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MARIKINA-RIZAL-LAGUNA-QUEZON HIGHWAY

DENR ISSUES SHOW CAUSE ORDER TO 'PROTECTED AREA' OCCUPANTS

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
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LUCENA CITY—More than 200 owners of alleged illegal structures built inside the government-declared “protected area” along the Marikina-Rizal-Laguna-Quezon (Marilaque) Highway received show cause orders (SCOs) from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Calabarzon, the agency said on Saturday.

The DENR regional office, in a report on Saturday, said the structures were built inside the designated road right-of-way by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) along the Marilaque. The highway traverses inside the Kaliwa River Forest Reserve, Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape in Rizal and areas covered by the Presidential Proclamation No. 1636 in some parts of Laguna and Quezon.

Nilo Tamera, DENR-Calabarzon executive director, explained that the structures have adverse implications to the biodiversity inside the protected area.

“We could no longer ignore the effect of climate change. We will continue serving show cause orders,” Tamera said in a statement.

Calabarzon, or Region 4A, stands for the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon.

Rizal, Laguna and Quezon as national park, wildlife sanctuaries and game preserves.

These areas were further protected by Republic Act No. 7586 (National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992).

The DENR has been issuing SCOs since Nov. 3 to the over 200 occupants that included owners of residential houses, and business establishments.

The SCO requires the recipient to justify, explain or prove something to the court or quasi-judicial body. It is used when there is a need for more information before deciding on a certain issue or matter.

The issuance of the SCO is a process to give the owners of the structures the opportunity to explain their presence inside the protected area, Tamera said.

“If they have legal rights to stay, we will respect that,” he stressed.

On Oct. 27, the DENR, the DPWH, the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Armed Forces and local government representatives agreed in a meeting to simultaneously issue SCOs to all settlers and structure owners inside the protected areas and timberland in Calabarzon.

Opportunity to explain

A protected area refers to portions of land and water set aside for their unique biodiversity and shielded from destructive human exploitation.

The Kaliwa Watershed Forest Reserve was declared as a forest reserve by Proclamation No. 573 on June 22, 1968, while the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape was established through PP 296 in 2001.

PP 1636, signed in 1977, declared portions of Bulacan,

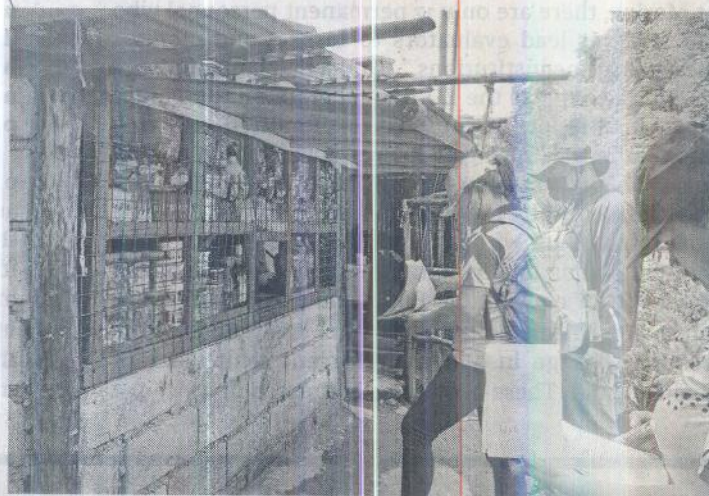
Permit

The DENR stressed that settlers and building owners would need to secure a permit from the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) before constructing inside a protected area.

The PAMB is a multisectoral body that was created by law to keep watch over the protected areas.

If the SCO recipients were found to have illegally built the structures or settled without permits, they will be issued a notice to vacate or a cease-and-desist order.

The violators will also face criminal charges or will be ordered to pay fines, the DENR said. **INQ**



EXPLAIN Personnel from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, in this photo taken on Nov. 3, deliver the show cause orders issued by the agency, asking occupants to explain their presence inside a “protected area” along the Marikina-Rizal-Laguna-Quezon Highway. —DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES FACEBOOK PHOTO



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Govt lists 3,000 illegal builds in Region 4A protected areas

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonlmayuga](#)

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is targeting some 3,000 illegal structures and occupants in Protected Areas (PA) within Region 4A.

DENR Calabarzon Regional Executive Director Nilo B. Tamoria told the BusinessMirror that most of these illegal structures were constructed without securing necessary permits from the DENR and should be dismantled to pave the way for massive reforestation in these so-called "areas set aside for conservation."

Last Wednesday, the DENR led regional officials and representatives from the Department of the Interior and Local Government, Philippine National Police, Department of Public Works and Highways, National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, Army, National Bureau of Investigation and local government units in issuing "show cause" orders for structures along the Marilaque Highway, demanding an explanation or justification from their owners or occupants for the existence of their facilities within a PA.

A total of 239 show cause orders were issued so far. These are broken down as follows: Rizal, 106; Laguna, 55; and, Quezon, 78.

"Once we saturated the serving of the show-cause orders in the areas within the 80-meters buffer from the centerline of both sides of the highway, we will again sit down with different agencies, assess and target other areas (interior) moving outward the national highway," Tamoria said.

Residential and medium rise buildings, resorts and even swine farm or poultry farm, he said, are covered by the saturation drive.

"All the structures will be covered. Other bigger structures will be covered eventually when we go outward. Most of those covered

last Wednesday were small-scale to medium-sized and big business establishments and residential. This is because we focused on the 80 meters on both sides of the road," he said, referring to the Marilaque Highway.

The highway traverses all the way from Marikina to Antipolo, Rizal, and several towns in Laguna and Quezon.

According to Tamoria, the Marilaque Highway straddles in three PAs, namely the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL), the Kaliwa River Forest Reserve by virtue of Presidential Proclamation 1636.

As for the structures within the Masungi Georeserve, he said some of the illegal structures within the area covered by the controversial memorandum of agreement (MOA) signed by former DENR Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez and the Masungi Georeserve Foundation Inc. led by Ben Dumaliang that assigned close to 3,000 hectares to Masungi Georeserve, have already been covered by show cause orders in the past.

As for the Masungi Georeserve itself, which is lacking a Special Use Agreement in Protected Area (Sapa) as mandated by environmental laws, the DENR Central Office has yet to come up with a decision of its ongoing assessment and review of the legality of the MOA.

Tamoria said the DENR's approach in the case of Masungi Georeserve is a review of the MOA. However, he said, in Filipino, that other structures inside the 2017 MOA were covered with show-cause orders.

