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815 sinkholes put Boracay at risk of collapsing – MGB

By TARA J. YAP

ILOILO CITY – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) warned that world-famous Boracay Island could collapse following the discovery of 815 sinkholes.

“There is danger if there is over-capacity. Only time will tell when structures will collapse,” warned Engr. Mae Magarzo, chief geologist of MGB in Western Visayas region.

Magarzo told the Manila Bulletin in a phone interview on Wednesday, Dec. 14, ▶ 13

815 sinkholes put Boracay at risk of collapsing – MGB 1◀

that the number of sinkholes at the country's most popular beach destination in Malay town, Aklan gradually increased the past four years.

The MGB-6 found 789 sinkholes in three barangays during a hazard assessment in 2018, the year when the Duterte administration implemented massive rehabilitation and banned tourists in Boracay for six months.

By 2019, the number of sinkholes rose to 801. By 2022, these increased to 815.

Magarzo said Boracay is susceptible to sinkholes since the ground is made mostly of limestone.

She added that sinkholes are very difficult to predict as these suddenly

emerge without prior indicators.

The MGB-6 Coastal Geohazard Map also found key areas in the resort-island that are susceptible to erosion.

“The main beach is already showing low erosion,” Magarzo said.

Magarzo is calling for stronger implementation of Boracay's carrying capacity.

In 2018, the government set a maximum of 19,215 tourists in the resort-island per day with only 6,405 new tourists allowed to enter.

The DENR has yet to release Boracay's new carrying capacity which was supposed to have been released when the term of President Duterte ended last June 30.



Gov't pushing tourism in protected areas

By EMMIE V. ABADILLA

The government now seeks to attract more foreign and domestic visitors in Protected Areas, such as the over 335,105.57-hectare Samar Island Natural Park (SINP).

"Those who crave adventure and prefer places off the beaten track will find SINP as their ideal place," says Zenaida R. Baisa, Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Samar's local governments have been putting a premium on ecotourism and the SINP is "a very promising destination for mountaineers, backpackers, and birdwatchers as well as city dwellers who just want to take a break", Baisa pointed out.

And for the now, SINP targets travelers who can do without the comforts of a deluxe hotel.

In Barangay Tenani, Paranas, Samar, the Tenanu Association for Women and Development (TAWAD) opened an eco-trail and bird watching site.

They are also working with boat operators negotiating the

rapids of the island's longest river.

The SINP's attractions include the 841-hectare Sohota Natural Bridge National Park, Basey, with caves, subterranean rivers, waterfalls, and its trademark natural stone bridge.

The Calbiga Caves Protected Landscape contains 12 caves, with the largest, Langun, spanning three football fields.

On the other hand, the Taft Forest Wildlife Sanctuary covers over 3,728 hectares of rainforests is a nesting site of the Philippine Eagle.

The Jicontol Watershed Forest Reserve covers over 6,483 hectares located in three municipalities in Eastern Samar: Dolores, Can-avid, and Maslog.

The mountainous terrain is an important habitat of threatened bird species, such as the Samar hornbill, the Visayan broadbill, and the yellow-breasted tailorbird.

The Bulosao Watershed Forest Reserve occupies over 4,000 hectares in the southernmost part of the island and is home to the Philippine tarsier and other endangered species.



PAGE



UPPER
LOWER



PAGE 1
STORY



BANNER
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

92-15-22

TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

Turning public forest lands into private property

CADASTRAL or cadastral is a comprehensive recording of the real estate or real property's metes-and-bounds. The results of a cadastral survey are often represented graphically in a cadastral map. It is an official register of the quantity, value and ownership of real estate used in apportioning taxes.



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■ CONTRERAS FROM A1

Turning public forest lands into private property

Real estate, on the other hand, denotes a real property, which refers to something owned that is attached to a piece of land. Such land can be used for residential, commercial or industrial purposes, and typically includes any resources within it, such as water, timber and minerals.

