming contents and to join the conversation about ocean preservation and climate action.

For more information on the Month of the Ocean campaign, follow us on our social media: @cccphl. (CCC)

## [PH highlights importance of NAPs as roadmap to resilience](#)

The Philippines emphasized the importance of developing and implementing National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and accelerating the provision and mobilization of support for developing nations to enable countries to outline their roadmaps towards climate resilience.

The ninth NAP Expo, hosted by the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in Dhaka, Bangladesh, centered on the theme "Driving Transformational Adaptation through National Adaptation Plans."

Bangladesh Prime Minister, H.E. Sheikh Hasina, urged nations to prioritize their policies and programs enhancing their adaptive capacities. Hasina also inaugurated the "Bangladesh Climate Development Partnership" to bolster cooperation with international partners in advancing their climate agenda.

CCC Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, serving as member of the UNFCCC's Adaptation Committee attended the opening ceremony, joining UNFCCC Executive Secretary Simon Stiell and Adaptation Director Youseff Nasseff.

He echoed Hasina's sentiments, stressing NAPs' significance for developing countries. Borje emphasized that NAPs, based on local risks and priorities, serve as crucial roadmaps to resilience, safeguarding lives and livelihoods amidst worsening climate change.

"Country-driven, science- and evidence-based NAPs will assist developing countries in addressing climate change and its impacts. With the assessment of local risks and vulnerabilities, and priority climate actions, NAP serves as our roadmap to resilience – a plan that can save our lives and livelihoods, and protect our future amidst worsening climate change," Borje said.

The Philippines shared its NAP formulation journey during various sessions, discussing best practices, lessons learned, and challenges. Borje underscored the need to view NAPs as investment plans during high-level dialogues, advocating for support to facilitate NAP formulation for developing nations.

Hosted by the UNFCCC through the Least Developed Countries (LDC) Expert Group or LEG, in collaboration with the Adaptation Committee (AC) and other constituted bodies, the NAP Expo 2024 was held from 22-25 April 2024 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Appointed during the 28th Sessions of the Conference of Parties (COP28), Borje serves as a member of the AC representing developing nations. It is the first time a Filipino national was appointed in the 14-year history of the AC, developing policies and providing guidance on global adaptation actions.

Outcomes of the NAP Expo 2024 will be deliberated at the Bonn Climate Change Conference in June 2024 and reported at the Conference of Parties in November 2024, signaling ongoing international collaboration towards climate resilience. (CCC)

## PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

### [CCC: Close adaptation finance gaps for transformative climate action](#)

The Philippines has called for the immediate delivery of climate finance commitments and underscored the need to close adaptation finance gaps, including through exploring innovative sources, to support developing nations' adaptation measures.

In a news release on Thursday, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) said the importance of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) for developing nations most at risk to and affected by climate change was emphasized at the NAP Expo 2024 in Dhaka, Bangladesh on April 22-25.

During the dialogue with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Executive Secretary Simon Stiell, and Bangladesh Minister for Environment, Forestry and Climate Change Saber Hossain Chowdhury, CCC Secretary Robert EA Borje underscored the importance of a holistic approach to close adaptation finance gaps.

Borje also called for a commitment to ensuring that support for developing countries' NAP formulation and implementation is available and easily accessible.

“To close the gaps, address our growing needs, and enhance adaptation action and support, we must work collectively to determine and unlock various sources, including the UNFCCC financial mechanism, and finance options with highest concessionality, least to no conditionalities, and no additional debt burden for developing nations,” Borje said.

The UN Environment Programme's Adaptation Gap Report 2023 estimated that support for adaptation falls short by up to USD366 billion per year.

Public finance flows for climate change adaptation from developed to developing countries have declined by 15 percent from 2021 figures, signaling the need to explore other sources for the timely implementation of adaptation measures.

“We need to go beyond the doubling of adaptation finance by 2025, and delivering on the overdue commitment of USD100 billion for developing countries' climate actions,” Borje said. “We need to be more creative and innovative to enable our timely implementation of action plans – so that we avoid further loss and damage while building our adaptive capacities.”

Guided by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., the Philippines forges partnerships with various countries, partners, and stakeholders to augment domestic resources, enabling the implementation of climate actions in speed and scale.

In addition to the UNFCCC financial mechanism, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Borje highlighted other innovative sources of support applicable to the Philippines, such as bilateral partnerships, private sector investments, foreign-assisted support from development partners and stakeholders, and mechanisms, such as thematic bonds.

From formulation to implementation, Borje underscored the importance of climate finance throughout the iterative process of NAPs.

“NAPs should then be considered as investment plans. With sufficient finance and transparent and predictable support flows, developing nations can translate plans into concrete actions with results,” he added.

Discussions on closing adaptation finance gaps and determining the new collective quantified goal on climate finance are expected to progress at the 29th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP29) in Baku, Azerbaijan on Nov. 11-22.

Hosted by the UNFCCC through the Least Developed Countries (LDC) Expert Group or LEG, in collaboration with the Adaptation Committee (AC) and other constituted bodies, the NAP Expo 2024 outcomes will be further discussed in the upcoming Climate Change Conference in June 2024 in Bonn, Germany, and at the COP29.

## Role of coops in sustainable dev't, climate resilience highlighted

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) highlighted the integral function of cooperatives in ushering sustainable development and attaining effective climate action in the country during the 47th General Assembly and 22nd Leaders' Congress of the National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO) held on May 4.

Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, CCC vice chairperson and executive director, underscored the vital role of cooperatives during the second plenary session titled "Green Growth and Climate Resilience as a Path for Sustainability."

"Cooperatives embody the spirit of bayanihan where people come together to help one another, to share resources, and work towards a common goal. It is also a creative approach to supporting people who need help. Strengthening the resilience of cooperatives enhances the resilience of our people, thereby fortifying the resilience of our entire nation," Borje said.

"Local energy cooperatives can promote renewable sources, such as solar and wind, reducing fossil fuel dependence through shared resources. Agricultural cooperatives, on the other hand, aid sustainable farming, lowering carbon footprints and enhancing biodiversity. Meanwhile, transportation cooperatives advocate eco-friendly travel, cutting emissions and congestion. All of these foster local production for a resilient Philippine economy," he added.

During the discussion, Borje amplified the ongoing efforts of the national government to achieve climate resilience and sustainable development across all sectors.

He detailed the country's overarching development and climate plans and frameworks such as the National Framework on Climate Change (NFCC), National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (NCCAP), and the draft National Adaptation Plan (NAP).

Borje emphasized the importance of the NAP in assisting cooperatives in identifying their assets and financial risks amid disasters and climate challenges.

He delved into how climate frameworks can effectively facilitate cooperative efforts to promote eco-friendly goods, services, technologies and practices to help protect Philippine ecosystems and biodiversity.

Borje also highlighted the importance of reducing energy, materials, and water consumption through highly efficient strategies, transitioning to a low-carbon economy, and mitigating long-term waste and pollution.

NATCCO was established to supervise the coordination and provision of training and educational services at the national level, and serve as a support mechanism for promoting social justice and economic development.

This year, NATCCO's assembly is focused on the theme "Building Trust, Climate Resilience and Sustainable Futures: Happy Members of Secured Co-ops in an Integrated Network."

The CCC remains steadfast in its commitment to mainstreaming a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in developing the country's strategies and plans for the climate crisis.

By engaging and involving the public, private, and cooperatives, the CCC aims to foster ecological and sustainable practices across a range of industries and contribute to the attainment of a climate smart and climate resilient Philippines.

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