The DENR Calabarzon had earlier recommended the cancellation of the MOA and to enforce the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act covering all PAs in the Calabarzon and called on all legal occupants to secure Sapa from the DENR as mandated by Department Order 2007-17 and subsequent amendatory orders.



DENR sets deadline for short film tilt

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources- Climate Change Service and Gender and Development Office has set a new deadline for the submission of entries for this year's Mga Kwentong KLIMA-likasan Recognition Awards and SINING-likasan Nationwide Short Film Competition.

The new submission deadlines for the recognition awards and the short film competition will be on 12 and 15 November from the original deadline of 5 November 2022.

DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change Atty. Analiza Rebueta-Teh said that the program is in line with the agency's ongoing advocacy to document and publicize good stories in order to create more ripples of hope throughout the country.

The program also seeks to recognize the stories of individuals, groups, and provincial local government units in addressing climate change and disasters in communities.

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CLIMATE FINANCE

PH SEEKS 'BOLDER' COMMITMENT FROM DEVELOPED NATIONS

By Jane Bautista
@janebautistaINQ

The Philippines will assert its call for "bolder" climate action from developed nations and also urge them to make good on their commitment to climate finance and assistance during the annual United Nations climate negotiations being held in Egypt from Sunday until Nov. 18.

The 27th session of the annual Conference of Parties (COP27) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change comes a week after Severe Tropical Storm "Paeng" (international name: Nalgae) barreled through the Philippines and caused landslides and massive flooding that left 154 people dead.

Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga, the head of the country's delegation to COP27, pointed out that Paeng's wrath was a "reminder of the devastating impacts of climate change."

The Philippine delegation to COP27 is composed of representatives from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Department of Energy, and the Climate Change Com-

mission, including climate scientists and climate and development experts.

Sameh Shoukry, Egypt's minister of foreign affairs and president-designate of COP27, said this year's summit in Sharm El Sheikh would provide an opportunity to address climate change as more than 100 heads of state and government would "come together, mend multilateralism, rebuild trust and unite at the highest political levels."

"COP represents an opportunity that humanity cannot afford to miss. With this in mind, it was only logical that COP27 unofficially be labeled 'the Implementation COP,'" Shoukry said, adding that it would be an avenue to ensure the full implementation of the Paris Agreement's provisions.

The Paris Agreement is a landmark international treaty on climate change adopted by 196 Parties at COP21 on Dec. 12, 2015. It aims to "limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels."

Loss and damage

Loyzaga said developing countries "hardly" contribute to greenhouse gas emissions but continue to suffer the most and

bear the brunt of climate change.

The Center for Climate and Energy Solutions said the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases were China, the United States, as well as members of the European Union.

"As developing countries need resources for climate adaptation, the Philippine delegation will continue calling on developed countries to step up to these obligations and deliver without delay on their commitments on climate finance, technology transfer and capacity building," Loyzaga said.

The country aims to build on the agreements from COP26 in Glasgow last year, particularly in the working group focused on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement that deals with climate finance and loss and damage.

Fourth most affected

"Simultaneously, addressing loss and damage is crucial for Philippine climate action plans. As such, the Philippines agrees to the operationalization and funding of the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage, which aims to provide developing countries with technical assistance," Loyzaga said.

Based on the Global Climate Risk Index report by environmental policy think tank Germanwatch, the Philippines ranked fourth out of 180 countries most affected by extreme weather from 2000 to 2019, next to Puerto Rico, Myanmar and Haiti.

A total of 317 extreme weather events in the country were recorded during the 20-year period of the study while climate-related hazards resulted in P506.1 billion worth of losses and damage over the past decade, the Department of Finance reported last year.

Civil society organizations, meanwhile, urged the Philippine delegation to put agroecology—an academic discipline that explores the relationship between agricultural crops and the environment—on the summit's agenda.

"We forward the framework of agroecology as a viable, feasible, and an alternative climate change adaptation and mitigation strategy ...[It] must be recognized as a global warming solution and a rights-based approach in the COP27 processes and decisions, to ensure the delivery of urgent and concrete climate actions," they said in an open letter on Sunday. INQ



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COP27's race vs climate disaster

SHARM EL SHEIKH, EGYPT—The COP27 summit kicked off on Sunday in this Red Sea resort city with nearly 200 countries struggling to outpace such climate impacts as massive flooding, droughts and heat waves. "COP27 must lay the foundations for much faster, bolder ... action now and in this crucial decade, when the global climate fight will be won or lost," United Nations chief Antonio Guterres said. —STORY BY AFP

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COP27 summit racing against climate clock

SHARM EL SHEIKH, EGYPT—The 27th session of the annual Conference of the Parties (COP27) kicked off on Sunday in Egypt with nearly 200 countries struggling to outpace increasingly dire climate impacts in a world upended by war and economic turmoil.

Just in the last few months, a cascade of climate-added weather disasters have killed thousands, displaced millions and caused billions in damages—massive flooding in Pakistan and Nigeria, deepening droughts in Africa and western United States, cyclones in the Caribbean, and unprecedented heat waves across three continents.

“Report after report has painted a clear and bleak picture,” said United Nations chief Antonio Guterres in the run-up to the 13-day conference in this Red Sea resort city.

“COP27 must lay the foundations for much faster, bolder climate action now and in this crucial decade, when the global climate fight will be won or lost.” Concretely, that means slashing greenhouse emissions 45 percent by 2030 to cap global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius above late-19th-century levels.

Warning beyond that threshold, scientists warn, could push Earth toward an unlivable hothouse state.

But current trends would see carbon pollution increase 10 percent by the end of the decade and Earth’s surface heat up 2.8 C, according to findings unveiled last week.

Promises made, under the Paris Agreement would, if kept, only shave off a few tenths of a degree.

“Our planet is on course for reaching tipping points that will make climate chaos irreversible and forever bake in catastrophic temperature rise,” Guterres said recently.

“We need to move from tipping points to turning points for hope.”

Conspicuous no-show

For the UN climate forum, that means transitioning from negotiations to implementation.

It also means a shift from politics to the economy, with government investments in China, the US and the Europe-



CRITICAL GATHERING IN RESORT CITY The Sharm El-Sheikh International Convention Center, where COP27 will hold its summit. Among the agenda is the impact of the world’s biggest polluting nations. But the participants will raise that matter without China in the meeting. —REUTERS

an Union leveraging hundreds of billions of yuan, dollars and euros into trillions.

The already daunting task of decarbonizing the global economy in a few years has been made even harder by a global energy crunch and rapid inflation, along with debt and food crises across much of the developing world.