The 1987 Constitution states in Article XII, Section 2 that, "All lands of the public domain, waters, minerals, coal, petroleum and other mineral oils, all forces of potential energy, fisheries, forests or timber, wildlife, flora and fauna, and other natural resources are owned by the State. With the exception of agricultural lands, all other natural resources shall not be alienated." In lay terms, these public lands and the resources that are contained therein cannot be converted into real estate that can be subjected to any cadastral survey.

Section 3 of Article XII has declared that lands of the public domain are classified into agricultural, forest or timber, mineral lands, and national parks. Those lands within the public domain that are classified as agricultural land are the only ones that may be further classified by law according to the uses which they may be devoted. The Constitution also specifically limits what can be alienated or subjected to titling — only those lands of the public domain that are considered as agricultural lands. Thus, private corporations or associations may not hold such alienable lands of the public domain except by lease, for a period not exceeding 25 years, renewable for not more than 25 years, and not to exceed 1,000 hectares in area. Filipino citizens, on the other hand, may lease not more than 500 hectares, or acquire not more than 12 hectares thereof by purchase, homestead, or grant.

another in the House by Rep. Joey Salceda, that effectively would enact a law that would treat public forest lands like real property that can be subjected to cadastral surveys. Senate Bill (SB) 413 filed by Senator Marcos is entitled "An Act to Establish the Forest Cadastre, Providing for Its Procedures, and for Other Purposes." House Bill (HB) 1162, filed by Representative Salceda, has the same exact title. The two bills have the same exact content. Even the explanatory notes are exactly the same. This suggests that the proposal comes from only one source.

What is problematic about these bills is that it subsumes the limits of forest lands and natural parks, and imply on it automatic enactment into law, without any separate legislative scrutiny. In Section 4 of SB 413 and HB 1162, there is a reference to a completed delineation of forest lands submitted to Congress by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Such would be adopted, but without the benefit of being first enacted into a separate law. What is, however, questionable is that while lands classified as forest lands shall not be reclassified except through an act of Congress, these bills would also recognize all vested rights within forest lands prior to delineation. It is not clear whether those vested rights include the right to eventual ownership if Congress enacts another law reclassifying those lands as alienable, considering that they have now been subjected to cadastral surveys.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
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AS
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

2-15-22

TITLE:

Turning public forest...

PAGE

2/2

DATE

Under the 1987 Constitution, Congress was tasked to do two things. First, and as stipulated in Section 3 of Article XII, was to determine the size of lands of the public domain which may be acquired, developed, held or leased, and the conditions therefor, taking into account the requirements of conservation, ecology and development, and subject to the requirements of agrarian reform. The other, which is directed in Section 4 of Article XII, was to legislate the limits of forest lands and national parks. The wording of the Constitution implied that this is an urgent task, when it used the word "as soon as possible." Once delimited, the Constitution directs that those lands shall be conserved and cannot be increased or diminished except by law.

Unfortunately, 35 years have passed but Congress has yet to determine the size of lands of the public domain that can be alienated or leased, and has not enacted a law that defines the boundaries of forest lands and national parks. This is no longer a plain act of negligence, but a blatant act amounting to dereliction of a constitutional duty.

Instead of these, what we have now are two bills, one filed in the Senate by Sen. Imee Marcos and

Section 5 of SB 413 and HB 1162 commands the DENR to "develop, install, maintain and update regularly a system of mapping of all forest tenurial instruments and agreements issued by the DENR in all forest lands. Such system shall reflect all existing tenure agreements and shall show graphically said tenures. Untenured forest lands shall also be reflected and shown graphically in order to complete the tenure mapping of municipalities and cities." This would apply to all lands, including national parks and protected areas, mineral lands, proclamations and reservations, and ancestral lands and ancestral domains.

