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02 OCTOBER 2025

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ABS CBN

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

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Tropical depression Paolo decelerated slightly as it moves over the Philippine Sea, the state weather bureau PAGASA said late Wednesday.

Wind signal no. 1 is now up over eastern and central Isabela, Quirino, northern and central Aurora, and northern Catanduanes.

At 10 p.m. Wednesday, tropical depression Paolo was located 695 kilometers east of Daet, Camarines Norte.

It packs winds of 55 kilometers per hour, with gusts up to 70 kph, and is moving westward at 20 kph.

Paolo will intensify up to severe tropical storm strength before making landfall over Isabela or northern Aurora on Friday morning or afternoon.

It will cross Northern Luzon and emerge over the West Philippine Sea in the evening.

CNN

Pope Leo calls for global action to tackle climate change

By: Christopher Lamb

Pope Leo XIV has called for pressure to be placed on governments to protect the environment as he stressed that damaging the natural world is incompatible with the Christian faith, in a speech at a climate conference Wednesday.

“We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures” Leo told the conference which was held to mark 10 years since Pope Francis’ landmark document on the environment. “Everyone in society, through non-governmental organizations and advocacy groups, must put pressure on governments to develop and implement more rigorous regulations, procedures and controls.”

The American pontiff’s remarks came in his first major speech on the environment since his election in May. Leo has indicated he wants to continue with his predecessor’s efforts to tackle the climate crisis, opening a new ecological center in the papal summer residence of Castel Gandolfo, about 15 miles outside of Rome, and calling for the conversion of people “inside and outside the church” who don’t recognize “the urgent need to care for our common home.”

Pope Leo paid tribute to his predecessor’s encyclical Laudato si’ (“Praised be to you”) which said responsible stewardship of the environment was a moral imperative for Catholics while linking environmental degradation with poverty.

The release of the encyclical was timed to influence the Paris COP21 climate summit and is considered have an impact on galvanizing religious groups and even those outside the Catholic Church to protect the environment while inspiring the group, the “Laudato si’ Movement”.

They were the organisers of the event at Castel Gandolfo at which Leo spoke Wednesday. Among those attending the event was Arnold Schwarzenegger, the actor and former Governor of California, who is supporting papal efforts on climate.

In his remarks, Leo referenced next month’s COP30 climate change conference in Brazil saying he hopes it and other forthcoming summits “will listen to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor, families, indigenous peoples, involuntary migrants and believers throughout the world.”

Leo’s remarks came just over a week after President Donald Trump called climate change “the greatest con job ever perpetrated on the world” during a speech at the United Nations General Assembly.

The pope quoted Francis’ second environmental document, Laudate Deum, which pointed out that “some have chosen to deride” the scientific data behind climate change and even “ridicule those who speak of global warming.” Leo insisted, however, that people’s hearts needed to be

changed, and called for a “true ecological conversion” which changes individuals and communities.

“We must shift from collecting data to caring,” he said before making a final appeal. “God will ask us if we have cultivated and cared for the world that he created for the benefit of all and for future generations, and if we have taken care of our brothers and sisters. What will be our answer?”

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Pope, Schwarzenegger to rally Catholics to 'terminate' climate change

Pope Leo XIV joins environmental experts and campaigners from around the world for a climate conference near Rome Wednesday featuring "Terminator" star Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The three-day event marks the 10th anniversary of late Pope Francis's landmark climate manifesto "Laudato Si", an appeal for action on human-caused global warming.

US-born Pope Leo, elected in May following Francis's death, has taken up his predecessor's rallying cry, insisting it is time to swap words for "decisive and coordinated climate action".

Time is of the essence. The emissions which drive climate change have been rising around the world, but need to almost halve by the end of the decade to limit global warming to the safer levels agreed under the 2015 Paris deal.

How to achieve that will be the focus of the upcoming UN COP30 climate summit in Brazil in November.

In light of that, "Raising Hope for Climate Justice" — which will be held in Castel Gandolfo, where the pope has a summer residence — will look at progress made and "urgent steps" now needed, organisers said.