“There have been fraught moments before,” said E3G think tank senior analyst Alden Meyer, recalling other wars, the near collapse of the UN-led process in 2009, and Donald Trump yanking the US out of the Paris Agreement in 2016.

“But this is a perfect storm,” dubbed by some a “polycrisis,” said the 30-year veteran of the climate arena.

After front-line negotiators set COP27 in motion on Sunday, more than 120 world leaders will put in appearances on Monday and Tuesday.

The most conspicuous no-show will be China’s Xi Jinping, whose leadership was renewed last month at a Communist Party Congress.

‘High expectations’

US President Joe Biden had said he would attend, but only after legislative elections on Tuesday that could see either or both houses of Congress fall into the hands of Republicans hostile to international action on climate change.

Cooperation between the United States and China—the world’s two largest economies and carbon polluters—has been

crucial to rare breakthroughs in the nearly 30-year saga of UN climate talks, including the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Sino-US relations, however, have sunk to a 40-year low after a visit to Taiwan by House leader Nancy Pelosi and a US ban on the sale of high-level chip technology to China, leaving the outcome of COP27 in doubt.

A meeting between Xi and Biden at the G-20 summit in Bali days before the UN climate meeting ends, if it happens, could be decisive.

One bright spot at COP27 will be the arrival of Brazilian President-elect Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, whose campaign vowed to protect the Amazon and reverse the extractive policies of outgoing President Jair Bolsonaro.

More than any other COP, perhaps, this one will be about money—or how little of it has flowed from countries that got rich burning fossil fuels to mostly blameless poorer nations suffering the worst consequences.

Developing nations have “high expectations” for the creation of a dedicated funding facility to cover loss and damage, UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell said on Friday.

“The most vulnerable countries are tired, they are frustrated,” Stiell said. “The time to have an open and honest discussion on loss and damage is now.”

The United States and the

European Union—fearful of creating an open-ended reparations framework—have dragged their feet and challenged the need for a separate funding stream.

Human rights approach

Meanwhile, a global rights watchdog on Sunday called on all governments to adopt human rights-based adaptation measures protecting the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change as governments convene for the COP27 today.

In its new report, titled “Any Tidal Wave Could Drown Us” and released amid the COP27 conference today, Nobel laureate Amnesty International (AI) noted that more than 5 million have died in the past decades because of extreme weather events like drought, floods, wildfires and vector-borne diseases.

Climate change has also displaced more than 22.3 million people worldwide, the report said, while also severely affecting people’s mental health and cultural heritage.

“The current and foreseeable adverse effects of climate change on the enjoyment of human rights of present and future generations, therefore, give rise to states’ duties to take all reasonable steps to the full extent of their abilities to prevent this harm,” AI said.

Among others, the report urged the world’s governments to apply adaptation and risk-reduction strategies that empower the most marginalized groups and communities, especially indigenous peoples and rural poor.

It also urged governments to engage local and indigenous communities by tapping their assistance and traditional knowledge in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

As for the wealthy, industrialized countries, the report called on their governments to act faster and “avoid imposing unreasonable expectations on developing countries.”

They should thus commit to new and additional climate financing that would allow developed countries to keep up with mitigation and adaptation strategies, AI said. —AFP, WITH A REPORT

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COP27 summit racing against climate clock

The 13-day conference comes amid demands for bolder climate action

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It also means a shift from politics to the economy, with government investments in China, the US and the European Union leveraging hundreds of billions of yuan, collars and euros into trillions.

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PHOTO released by the Egyptian Presidency of the 27th UN Climate Change Conference shows the illumination of Khafre Pyramid, one of the three ancient pyramids of Giza, on Nov. 5, 2022. (AFP)

outgoing President Jair Bolsonaro.

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Still hopeful about COP 27



Atty. Jose Ferdinand M. Rojas II

RISING SUN

AS you read this column, environmental activists, scientists, and government officials in the thousands are gathered at the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP 27) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change being held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. This event is happening from November 6 to 18, 2022.

The Philippines has a delegation in the conference, many of whom were part of the preparations held in October. A consultation meeting was participated in by the Climate Change Commission (CCC), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and 23 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that are actively working on climate change-related initiatives.

The rest of the country is keeping its fingers crossed that our COP 27 delegation will, indeed, achieve the

desired results from the meeting. There are many groups and individuals worldwide who have expressed hopelessness about the COP meetings, saying that after such a long time and numerous conferences, we have achieved very little and are still far from hitting our targets. This is despite the global climate's emergency situation.

There are important reasons for the Philippine representatives to work extra hard this year. We all know the country is one of the most affected places as far as climate

There are important reasons for the Philippine representatives to work extra hard this year. We all know the country is one of the most affected places as far as climate change is concerned. The rise of sea level and severe weather events affect our people and property greatly. Livelihood, agriculture, and biodiversity all suffer.

change is concerned. The rise of sea level and severe weather events affect our people and property greatly. Livelihood, agriculture, and biodiversity all suffer.

According to experts, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and more intense. For example, typhoons will be stronger and droughts will last longer. It will either be extremely hot, or extremely flooded/cold. If it's any indication, the recent typhoons—Paeng, Agaton, Odette—have wreaked great havoc on our people and their livelihood, not to mention on various infrastructure and other assets.

COP 27 is crucial in that a critical matter will be (has to be) discussed—climate finance. The issue is not about raising targets, but rather a matter of raising money so poor countries can move away from coal, so developing nations can do their part. Targets are meaningless if some nations do not have the capacity at all to deal with the impacts of a heating planet. Ironically, these nations that are making the tiniest contributions to global warming are the same ones that feel its consequences more acutely.

Part of climate justice is the creation of a loss and damage finance facility. It's also about fairly sharing the remaining carbon budget. Simply put, the poorer nations are saying that developed countries that have burned fossil fuels in the past in order to develop their economy have already taken more than their fair share of the carbon budget. They are, therefore, responsible for financial damages and losses from extreme weather events caused by climate change resulting from past emissions.

It definitely looks like there will be hot debates over this.



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Senate may tweak budget amid call to use intel funds for disaster

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COP27 puts climate compensation on agenda

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt -- Delegates at the the UN's COP27 climate summit in Egypt agreed to discuss whether rich nations should compensate poor countries most vulnerable to climate change for their suffering.

"This creates for the first time an institutionally stable space on the formal agenda of COP and the Paris

Agreement to discuss the pressing issue of funding arrangements needed to deal with existing gaps, responding to loss and damage," COP27 president Sameh Shoukry told the opening plenary.

The item was adopted to the agenda in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on Sunday, as world leaders arrived for the negotiations scheduled to

run through Nov. 18.