There is no question that access to the use of forest resources should be made available for national development, even as we recognize the rights of indigenous peoples and other forest-based communities that depend on these lands for their livelihoods. Laws have been passed, such as the Indigenous People's Rights Acts, or Republic Act 8371, as well as programs and approaches have been adopted toward community-based resource management. There is also a need to document and establish a registry of all tenurial instruments and arrangements. But these should all be done in the context that lands of the public domain that are classified as forest lands should not be treated as real property. The use of the word "cadastral" is dangerous, even if the intent may be noble.



TITLE:

PAGE:

DATE

5 nabbed for improper disposal of waste materials in Iloilo City

By Hector Lawas

FIVE persons engaged in the business of septic tanks and sewerage cleaning service were arrested for operating without necessary permits and improper disposal of waste materials.

The National Bureau of Investigation identified the arrested suspects as Rey Sampiano, Mark Ronel Chavez, Michael Balba, Cyrus Cañonero, and Walhert Mapa.

The arrest stemmed from a request for assistance by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Environmental Management Bureau - Region VI regarding a desludging service provider in Iloilo City allegedly operating without necessary permits.

Also, the desludging service provider was reported disposing the waste collected to different areas of Iloilo City without applying any treatment.

The arrested suspects were presented for inquest proceedings before the Iloilo City Prosecutors Office for violations of Republic Act 9275 in relation to R.A. 10175, Supplemental IRR of Sanitation Code, P.D. No. 836, and P.D. No. 984.



TITLE :

PAGE

DATE

5 nabbed for improper waste disposal in Iloilo City

By HECTOR
LAWAG

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sary permits.

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TITLE :

PAGE

DATE

LGUs honored on Manila Bay efforts

By Joel E. Zurbano

THE government has awarded outstanding cities and municipalities for their contributions to rehabilitate and protect the Manila Bay watershed and for being compliant with the Philippine Fisheries Code.

Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Benjamin Abalos Jr. the eight local government units (LGUs) receiving the Manila BaYani Awards and Incentives and five recognized through Fisheries Compliance Audit are testaments to their efforts to protect the country's body of water and natural resources.

The DILG chief urged LGUs to continue protecting the coastal areas and aquatic resources, saying "there's more to be done, especially in the face of climate change."

Among the MBAI awardees for 2018 to 2020 are Baliuag (Bulacan), Kalayaan (Laguna), and Magallanes (Cavite) for the Municipal category; while Balanga (Bataan), Biñan (Laguna), Imus (Cavite), Makati City, and Navotas City bagged the award for the City category.

For the year 2021, the local governments of Biñan and Kalayaan (Laguna), Baliuag (Bulacan), and Balanga (Bataan) were recognized anew for the MBAI Award.

The MBAI Award aims to incentivize LGUs and recognize their exemplary performance in advancing effective waste management, uplifting the welfare, safety, and living conditions of informal settler families and the general public, promoting the protection of coastal and marine resources, and strengthening their institutional mechanisms, all of which contribute to the rehabilitation and protection of Manila Bay.



Mindanao tribesmen seek Sen. Padilla's help for ancestral domain recognition

LEADERS of the indigenous Teduray and Lambangian people from Mindanao have sought the help of Senator Robinhood Padilla to look into the 26-year delay of their much-awaited ancestral domain recognition.

In a courtesy call facilitated by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples on Monday, December 12, a delegation of the Teduray Lambangian Ancestral Domain Claim (TLADC) met with Padilla, currently the chairman of the Senate Committee on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs to complain about how the alleged denial of their claim to their ancestral domain had displaced their peoples and relegated them to live in hazardous areas.

This became evident when the recent onslaught of typhoon "Paeng" caused deadly landslides, according to the leaders of the Teduray and Lambangian people.

"We thank Sen. Padilla for the productive conversation on the status of the Teduray and Lambangian peoples' ancestral domain claim, and the issues and concerns at ground zero. The protection of our lands, lives, and livelihoods are crucial for our pathway towards genuine sustainable development and climate resilience," Timuay Alim Bandara, head claimant

of TLADC, said in a statement.