Action hero-turned-environmental campaigner Schwarzenegger told a press conference at the Vatican Tuesday that it was "very important" for the Catholic Church to throw its weight behind the global challenge.

"There is not one single person who can 'terminate' pollution alone," he quipped.

"We have to work together. You have 1.4 billion Catholics in the world, and you have 200,000 churches, and you have approximately 400,000 priests. Imagine the power of communication," Schwarzenegger added.

"Every single one of those 1.4 billion Catholics can be a crusader for the environment."

'People power'
The former California governor will speak Wednesday alongside Brazil's Environment Minister Marina Silva and Pope Leo, who has declared protecting the environment "a matter of justice: social, economic and human".

"In a world where the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters are the first to suffer the devastating effects of climate change… care for creation becomes an expression of our faith and humanity," the pope wrote in September.

Before his election as head of the Catholic Church, Robert Francis Prevost spent around 20 years as a missionary in Peru, where he helped vulnerable communities hit by the effects of climate change, including severe floods.

Schwarzenegger said the conference — which brings together bishops, climate and biodiversity experts, Indigenous leaders and civil society representatives — was a chance to harness “people power”.

Lorna Gold, head of the Laudato Si’ Movement organising the conference, said participants would make a new pledge in memory of Pope Francis “to fulfil the vision” of his call to climate action, which would then be delivered to COP30.

“We know our leaders are not making adequate progress… (and) are not prepared to wait,” she told journalists.

The aim of this conference is “to see how we as non-state actors can step up”, she said.

Experts credited Francis with having influenced the landmark 2015 Paris climate accords with his “Laudato Si” encyclical, which argued that developed economies were to blame for an impending environmental catastrophe.

Nearly a decade later in 2023, Francis warned that some of the damage was “already irreversible”.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY GUARDIAN

People's Survival Fund launches nationwide caravan for climate resilience

The People's Survival Fund Board, led by the Department of Finance, has launched a nationwide PSF Caravan beginning in Mindanao to equip local government units with tools and knowledge to access climate finance and deliver locally led adaptation projects.

"The purpose of this caravan is to help fast-track and scale up local governments' access to the Fund, and because the PSF provides long-term finance specifically for local adaptation projects, it has the power to shape communities' resilience and save lives," DOF Chief of Staff and Undersecretary Maria Luwalhati Dorotan Tiuseco said.

She added that the DOF "is ready to doSet featured image the handholding to ensure that the funds go to the right projects."

The PSF is the Philippines' pioneering climate adaptation financing mechanism, enabling LGUs and local organizations to design and implement community-based initiatives that strengthen climate resilience.

To date, the PSF Board has approved 24 adaptation projects and project development grants nationwide totaling PHP 1.421 billion, demonstrating the Marcos Jr. administration's commitment to empowering local communities to confront climate risks.

Co-hosted with the United Nations Development Programme's Strengthening Institutions and Empowering Localities Against Disasters and Climate Change in the Philippines and supported by the Australian Government, the national caravan aims to fast-track LGUs' access to the PSF by raising awareness, sharpening technical skills, and guiding them through the fund's processes.

The caravan is being held across vulnerable municipalities and provinces in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, including the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, with the next leg scheduled for October and continuing until the first quarter of 2026.

The Mindanao caravan, held in Butuan City on Sept. 18–19, 2025, gathered over 55 participants from LGUs, national agencies, academe, the private sector, and civil society to forge collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

Participating LGUs included the municipalities of Kitcharao, Tubay, Las Nieves, and Santiago, and Butuan City in Agusan del Norte; the provincial governments of Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur; the Municipality of Esperanza; the municipalities of Cateel, Governor

Generoso, and Manay in Davao Oriental; and the provincial governments of Davao Oriental, Dinagat Islands, Bukidnon, and Surigao del Sur.

The caravan featured seminars, technical consultations, and interactive workshops led by resource persons and subject matter experts.

As the country's blueprint for building climate resilience and reducing risks, the National Adaptation Plan was discussed in detail to guide participants in integrating it into their local planning frameworks to produce science-based proposals for climate change adaptation projects.