Much of the tension at COP27 is expected to relate to loss and damage - funds provided by wealthy nations to vulnerable lower-income countries that bear little responsibility for climate-warming emissions.

At COP26 last year in Glasgow, high-income nations blocked a

proposal for a loss and damage financing body, instead supporting a new three-year dialogue for funding discussions.

The loss and damage discussions now on the agenda at COP27 will not involve liability or binding compensation, but they are intended to lead to a conclusive decision "no later than 2024," Shoukry said.

"The inclusion of this agenda reflects a sense of solidarity for the victims of climate disasters," he added.

Before the adoption, Matthew Samuda, a minister in Jamaica's economic growth ministry, said, "I'm hopeful that it will get on the agenda."

"There has been a softening of positions from many nations who a year ago or two years ago would

not have been willing to support it."

Others expressed concern about potential holdouts.

"We know the Europeans are supporting us," said Saleemul Huq, director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development. "Now we need to see whether the US is going to block on their own or not." - Reuters



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ACROSS ASIA, BIKERS GREET COP27'S OPENING IN EGYPT

CYCLING enthusiasts and ordinary people joined climate campaigners in 49 coordinated biking events in nine Asian countries as the COP27 climate summit began Sunday in Egypt.

COP27 is being held at the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh from November 6 to 18. Pedal for People and Planet was held in the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Japan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal.

The bikers called on governments of rich, industrialized countries to immediately deliver climate reparations for developing countries that are bearing the brunt of climate change. Lidy Nacpil, coordinator of Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD), said the plight of people of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Philippines after climate change-related calamities dramatically and tragically highlight the gravity and urgency of addressing climate change.

"This year, millions of people all over the world have suffered the grave impacts of climate change. Homes have been damaged, jobs and livelihoods disrupted or lost altogether, vast areas of crops destroyed, people have been dislocated. Too many died. We call on the governments

of rich, industrialized countries, their elites and giant corporations who bear the greatest responsibility for the climate crisis: pay your climate debt owed to people and communities who contributed the least, if at all, to the problem, but bear its biggest impacts," said Nacpil.

Nacpil said the fulfillment of climate finance obligations is part of reparations. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change—a legally binding agreement that is the basis of the climate summit that is about to start in Egypt—specifies that developed country governments must provide climate finance to developing countries in recognition that developed countries have contributed the most to the problem of climate change.

"This climate finance is to be used for adaptation, building resilience, and GHG reduction measures in developing countries, which includes the transition to renewable energy away from fossil fuels. It is not aid or assistance but part of reparations for the harm caused," said Nacpil.

In 2009, developed countries pledged to jointly mobilize \$100 billion annually in climate finance by 2020 to fund climate action in developing countries.

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Across Asia, bikers greet COP27's opening in Egypt

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"This 100-billion climate finance goal is miniscule, considering that the estimated climate finance needed between now and 2030 is at least \$11 trillion. But rich countries are not even fulfilling their promise of this ridiculously low amount. They are spending several times more on subsidies for fossil fuels," said Nacpil.

"They are also refusing to provide climate finance to cover loss and damage to lives, infrastructure, ecosystems and economies," she said.

The COPs are the biggest and most important annual climate-related conferences. This year marks the 27th annual summit, or COP27. Countries agreed at last year's summit to deliver stronger commitments this year, including updated national plans with more ambitious targets. However, only 23 out of 193 countries have submitted their plans to the UN so far.

This year's summit will also see negotiations regarding some points that remained inconclusive after COP26 in Glasgow, including "loss and damage" financing.

Atty. Aaron Pedrosa, speaking for the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ), said the usual inaction, deception and tactics by governments of the Global North to avoid their climate finance obligations are "serious travesties of justice and outright violations of human rights at this time of intensifying climate impacts."

"The lack of progress in climate pledges has put us on the pathway to climate catastrophe. We have very little time left to address climate change and save humanity and the planet," added Pedrosa.

This is the fourth Pedal for People and Planet event this year. The first was held on April 24 in 9 countries,

the second was held on June 5 in 11 countries, and the third on October 2 in 8 countries.

In the Philippines, bike actions were held in 10 cities and provinces with routes that included sites of proposed coal and LNG plants. The biggest event was held in Metro Manila with more than 2,500 bikers riding 15 kilometers from Quezon City to Manila to Quezon City, including 500 bikers riding 27 kilometers from Bulacan Bf to join the bike action. The event was organized by APMDD with Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ), Sanlakas, Orang, 350.org, Pilipinas, Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC), The Climate Reality Project Philippines, Oxfam Philippines, Greenpeace Pilipinas, Caritas Philippines, The Firefly Brigade, Sikdistang Pilipino, Galas Bikers Club and Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura.



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THE PHILIPPINE
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TRUTH SHALL

Cyclists join a Pedal for People and Planet event, held simultaneously in nine countries across Asia, at the Quezon City hall yesterday to call on industrialized nations to provide immediate reparations for developing countries affected by climate change. The event was staged as the Climate Change Conference 2022 – Conference of Parties or COP27 opens in Egypt. See related story on Page 4.

JESSE BUSTOS

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'Climate change's impact on health deadlier than cancer'

The impact of climate change on health – if carbon emissions remain high – could be up to twice as deadly as cancer in some parts of the world, according to new data released by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Climate Impact Lab.

Building on the analyses of 2020, 2021 and 2022 Human Development Reports, and an evolving stream of frontier research, the data showed how climate change can impact people's lives from mortality to livelihoods and energy use.

Although higher temperatures and a warmer climate put cardiovascular and respiratory systems under

stress everywhere, outcomes will vary between places, according to communities that have the resources to adapt and those that do not.

The study gives the example of Dhaka, Bangladesh, where under a scenario of very high emissions by 2100, additional deaths due to climate change could rise to nearly twice the country's current annual death rate from all cancers, and 10 times its annual road traffic fatalities.

Since the late 19th century, the earth's average temperature has risen by nearly 1.2°C, changing the entire surface area of the planet, according to the research.

It said that billions live in regions

that have already experienced warming greater than the global average.

"As the impacts of climate change are not evenly distributed globally, they will generate a significant uptick in inequalities over the coming years and decades," the report said.

But by highlighting that the future is not predetermined, UNDP hopes the information can empower people everywhere, to step up climate action.

The Human Climate Horizons mission is to ensure equal access to data on future impacts, inform decision-making and help everyone understand the human consequences of climate change in different scenarios.