Data from the Task Force Barat, a formation of Teduray, Lambangian and Dulangan Manobo peoples responding to the crises left by Paeng, revealed that a total of 2,025 families from their tribes were affected, resulting in 46 dead and 6 others missing.

The issuance of a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) for the Teduray and Lambangian has been denied for more than two and a half decades, they told Padilla. The latest snag is a resolution by the Bangsamoro Parliament issuing a cease and desist order to the CADT application process as part of the complexities of the Bangsamoro transition.

For its part, the legal, research, and policy institution Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center (LRC) urged the Senate to push through with a special investigation in aid of legislation.

"We urge our honorable lawmakers to probe into the persisting delays of CADT issuance for the Teduray and Lambangian people with the aim of fast tracking the process. This is a right ensured under IPRA [Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997]," Atty. Ryan Roset, Direct Legal Services Coordinator of LRC, said. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



2-15-22

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

BBM wants concrete fund guidelines for climate change loss

BRUSSELS – President Marcos called for more concrete guidelines in the funding of initiatives aimed at mitigating the damage and losses caused by climate change, reiterating how the risks are greater in the Philippines than elsewhere.

Speaking to leaders and business executives from the European Union (EU) the other day, Marcos said progress has been made in the Conference of Parties (COP), the decision-making body that monitors and reviews the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The President said he has “some optimism” that “the concept of

damage and loss has now been accepted by all parties involved.” The 27th session of COP reached agreements that crafted a funding mechanism to compensate vulnerable nations for “loss and damage,” he added.

“However, this still brings us to a very difficult and fundamental question, and when you speak of damage and loss, how do we quantify that damage and loss? What are the rules that we apply? When does it begin?” Marcos said.

Even if countries quantify the damage and loss caused by climate-related disasters in terms of dollars and other measures, they have not come to the conclusion as to what

they should do with that number, he said during a working luncheon with EU leaders and business executives here.

“And so we really would like to see much more progress in terms of that, the financing, with the mitigation and the adjustment of our countries who are at great risk to the effects of climate change,” he added.

Marcos said climate action is important to the Philippines, noting that the country is “regarded as probably one of the most, if not the most, vulnerable countries in the world to the effects of climate change.” – Alexis Romero, Janvic Mateo, Jose Rodel Clapano



TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

Budget hike urged to address climate change

By LOUELLA DESIDERIO

The Philippine government is being urged to encourage green lending and investments to make funds available to fight climate change, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said.

In the latest blog of the multilateral lender, ADB infrastructure specialist Naeeda Crishna Morgado and ADB energy specialist Diana Connett said that as the Philippines is one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change, being hit by an average of 20 typhoons per year and affected by extreme floods, it would need substantial financing to address the challenge.

With the Philippines setting one of the most ambitious targets among Southeast Asian countries by committing to cut 75 percent of its emissions by 2030 and to accelerate efforts to adapt to a changing climate, but only having 2.7 percent of the target to be financed through the public budget, the ADB specialists said achieving the goal would depend on financing the country's climate program.

"We need action on five fronts to unlock the financing needed," they said.

Among the recommendations by the ADB specialists include seeking a higher budget for climate action.

"Effective government budgeting is key to building institutions, as well as the teams of people needed to convert climate ambition into action... Maintaining and increasing budget allocations — from the 6.27 percent of the annual budget allocated for climate resilience in 2021 — will be critical," the ADB specialists said.

They also cited the need to

mobilize international climate finance to support the country's climate ambitions.

"A pipeline of projects needs to be built, and project sponsors need more capacity to mobilize funds, design projects and engage investors," the ADB specialists said.

In addition, there should be efforts to encourage banks to finance green initiatives.

"The central bank, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and other financial regulators have put in place a suite of policies to integrate environmental, social and governance issues into banking practice; encourage green lending; and support banks considering how climate risks affect their lending. Banks and financial institutions need greater capacity to take on this agenda," the ADB specialists said.