Climate Change Commission Deputy Executive Director Rommel Cuenca highlighted how the NAP can be embedded into Comprehensive Land Use and Development Plans, Local Climate Change Action Plans, and Annual Investment Plans to strengthen the scientific basis of LGUs' project proposals.

To help LGUs and accredited local or community organizations access funding for these proposals, the DOF Climate Finance Policy Group discussed the key features and end-to-end processes of the PSF.

Workshops also gave LGUs the opportunity to pitch initial proposals and receive live feedback from PSF Board members, including Yvonne Garcia Flores of the Gokongwei Group and Silvestre Barrameda Jr. of the National Resilience Council.

Other experts present included Vincent Cotoron of Caraga State University and Guiamel Alim of the Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society.

The Municipality of Kitcharao LGU shared its experiences in handling a PSF-funded project, offering participants insights into the process and guidance in developing or refining their own climate adaptation proposals.

The PSF Secretariat conducted a site visit and a courtesy meeting with Mayor Jenry E. Montante to affirm the fund's support for the continued implementation of the project to enhance sustainable management of the community's river ecosystem.

Also present were representatives from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority, Ministry of the Interior and Local Government, Mindanao Development Authority, Sibog Katawhan Alang sa Paglambo Inc., and regional offices of the Bureau of the Treasury and Bureau of Local Government Finance.

The PSF Board is composed of multi-sectoral representatives including the Secretary of Finance as chairperson, the vice chairperson of the Climate Change Commission, the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management, the Secretary of the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development, the Secretary of the Interior and Local Government, the

chairperson of the Philippine Commission on Women, and members from non-government agencies representing the business sector, non-government organizations, and the academe and scientific community.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

Global forum urges environmental transparency, access to info

By: Marita Moaje

Participants at a global forum held in Manila on Tuesday called on governments to pass a right to information law that would give the public easier access to information, especially on governance and environmental concerns, and help strengthen transparency, and institutionalize citizens' right to know in this digital age.

At the closing of the 2025 International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI), the Philippines, as the first Southeast Asian country to host the global event, joined the call for the passage of stronger laws on access to information.

"We, hereby encourage member states to strengthen access to information, to define environmental information broadly, to establish public environmental information clearinghouses to serve as centralized, publicly accessible data repositories, and to develop clear dissemination frameworks with legally defined timelines and procedures," the statement endorsed by the participants to the forum read.

Moreover, they also urged "governments to enact legislation requiring proactive publication of environmental threats and ensure that the grounds for denying access to environmental information are strictly limited to reasons permitted under international human rights law and subject to proportionality and necessity."

FOI law for PH

On Monday, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Acting Secretary Dave Gomez opened the event by calling on Philippine lawmakers to finally enact a Freedom of Information (FOI) Law that meets global standards and empowers democracy.

"A government that listens, informs, and empowers its citizens. Because only with an informed citizenry can we build a truly democratic nation," he said.

Gomez acknowledged that while the Marcos administration envisions a government that is "not only for the people but also with the people" under a "Bagong Pilipinas" or New Philippines, he said more still needs to be done to fulfill the government's bid to institutionalize the FOI Program.

Environmental transparency

International participants to the forum urged government to promote access to environmental information, especially for communities potentially affected by transboundary or high-risk activities, in accordance with international principles, including Principle 19 of the Rio

Declaration, and in line with the right to free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples, as recognized in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

This includes advance notice, full disclosure of risks, and mandatory public participation of potentially impacted communities in environmental and social impact assessments for major projects, including cross-border consultations.

Other recommendations included defining environmental information broadly, from emissions data to biodiversity and industrial impacts, accelerating the adoption of access to information (ATI) legislation in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and drawing from model laws.

Meanwhile, the Manila forum also called on the over 50 countries that still lack ATI laws to accelerate the adoption of access to information legislation.

“Member States must lead this global effort, ensuring that all people can meaningfully engage in protecting their environment and future. We further call for regular global monitoring of progress, with the UN system reporting annually on advances and gaps in access to environmental information worldwide," it said.