— Pia Lee-Brago



SERYOSOHIN NATIN ANG CLIMATE CHANGE



ANAK NG TETENG! NI BONG REVILLA

TILA umusbong ang bahagyang sisihan sa pagitan ng mga lokal na opisyal na naapektuhan ng Bagyong Paeng at pamunuan ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAG-ASA) dahil sa kakulangan umano ng maayos na anunsyo hinggil sa naturang bagyo.

Dahil sa lakas ng pananalasa ay hindi kinaya

ng mga paghahandang isinagawa ng maraming lokal na pamahalaan dahil hindi umano nila akalaing sobrang lakas ng hangin at napakaraming buhos ng ulan ang magaganap kaya sinisisi nila ang PAG-ASA.

Ilang araw na namang nagpapaliwanag ang PAGASA at tahasang nilang sinasabi na kahit katiting ay wala silang pagkukulang sa kabila ng ka-

kapusan nila sa mga empleyado at may ilang aparato na hindi gumagana ay buong-buo pa rin umano nilang naipahatid sa publiko ang anunsyo.

Tila nakakalimot tayo saglit na ang mga hindi inaasahang kalamidad ay epekto na ng tinatawag na climate change at maging ang PAGASA ay kumbinsido na simula pa lamang ng pananalasa ng Bagyong Yolanda at mga sumunod pang bagyo ay epekto na ng climate change.

Kaya nga agad akong nagsumite ng isang resolusyon na naglalayong atasan ang nararapat na

komite sa Senado na magsagawa ng inquiry, in aid of legislation hinggil sa pagkadamay ng maraming bagyo at hindi mapigilang pag-usbong ng mga negatibong epekto ng climate change.

Ito ay upang matiyak lamang ang kaligtasan at kapakanan ng mga Pilipino hinggil sa delikadong banta na dulot ng pagtaas ng frequency at intensity ng natural na sakuna at kalamidad na sa huli ay masiguro na magkaroon ng sistema at polisiya na mapaninindigan ang kaligtasan at katatagan.

Panahon na para pagtuunan ng pansin ang pag-aaral at seryosong paghimay sa mga detalye ng climate change upang kung may kalamidad na dumating ay hindi na maulit na mawwi sa sisihan

ang lahat dahil lamang sa mali ang ating pagtaya.

Nalilihis kasi tayo ng direksiyon at nawawala sa pagtutok kung paano iriresolba ang lumalalang sitwasyon hinggil sa climate change na hindi na mapigilan ang mga pagbabago at kaganapan na kasalukuyan nang nangyayari.

Huwag sanang mawaglit sa isipan ng ating mga kababayan na ang Pilipinas ay itinalang panglabingpito sa buong mundo na pinakaapektado ng mga kalamidad base sa inilabas na ulat ng Global Climate Risk Index.

Ibig sabihin nito, talagang nararanasan na natin ang climate change kaya nga may ginagamit na tayong klasipikasyon na Corona's four type of climate types (Types I-IV) base sa buwanang nararanasan nating klase ng klima sa loob ng isang taon.

Ang isang lalawigan ay ikinukonsiderang Type I climate kung nakararanas ng kakaibang init ng panahon na nagdulot ng pagkatuyo ng lupa na sinasabayan ng mga hindi inaasahang pagbuhos ng ulan; karaniwan kasi na tag-ulan ang panahon ng Hunyo hanggang Nobyembre.

Ang Type II climate naman ay kung nakararanas tayo ng maalinsangang panahon at wala talagang pagbuhos ng

ulan sa buong taon at nagkakaroon lamang ng pag-ulan sa buwan ng Nobyembre hanggang Pebrero.

Itinuturing namang Type III climate kung napakaikli ng panahon ng tag-init na karaniwang nagaganap sa mga buwan ng Pebrero hanggang Abril, samantalang ang Type IV ay ang regular na pag-ulan sa buong taon na tila sinadya ang pagkakatakda ng panahon sa pagbuhos ng ulan buong taon.

Base sa pag-aaral ng PAGASA, dalawa ang pangunahing sanhi ng climate change na dapat ay maging malinaw sa ating mga kababayan upang kahit paano ay maibsan ang paglala nito.

Ang una ay ang natural na pagbabago ng klima ng buong mundo nitong mga nagdaang matagal na panahon dahil sa sama-samang epekto ng enerhiya mula sa araw, pag-ikot ng mundo at sa init na nagmumula sa ilalim ng lupa na nagpapataas ng temperatura o init sa hangin na bumabalot sa mundo.

Ikalawa ay ang gawain ng mga tao na nagbubunga ng pagdami o pagtaas ng carbon dioxide at iba pang greenhouse gases (GHGs) na siyang nagkukulang ng init sa mundo na kung hindi talaga mapigil ay baka kung saan na tayo pulutin

paglipas ng panahon.

Maging ang pagbuga ng carbon dioxide ng mga sasakyang gumagamit ng gasolina, ang pagpuputol ng mga puno na inaasahan nating mag-aalis ng carbon dioxide sa hangin at ang pagkabulok ng mga bagay na organic na nagbubunga ng methane na isa pang uri ng GHGs ay ilan sa mga sanhi ng climate change.

Ayon sa pahayag ng United Nations (UN) para mapanatili nating maayos ang klima ng mundo, ang greenhouse-gas emissions ay kailangang maibaba sa net zero bago pa sumapit ang taong 2050 dahil kung hindi ay tiyak na wala nang titirahan pang susunod na lahi.

Maging ang World Bank ay nagpahayag na ang climate change ay maaaring magdulot ng pagkagutom sa mahigit sa 100 milyong katao sa buong mundo sa taong 2030 kung hindi natin matutugunan ang problemang ito na binalewala lang ng ilan.

Ang climate change ay isang phenomenon na labis talaga ang epekto sa buong Pilipinas at mahihirapan tayong tugunan ang kahirapan, pagkagutom, kalusugan, kaligtasan at ibang suliranin na maaari nating kaharapin kung babalewalain lang natin ang nakakatakot na problemang ito.

Anak Ng Teteng!



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Sunak to deliver COP27 climate speech

LONDON: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak will urge world leaders to move "further and faster" in transitioning away from damaging fossil fuels in a speech Monday (Tuesday in Manila) to the COP27 climate change summit in Egypt, his office said.

Pledging to make the UK a "clean energy superpower," Sunak will warn that tackling global warming is "fundamental" to future prosperity and security, it said in a statement on Saturday.

Sunak — who had originally not intended to attend the summit —

will argue that the "shock" to the oil and gas markets caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine underlines the need to move to cheaper, cleaner and safer sources of energy.

The new British prime minister had argued that "pressing domestic commitments" would keep him away from COP27 after inheriting an economic crisis from predecessor Liz Truss.