The government is likewise being urged to attract private investors in clean energy projects.

"Investment in geothermal, solar and wind projects can be unlocked by updating regulations and putting in place the right incentives to help address investment risks," the ADB said.

Lastly, the ADB specialists said local governments need to be mobilized to take action by increasing their awareness, know-how and capacity to implement climate change programs.

"There is a clear message coming out of the United Nations COP27 Climate Change Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh: the world has until 2030 to take the necessary action to limit global warming or else it will be too late.

The clock is ticking for the Philippines, and the money needed for climate action cannot be mobilized fast enough," the ADB said.



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INQUIRER



12-15-22

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

MORE CLARITY NEEDED

MARCOS URGES ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE FUND

By Nestor Corrales
@NCorralesINQ

BRUSSELS—President Marcos on Tuesday renewed his call for rich countries to fulfill their climate finance promises to vulnerable nations like the Philippines during a meeting with European Union (EU) leaders and businessmen here.

In his remarks at the Association of Southeast Asian

Nations-EU working luncheon, he asked for “more concrete funding guidelines” on mitigating climate change damage and loss.

“When you speak of damage and loss, how do we quantify that damage and loss? What are the rules that we apply? When does it begin?” Mr. Marcos said.

Even if countries succeeded in quantifying the damage and loss, in terms of dollars and

other measures, “we still cannot, we still have not come to the conclusion as to what we do with that number,” he added.

“And so we really would like to see much more progress in terms of that, the financing, with the mitigation and the adjustment of our countries who are at great risk to the effects of climate change,” the President told EU leaders.

According to him, climate

action is important to the Philippines which is “regarded as probably one of the most, if not the most, vulnerable countries in the world to the effects of climate change.”

“Since that seems to be the case and that is what we are facing in the Philippines, we are very much in need of the assistance of Europe, of all the First World countries and to be able to adjust our economy, our com-

munities to the onset of the effects of climate change,” he said.

The President said that he observed “all the progress” in the Conference of Parties (COP) 27 summit and views with “some optimism” that “the concept of damage and loss has now been accepted by all parties involved.”

After weeks of intense negotiations at the COP 27 summit held in Egypt, world leaders from

196 countries agreed to establish a fund to compensate countries that suffer the most from climate-induced disasters yet contribute little to global warming.

The President was obviously feeling under the weather on his second day in Brussels as the temperature dropped to -3 degrees, prompting him to skip his scheduled press briefing with the media on Tuesday night. INQ



TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

Marcos urges EU to help PH and other climate vulnerable countries

By BETHEENA V. UNITE

President Ferdinand "Bong-bong" Marcos Jr. has urged the European Union (EU) to extend assistance to the Philippines in mitigating the harsh effects of climate change.

During his meeting with top businessmen and EU leaders in Brussels, Belgium, Marcos stressed the importance of climate action, especially to the Philippines, as he urged them to step up aid to vulnerable countries like his country.

"Climate action is particularly important to the Philippines," said the President, especially since the country is "regarded as probably one of the most, if not the most vulnerable country in the world to the effects of climate change."

"Since that seems to be the case and that is what we are facing in the Philippines, we are very much in need of the assistance of Europe, of all the first world countries and to be able to adjust our economy, our communities to the onset of the effects of climate change," he said.

The chief executive said he has observed "all the progress" in the Conference of Parties (COP) and views with "some optimism" that "the concept of damage and loss has now been accepted by all parties involved."

After immense negotiations, countries at the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) reached deals on an outcome that created a funding mech-

anism to compensate vulnerable nations for "loss and damage" from climate-related disasters.

"However, this still brings us to a very difficult and fundamental question, and when you speak of damage and loss, how do we quantify that damage and loss? What are the rules that we apply? When does it begin?" Marcos pointed out.

Even if countries succeeded in quantifying the damage and loss, in terms of dollars and in terms of other measures, he said "we still cannot, we still have not come to the conclusion as to what we do with that number."