PH open data innovations

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Assistant Secretary Kris Ablan presented the Philippines’ innovations to make government information inclusive.

During a panel discussion, Ablan highlighted the free internet rollout to remote barangays and the Department of Science and Technology’s “Starbooks” digital library kiosks, which provide offline access to government data for communities without internet connectivity.

He said the Philippines has an FOI website where the public can find available information and submit information requests to various government agencies.

“I just checked before our panel, we have more than 250,000 questions and answers. That's all saved up in a hard drive, and then we distribute it to all of the kiosks that are spread throughout our country,” he said.

“At present, we have around 9,000 kiosks or terminals in areas where there is no internet. So that's what we have been (doing). We still have a long way, not all islands have either free internet or have these kiosks so the project is still ongoing.

Ablan added that youth volunteers can help seniors and marginalized groups navigate FOI portals, while future integration of AI translation tools could break language barriers in government datasets.

PH transparency efforts

Philippine Climate Change Commission (CCC) Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje presented the country's upgraded climate data portals, including the National Integrated Climate Change Database and Information Exchange System (NICDES) and the Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET) platform.

He stressed that data must be transformed into actionable information to guide communities and decision-makers.

"If there is a system that's robust, that's established, and that's already part of the governance ecosystem, that will act more as an incentive for all stakeholders to be more open with the data that they have. So I think that's very key to be able to understand and to be able to move forward our agenda on transparency, accountability, and governance towards just and equitable climate change governance," he said.

"We need to ensure that the system is there, the process is there, and more importantly, that everybody buys into the value and the culture of openness, transparency, and accountability. Otherwise, you may build the infrastructure, but it will not be used," he added.

SMNI NEWS

First Muslim climate summit unites gov't, communities vs. crisis
By: Jayson Rubrico

The Philippines continues to feel the brunt of climate change — destructive typhoons and floods during the rainy season, and extreme heat damaging crops during dry months.

The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos or NCMF says these threats are a serious concern, especially for vulnerable communities.

''Of course, many of our relatives and fellow Filipinos have been devastated by typhoons,'' Sec. Sabuddin Abdurahim, National Commission on Muslim Filipinos.

The Mindanao Development Authority added that Mindanao is now experiencing stronger storms and heavier rainfall than in past decades.

''We need to prepare in Mindanao because the climate is changing. We are now experiencing typhoons, and the level of rainfall hitting us in Mindanao is a lot different from what it was two or three decades ago,'' Sec. Sabuddin Abdurahim, National Commission on Muslim Filipinos said.

The summit highlighted the Islamic principle of being khalifah or stewards of the Earth — a duty written in the Qur'an and taught by Prophet Mohammed. Leaders stressed that protecting the environment is both a responsibility and a form of worship.

''In truth, the faith of Muslims is not just belief, but it comes with the duty of being a khalifah or caretaker of the environment,'' Dir. Masideng Salic NCMF – Bureau of Muslim Settlement said.

''Mother Earth itself has been entrusted to us because we are Allah's vicegerents on earth,'' Yusoph Mando President, Regional Da'wah Council of the Philippines said.

Government agencies also recognized the summit as timely and crucial in uniting faith with action.

''Climate change is the governance challenge of our generation, so it really needs a whole society approach,'' Sec. Robert Borje Climate Change Commission said.

''Together with our Muslim brothers and sisters, we are really trying to implement the whole-of-society, whole-nation, and whole-of-government approach,'' Asec. Lilian De Leon, Department of Interior and Local Government said.

Through this initiative, officials hope to build stronger partnerships among government, faith leaders, and communities — to fight not only for the environment, but for the future of all Filipinos.

THE MANILA TIMES

Making our farming sector climate resilient can save billions

By: William Dar

As expected, the last two storms that visited the Philippines left communities inundated by floods and damage exceeding P1.3 billion to agriculture.

The government also had to allocate P3 billion in assistance to farmers and fishers affected by the recent storms.

And the sad thing is that scenario is nothing new. Just imagine if the P1.3 billion in damage to farms was avoided if not minimized, and the P3 billion the government has to spend in assistance is allocated for other purposes?