But that fuelled doubts about Sunak's interest in the planetary emergency, and critics said the inexperienced leader was passing up

an opportunity to rub shoulders with the likes of US President Joe Biden and European peers.

Sunak will urge leaders assembled at the Red Sea resort of Sharm El-Sheikh not to "backslide" on commitments made at last year's COP26 summit in Glasgow intended to limit global temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels.

In a statement ahead of his departure on Sunday, Sunak said: "When the world came together in

Glasgow last year, nations agreed an historic roadmap for preventing catastrophic global warming. It is more important than ever that we deliver on those pledges.

"Fighting climate change is not just a moral good — it is fundamental to our future prosperity and security."

The UK hosted world leaders in Scotland last year, with nearly 200 countries coming together on a global deal to combat climate change and work toward net-zero emissions.

AFP



'LET'S SAVE THE PLANET' This file photo shows Britain's new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak delivering his first address to the nation outside 10 Downing Street in London on Oct. 25, 2022. Sunak will urge world leaders to move further and faster in transitioning away from damaging fossil fuels in a speech on Monday, Nov. 7, 2022, to the COP27 climate change summit in Egypt, his office said. XINHUA PHOTO



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Climate policy should not punish poor countries

Every year, global climate summits feature a parade of hypocrisy, as the world's elite arrive on private jets to lecture humanity on cutting carbon emissions. This November's climate summit in Egypt will offer more breathtaking hypocrisy than usual because the world's rich will zealously lecture poor countries about the dangers of fossil fuels—after devouring massive amounts of new gas, coal, and oil.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine pushed up energy prices even further, wealthy countries have been scouring the world for new sources of energy. The United Kingdom vehemently denounced fossil fuels at the Glasgow climate summit just last year, but now plans to keep coal-fired plants available this winter instead of shutting almost all of them as previously planned. Thermal coal imports by the European Union from Australia, South Africa, and Indonesia increased more than 11-fold. Meanwhile, a new trans-Saharan gas pipeline will allow Europe to tap directly into gas from Niger, Algeria, and Nigeria; Germany is reopening shuttered coal power plants; and Italy is planning to import 40 percent more gas from northern Africa. And the United States is going cap-in-hand to Saudi Arabia to grovel for more oil production.

At the climate summit in Egypt, the leaders from these countries will all somehow declare with straight faces that poor countries must avoid fossil fuel exploitation, for fear of worsening climate change. These very same rich countries will encourage the world's poorest to focus instead on green energy alternatives like off-grid solar and wind energy. They're already making the case. In a speech widely interpreted as being about Africa, the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said it would be "delusional" for countries to invest more in gas and oil exploration.

The hypocrisy is simply breathtaking. Every single rich country today became wealthy thanks to exploitation of fossil fuels. The world's major development organizations—at the behest of wealthy countries—refuse to

COMMENTARY

BJORN LOMBORG

fund fossil fuel exploitation that poor countries could use to lift themselves out of poverty. What's more, the elite prescription for the world's poor—green energy—is incapable of transforming lives.

That's because sun and wind power are useless when it is cloudy, nighttime, or there is no wind. Off-grid solar power can provide a nice solar light, but typically can't even power a family's fridge or oven, let alone provide the power that communities need to run everything from farms to factories, the ultimate engines of growth.

A study in Tanzania found almost 90 percent of households given off-grid electricity just want to be hooked up to the national grid to receive fossil fuel access. The first rigorous test published on the impact of solar panels on the lives of poor people found they got a little bit more electricity—the ability to power a lamp during the day—but there was no measurable impact on their lives: They did not increase savings or spending, did not work more or start more businesses, and their children did not study more.

Moreover, solar panels and wind turbines are useless at tackling one of the main energy problems of the world's poor. Nearly 2.5 billion people continue to suffer from indoor air pollution, burning dirty fuels like wood and dung to cook and keep warm. Solar panels don't solve that problem because they are too weak to power clean stoves and heaters.

In contrast, grid electrification—which nearly everywhere means mostly fossil fuels—has significant positive impacts on household income, expenditure, and education. A study in Bangladesh showed that electrified households experienced a 21 percent average jump in income and a 1.5 percent reduction in poverty each and every year.

The biggest swindle of all is that rich world leaders have somehow managed to portray themselves as green evangelists, while more than three-quarters of their enormous primary energy production comes from fossil fuels, according to the International Energy Agency. Less than 12 percent of their energy comes from renewables, with most from wood and hydro. Just 2.4 percent is solar and wind.

Compare this to Africa, which is the most renewable continent in the world, with half of its energy produced by renewables. But these renewables are almost entirely wood, straws, and dung, and they are really a testament to how little energy the continent has access to. Despite all the hype, the continent gets just 0.3 percent of its energy from solar and wind.

To solve global warming, rich countries must invest much more in research and development on better green technologies, from fusion, fission, and second-generation biofuels, to solar and wind with massive batteries. The crucial insight is to innovate their real cost down below fossil fuels. That way, everyone will eventually switch. But telling the world's poor to live with unreliable, expensive, weak power is an insult.

There is already pushback from the world's developing countries, who see the hypocrisy for what it is: Egypt's finance minister recently said that poor countries must not be "punished," and warned that climate policy should not add to their suffering. That warning needs to be listened to. Europe is scouring the world for more fossil fuels because the continent needs them for its growth and prosperity. That same opportunity should not be withheld from the world's poorest.

Bjorn Lomborg is president of the Copenhagen Consensus and visiting fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. His latest book is "False Alarm: How Climate Change Panic Costs Us Trillions, Hurts the Poor, and Fails to Fix the Planet."



The doom of climate change

ONE could speculate as to the ecological footprint and greenhouse gas emissions generated by the 40,000 or more who are gathered at Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt this week. How many airplanes did these 40,000 persons fill? How many of the participants in the 27th Conference of Parties (COP27) and its side events chose less polluting modes of transportation such as ship or train? Ajit Rajagopal, maybe the only person who walked to Sharm El-Sheikh, was arrested!

OK, let's put aside cynicism and focus on what is at stake: the COP27 has been dubbed "Climate Implementation Summit" to signify that the time for talk is over and now is the time for action. So far pledges to cut greenhouse emissions are way below what is needed. Will COP27 be able to set the world on a path to push back climate change and save the planet, thus proving skeptics and critics — such as *The Economist* ("Say goodbye to 1.5 C") and Greta Thunberg ("COPs are not really working") — wrong?