"And so we really would like to see much more progress in terms of that, the financing, with the mitigation and the adjustment of our countries who are at great risk to the effects of climate change," the chief executive told EU leaders.

The COP serves as the decision-making body responsible for monitoring and reviewing the UNFCCC implementation.



PH, EU identify areas of cooperation

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

PRESIDENT Marcos Jr. has secured the commitment of the European Council to cooperate with the Philippines on a wide range of areas such as trade, climate mitigation, and support for the country's bid to address issues in the Philippines' seafaring industry.

The President met with European Council president Charles Michel on the sidelines of the 10th Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the European Union (Asean-EU) Business Summit in Brussels on Tuesday.

Marcos also highlighted the vital role of Asean countries and its increased presence in the world economy during their meeting. The Philippines is the dialogue facilitator between Asean and the EU.

The European Council consists of the heads of state or government of the EU's member-states.

Michel for his part agreed with the idea that there is a need to operationalize the green fund on climate change and the damage and loss policy. The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was designated as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and aims to encourage the paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development by providing support to developing countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) while at the same time adapting to the effects of climate change.

See PH > Page A2

He also said the EU is ready to work with the Philippines and Asean on climate change, particularly on the transfer of green technology, which involves improving resilience to climate change and reducing GHGs.

In addressing the summit, Marcos said while free trade agreements between the Asean-EU remains a long-term objective, economic cooperation initiatives among specific countries, including the Philippines, will be prioritized particularly on areas of mutual interests.

Marcos also emphasized the importance of forging stronger public-private cooperation to boost trade and investment especially in a post-pandemic economic setup, and of expediting the imple-

mentation of the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy.

Marcos said Asean member-countries will continue to recognize the historical importance of the EU as a trade and investment partner to Asean even as he urged his fellow leaders and business representatives to continue to strengthen trade and investment endeavors between the EU and Asean, in a bid to enhance economic integration between the two blocs.

He also expressed hope that through the Asean-EU Trade and Investment Work Programme, the momentum could continue in 2023 and beyond.

"Thus, while the Asean-EU FTA (free trade agreement) remains a common long-term objective,

economic cooperation initiatives will be prioritized on areas of mutual interest in order to bridge the gap and realize this long-term objective," Marcos said.

The President also recognized the crucial role of the Asean-EU Business Council in advancing Asean's regional economic integration, in the post-coronavirus disease pandemic economic recovery efforts through its initiatives and valuable insights.

Marcos said the business council for instance has provided a platform for the much-needed dialogue between the EU and Asean, after the reopening of borders with the easing of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He also pitched for continued closer and stronger public-private

collaboration amid the challenges that the world is facing brought about by recent geopolitical tensions.

"There is a growing need for the public sector to collaborate with private institutions, especially now that Asean member-states are in a post-pandemic economic recovery and are facing new challenges brought about by recent geopolitical tensions, problems in the supply side, problems also with food prices," he said.

The President, meanwhile, highlighted the increased presence of Asean on the global stage through its efforts on regional economic integration and supply chain resilience.

Marcos said the entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive

Economic Partnership or RCEP, the ongoing review of existing trade agreements, and Asean's initiatives to facilitate trade of essential goods demonstrates the region's push to maintain an "open, free, and fair trade."

He said Asean is also well-positioned to accelerate intra-regional trade and growth following the participation of its member countries in mega trade deals such as the RCEP and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

The President's trip to Brussels is his first in Europe and his seventh abroad, since becoming president last June.

Marcos is expected to return to Manila on Thursday evening.

He is expected to go on a state

visit to China in January.

Speaker Martin Romualdez said the President has agreed to attend the World Economic Forum in Davos in Switzerland in January.

WEF founder and executive chairman Klaus Schwab invited Marcos Jr. to attend the event in Davos from January 16 to 20 during their meeting in Cambodia on the sidelines of the Asean Summit.