But traditional and social media were filled with images and videos of communities and farming enclaves inundated and almost destroyed by floods whenever a storm hits the Philippines. When there are no storms, the monsoon rains can make life equally miserable for Filipinos, especially the poor and marginalized.

Amid the stink of corruption being uncovered in the flood control scandal, one thing is very clear: Investing to make the Philippines climate smart and resilient have taken a backseat, making the country's agriculture sector very vulnerable to the effects of extreme weather events.

While the anger over the flood project corruption scandal is growing and more Filipinos are demanding accountability, we should, as soon as possible, get our acts together in investing more and wisely to make the country climate smart and resilient.

For starters, the Philippines already has the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2023-2050, which was developed in 2023 and unveiled at COP28 in Dubai. The NAP aims to reduce the country's vulnerability to climate change impacts. To achieve that, the government will take the lead in building adaptive capacity and resilience, and integrating climate change adaptation into its policies, programs, projects, and activities.

When it comes to the bureaucracy, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) takes the lead with the mandate to initiate community-level action and securing international support for funds. It was the CCC and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) that developed the NAP.

The intention was for agencies to have the NAP integrated into their programs and projects, starting with fiscal year 2025.

But what happened?

As we all know now, the 2025 General Appropriations Act (GAA) did not prioritize funding for climate resilience. Reports of billions of pesos worth of insertions for flood control projects of which many were non-existent or substandard can somehow explain that.

To say that 2025 was “politically hijacked” is an understatement.

ADB not giving up

Fortunately, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has not given up on the Philippines in pursuing its climate goals, with the CCC declaring last June that it is hopeful for the approval of a $400-million loan from the bank to strengthen marine ecosystems and advance the Philippines’ blue economy under the NAP.

However, the NAP should also address the need to make the farming sector resilient to the challenges of extreme weather events. And I recommend that making the farming sector climate resilient starts with water management, integrating flood control with saving water for planting during the dry season, and other purposes like generating power.

We can start with this question: Have we ever wondered how much flooding there is during the rainy season, only to see dried-up fields and rivers during the summer?

In short, there is so much water (and strong winds) during the rainy season, but not enough during the summer, especially when El Niño strikes.

The last El Niño episode in 2024 should have taught us a valuable lesson, which is to save water during the rainy season by integrating flood control projects with rainwater harvesting, and small water impounding systems, and large and small dams.

And I am not only talking about saving water for farming (including for aquaculture) but also for other purposes, like generating power, and providing back-up water supply for households and industries.

An excellent way to start off water management and conservation in the country is developing an integrated water management plan for each of the 18 big river systems, with the aim of investing to reduce flash flooding and impound more water for dry season agriculture.

Success in water management

Success in water management — controlling floods and impounding water — will help the country establish a carbon market system through the Asean Carbon Market Sustainability Council-Philippines that I chair.

The mission of the Asean Carbon Market Sustainability Council-Philippines is to “Catalyze a trusted, transparent, and scalable carbon market ecosystem in the Philippines that is fully

aligned with Asean regional strategies, globally recognizes standards, and national climate and development priorities."

One of the advocacies of the Asean Carbon Market Sustainability Council-Philippines is to champion a robust National Carbon Market Law to drive systemic change.

And giving focus to make the country's agriculture sector climate ready and resilient can lift more people out of poverty, helping make systemic change a reality.

So, what does the government need to do?

In the interim, it is the government's primordial duty to start enacting the policies, invest in integrated flood control and water impounding infrastructure, and stop corruption in public works to help farmers attain resiliency against extreme weather events. Again, developing an integrated plan for the 18 river basins is an excellent start.

Long-term planning is essential here, and this means zero tolerance for corruption.

Also vital is adopting a holistic approach, or integrating the individual parts into a system, and resolving the individual issues using big-picture critical thinking.

That approach, if applied to making the country's agriculture sector climate ready and resilient, will result in billions of pesos in additional production for farming and fisheries, billions of pesos wisely invested in infrastructure, and billions of pesos provided to other marginalized sectors instead of food producers ravaged by the storms.

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