What is different with this climate change summit, David Waskow of the World Resources Institute's International Climate Initiative told *Scientific American*, that "we are living in the impacts [of climate change] now." Europe just experienced its hottest summer on record. Thirty-three million, about 15 percent of Pakistan's population, were displaced by an unprecedented amount of rainfall a few months ago. A third of the country was submerged. The World Weather Attribution reported that the southern provinces of Sindh and Balochistan received 7 to 8 times their usual rainfall. Prior to the monsoon season, Pakistan and India experienced a prolonged, extreme heat wave. While World Weather Attribution



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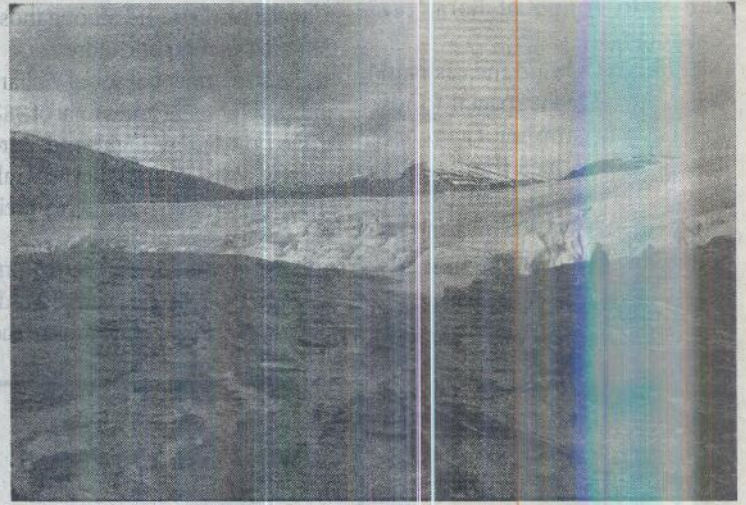
cannot determine with accuracy the part that climate change played in the killer monsoon, climate change was a major driver in the heat wave.

Aside from claiming 1,700 lives, the floods in Pakistan resulted in massive loss of livelihood, destruction of infrastructure and agricultural crops. We can relate considering that the Philippines gets hit by storms year in and year out, most recently Severe Tropical Depression "Paeng." It wasn't even a typhoon, yet it brought massive and unprecedented destruction to communities from Maguindanao in Mindanao, to Panay in the Visayas and Calabarzon in Luzon.

Despite this predicament we are still better off here compared to Africa. Scientists whose call for urgent action to address the situation in Africa was published in multiple scientific journals, including *The Lancet*, on October 18, estimate "that the climate crisis has destroyed a fifth of the gross domestic product of the countries [in Africa]."

"The damage to Africa should be a supreme concern to all nations," the authors warn. "The acute and chronic impacts of the climate crisis create problems ... that spread through globalized systems." The world is interconnected and leaving countries to the mercy of environmental shocks, as the authors put it, create an "instability that has severe consequences for all nations." This instability will affect the world politically, economically and socially.

Wealthy nations are called on to



■ The mighty Svartisen glacier in Norway in 1974. The world's glaciers which feed irrigation systems and hydropower plants continue retreating due to climate change. PHOTO BY ARNE STINUS

contribute more, to do more to help the countries that are bearing the brunt of climate-induced disasters. Countries in the Global South such as India, Pakistan, the Philippines and Africa's nations have contributed very little to greenhouse gas emissions, yet their populations are the most affected. Governments and people "pour money into responding to disasters, but can no longer afford to pay for greater reliance or [reduce] the root problems through emissions reductions," the scientists point out. This inability of the affected countries to help their citizens prepare better for disasters and thus minimize the destructiveness of the latter, will become a crisis that will "engulf all corners of the globe, by which time it may be too late to effectively respond. If so far wealthy counties have failed to be persuaded by moral arguments, then hopefully their self-interest will now prevail," the authors conclude.

Unfortunately, at least the wealthy European nations are currently facing their own "unprecedented and

overlapping crises," according to *The Lancet's* "2022 Europe Report" on health and climate change. This is primarily due to Russia's assault on Ukraine — an environmental disaster — and the resulting energy crisis and "fastest-growing migrant crisis since World War 2." This is a predicament from which Europe cannot escape. Resources that could have been used to help vulnerable countries prepare better and recover faster from natural disasters, are spent on helping Ukraine, including replenishing its war arsenal, and on Europe's own domestic military capabilities.

As bad as the floods, droughts, heat waves and powerful storms that ravage the world are, Greta Thunberg (*The Guardian*, October 8) reminds us that what we are seeing isn't the "new normal." Rather, what "we are seeing now is only the very beginning of a changing climate, caused by human emissions of greenhouse gases." Can we humans also undo the deadly mess we've created? Or have we reached the point of no return?



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Broad coalition formed vs reclamation in Cebu

Group urges Cebuanos: Be 'vigilant' as 10 of 50 approved, applied, planned 'massive dump-and-fill projects' in the country are on the island

By Ador Vincent Mayol
@inquirervisayas

CEBU CITY—Environmental advocates and civil society organizations in Cebu have launched a coalition against reclamation projects that destroy marine life and coastal resources on the island.

The Save Cebu Movement (SCM) was formally rolled out at the University of the Philippines Cebu on Saturday by Oceana Philippines together with Philippine Earth Justice Center, fisherfolk, urban poor, business groups, faith-based organizations and lawyers, among others.

The coalition would focus on mounting a strong lobby before policymakers, saying it was time for these entities to "mend their distorted priorities."

"People in power promote these projects as the cure to our country's economic ills. They promise jobs, secure future, growth, and development without even calculating the impact it brings to the marine ecosystem, and to people's food and nutritional security," read the coalition's manifesto.

It added: "It is high time to listen to science and to the voices on the ground. Time to up-

hold the rule of law. Stop these reclamation projects to minimize massive quarry activities that carve our mountains, and decrease the need for more fossil-based energy sources that emit greenhouse gases."

'Grave danger'

Citing a report from the Philippine Reclamation Authority, SCM said 10 of the 50 applied, approved or existing reclamation projects in the country are located in Cebu, making the island the "ground zero" of the massive dump-and-fill projects at various stages of development.

This placed Cebuanos in grave danger, including its marine and fishing resources that provide food and livelihood to many people, according to the coalition.

The proposed reclamation projects in Cebu are located in the towns of Minglanilla, Consolacion and Cordova, as well as in the cities of Mandaue, Lapu-Lapu, Talisay and Naga.

SCM said these destructive projects brazenly convert coastlines into permanent land by dumping and filling materials dredged from other parts of the ocean or quarried from the mountains to build permanent structures that destroy man-

groves, seagrass beds, corals and fisheries.