Schwab had commended Marcos then for the strong showing of the economy and said that his attendance to the WEF serves as a good opportunity to let the global business community know about the dynamism and positive developments happening in the Philippines in a bid to attract more investors.



BBM seeks help vs climate change

Climate change is among the priorities of the Marcos administration, calling it the 'greatest threat that is affecting nations and people'

BY MICHELLE GUILLANG
@tribunephil_mish

BRUSSELS – President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. has called on his counterparts and

business leaders to create more concrete funding guidelines for cushioning climate change damage and loss.

Speaking at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-European Union working

luncheon with EU leaders and businessmen in Brussels on Tuesday (Belgium time), Marcos urged them to boost their efforts in addressing climate change and provide financial assistance to countries in need like the Philippines.

He said climate action is critical to the Philippines since the country is “regarded as probably one of the most, if not the most, vulnerable countries in the world to the effects of climate change.” **Turn to page A2**

From page 1

“Since that seems to be the case and that is what we are facing in the Philippines, we are very much in need of the assistance of Europe, of all the first world countries and to be able to adjust our economy, our communities to the onset of the effects of climate change,” he said.

Marcos has observed “all the progress” in the Conference of Parties and views with “some optimism” that “the concept of damage and loss has now been accepted by all parties involved.”

After immense negotiations, countries at the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change reached deals on an outcome that created a funding mechanism to compensate vulnerable nations for “loss and damage” from climate-related disasters.

“However, this still brings us to a very difficult and fundamental question, when you speak of damage and loss, how do we quantify that damage and loss? What are the rules that we apply? When does it begin?” he asked.

Even if countries succeeded in quantifying the damage and loss, in terms of dollars and terms of other measures, Marcos said, “we still cannot, we still have not come to the conclusion as to what we do with that number.”

“And so we really would like to see much more progress in terms of that, the financing, with the mitigation and the adjustment of our countries who are at great risk to the effects of climate change,” he said.

The COP serves as the decision-making body responsible for monitoring and reviewing the UNFCCC implementation.

Climate change is among the priorities of the Marcos administration, calling it the “greatest threat that is affecting nations and people.”

Collaboration

Meanwhile, at the 10th ASEAN-EU Business Summit, Marcos expressed hope that the collaboration between the government and private groups would accelerate the world’s post-pandemic recovery and mitigate geopolitical tensions.

In his speech, Marcos recognized the ASEAN-EU Business Council



72-15-22

TITLE:

PAGE

2/2

DATE

BBM seeks help vs climate change

for its continued support of the Southeast Asian nations, from the sectoral bodies up to the Leaders forum and at that level.

The platform, he said, paves the way for the much-needed dialogue between the EU and ASEAN, following the gradual reopening of borders with the easing of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Marcos acknowledged the pivotal role the EU-ASEAN Business Council plays in advancing ASEAN's regional economic integration and post-pandemic economic recovery efforts like the ASEAN-EU Trade and Investment Work Programme.

The program, according to ASEAN, seeks to "enhance economic cooperation in addressing emerging challenges and opportunities for trade and investment between ASEAN and the EU."

Marcos is optimistic that the discussions undertaken during the summit will not only bring new impetus for both sides to bolster sustainable trade and investment but will also provide ways to fast-track the implementation of the EU's strategy.

He added that ASEAN has increased its presence on the global stage through its efforts on regional

economic integration and supply chain resilience.

"The entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership or RCEP, the ongoing review of existing trade agreements, and ASEAN's initiatives to facilitate the trade of essential goods demonstrates the region's push to maintain an open, free, and fair trade," he said.