"The ocean is our food source, our comfort, our culture, our inspiration, and our home. But for years, humans have plundered and destroyed this critical life support system by perpetuating illegal and destructive activities [by] converting coastlines, corals, seagrasses, mangroves, and wetlands into permanent land, and allowing fossil gas facilities and incineration technologies."

Irreversible

SCM said scientific studies showed that land reclamation and other coastal developments cause irreversible environmental degradation, destroy fish habitats and spawning grounds, and inflict harm on the coastal resources that support the livelihood of fisherfolk.

With the Philippine sea level rising three times faster than the global average, SCM said illegal coastal development projects further increase people's vulnerability to environmental hazards and extreme weather events, such as flooding, storm surges, land subsidence and liquefaction.

Lawyer Rose-Liza Eisma-Osorio, legal and policy director of Oceana Philippines,

a nonprofit ocean conservation organization, encouraged Cebuanos to be more vigilant against reclamation projects.

"The issue about reclamation projects is critical. That is why we need to have a unified voice against it. We need to be more solid. What will happen to future generations if we destroy the coasts? We need to be empowered," she said.

Listen

"I hope the government will listen to the voice of residents who were directly affected by reclamation projects. If local governments won't do what they are required of, then we can make them accountable," she added.

SCM instead encouraged the government to effectively implement the amended Fisheries Code of the Philippines that protects fishing grounds and the municipal waters.

"We call for full transparency of government projects and meaningful consultations for protecting our coasts. These destructive projects are incompatible with the people's fundamental right to a healthful ecology, a right which carries with it the correlative duty not to impair the environment," it said. **INQ**



PPA strengthens tree-planting initiatives

THE Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) will further intensify the implementation of its administrative order that mandates applicants and contractors to plant trees or mangroves in obtaining permits.

"In response to the call of our President BBM to conduct tree planting activities, PPA will further intensify its tree planting initiatives under PPA Administrative Order 14-2020," Jay Santiago, PPA general manager, said in a statement yesterday.

Under the said PPA memorandum, non-compliance to its provisions may result in the cancellation or non-renewal of the permit to operate,

certificate of registration and contract of the operators.

"All grantees or persons or entities applying with the PPA for the issuance of accreditation certificate, certificate of registration, appointment and authorization, including those awarded with contracts for the provision of services in the ports, are subject to the condition that the applicant/grantee shall plant trees and/or mangroves," PPA said.

This is one of PPA's contributions to nature amid the effects of climate change happening across the world, Santiago added.

In consonance with Republic Act No. 9729, or The Climate Change

Act of 2009 authored by Senator Loren Legarda, PPA issued Administrative Order No. 14-2020 mandating permit applicants and contractors to plant 1,000 trees or mangroves that are of great help in times of inundation.

According to Santiago, the agency aims to further strengthen its tree planting initiative that started two years ago.

In partnership with various Community Environment and Natural Resources Office, PPA said it has planted more than 3,000 mangroves and seedlings in Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga, Agusan, Bicol and Negros Oriental. - *Myla Iglesias*



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1K puno dapat itanim bago bigyan ng PPA permit

Magpapatupad ang Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) ng requirements para sa pagtanim ng 1,000 o higit pang seedlings ng puno o mangrooves bago bigyan ng permit, lisensya at kontrata ang isang aplikante maging ang kanilang kontraktor.

Alinsunod na rin ito sa kautusan ni Pangulong Bongbong Marcos na palakasin ang kampanya laban sa "climate change" matapos makita ang epekto ng deforestation at ng katatapos lamang na bagyong Paeng.

Upang maiwasan ang matinding pagbaha, sinabi ng Pangulo na mas paigtingin pa ang tree planting sa buong bansa.

Sa ilalim ng Republic Act No. 9729 o "The Climate Change Act of 2009" na inakda ni Senator Loren Legarda, taong 2020 pa nang maglabas ang Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) ng Administrative Order No. 14-2020 na nagmamandato sa mga aplikante ng permit, kontrata at lisensya mula sa ahensya gayundin ang mga kontraktor nito na magtanim ng mga puno o mangroves na malaking tulong kapag may baha.

Katuwang ang Community Environment and Natural Resources (CENRO), nakapagtanim na ang PPA ng mahigit 3,000 mangroves at seedlings sa Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga, Agusan, Bicol, Negros Oriental at Bataan, ayon kay PPA General Manager Jay Santiago. -Danilo Garcia-



Xi calls for wetlands conservation

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Saturday called for strengthening cooperation on wetlands conservation and scaling up wetlands action across the world.

He made the remarks while delivering a speech via video at the opening ceremony of the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP14).

In his speech, Xi noted that it is important to build global consensus on prizing wetlands, show respect for nature, minimize disruption and damage caused by human activities, and protect the ecological security of wetlands in order to leave the beautiful wetlands to future generations.

"It is important that we advance the global process on wetlands conservation, redouble efforts to preserve authenticity and integrity, include more important wetlands in nature reserves, improve cooperation mechanisms and platforms, and increase the coverage of wetlands of international importance," Xi said.

He also called for enhancing people's well-being globally by leveraging the role of wetlands in promoting sustainable development, tackling climate change, protecting biodiversity, and delivering more benefits to people around the world.

Historic achievements have been made in wetlands conservation in China. The country has increased the area of wetlands to 56.35 million hectares, put in place a protection system and enacted a Wetlands Conservation Law, according to Xi.

The president further noted that China will pursue a modernization of harmony between humanity and nature, and promote high-quality development in the wetlands conservation cause.

China has recently drawn up a layout plan of national parks. Under the plan, China will designate a number of national parks, accounting for about 10 percent of the country's land area. About 11 million hectares of wetlands will be incorporated in the national park system, with a focus on developing wetland national parks including the Three-River-Source National Park, the Qinghai Lake National Park, the Ruoergai National Park, the Yellow River Estuary National Park, the Liao River Estuary National Park and the Songnen Plain Crane Homeland National Park.

A national wetlands conservation plan and major conservation projects will be implemented, Xi added.

China will promote international exchanges and cooperation to protect the four bird migration routes passing China and to build an international mangrove center in Shenzhen, Xi said, adding that China supports the convening of a conference of the World Coastal Forum.

"Let us join hands to write a new chapter in global wetlands conservation," said the Chinese president.

Themed "Wetlands Action for People and Nature," the COP14 is scheduled to run from November 5 to 13 in China's Wuhan and Switzerland's Geneva. **XINHUA**



SAVING THE WETLANDS Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers a speech via video at the opening ceremony of the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands held in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province on Saturday, Nov. 5, 2022. XINHUA PHOTO