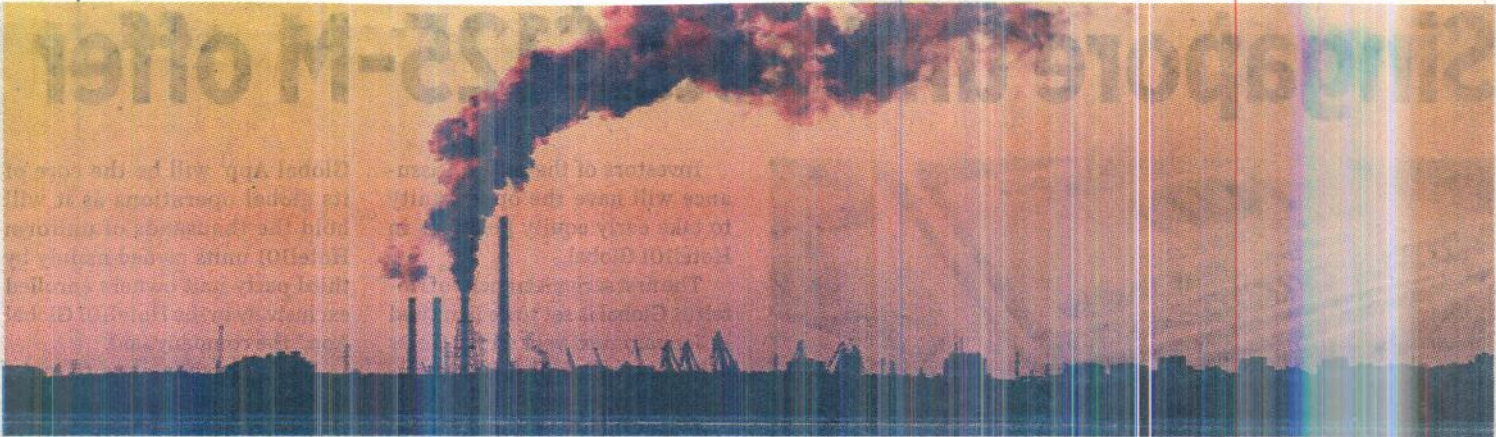
He added: "Moreover, with the participation of ASEAN members in mega trade deals such as RCEP and Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, ASEAN is well-positioned to accelerate intra-regional trade and growth."

Recognizing the historical importance of the EU as a trade and investment partner to ASEAN, he urged his fellow leaders and business representatives to continue to strengthen trade and investment endeavors between the two blocs.

"Thus, while the ASEAN-EU FTA (Free Trade Agreement) remains a common long-term objective, economic cooperation initiatives will be prioritized on areas of mutual interest in order to bridge the gap and realize this long-term objective," he said.



PEXELS-MAREK PIWNICKI



EU agrees to move forward with developing-nation green finance

THE European Union has agreed to “operationalize” the Green Climate Fund to help developing countries tap financing for their climate projects, Malacañang said, following a meeting in Brussels between President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. and European Council President Charles Michel.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Office of the Press Secretary said the meeting took place on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-European Union (ASEAN-EU) Commemorative Summit.

Mr. Michel was quoted in the statement as saying that the EU is ready to work with the Philippines on integrating green technology into government operations.

Developing countries have taken the position that industrialized countries must help finance their climate-mitigation efforts, since the developed world is most responsible for the bulk of the greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) said on Tuesday that the Philippines must budget and mobilize private funding more effectively for climate projects, given the limited resources available to uphold its international commitments.

In 2021, the Philippines committed to reduce 75% of its emissions by 2030. Economic officials have estimated that the Philippines can fund only a small fraction of these initiatives using its own resources.

“The clock is ticking for the Philippines, and the money needed for climate action cannot be mobilized fast enough,” the ADB said in a blog post.

At a separate business summit, Mr. Marcos went to bat for keeping trade open in the wake of rising protectionist sentiment inspired by the concurrent food and energy crises.

“The entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership or RCEP, the ongoing review of existing trade agreements, and ASEAN’s initiatives to facilitate the trade of essential goods demonstrates the region’s push to maintain an open, free, and fair trade,” he said.

“Thus, while the ASEAN-EU FTA (free trade agreement)

remains a common long-term objective, economic cooperation initiatives will be prioritized in areas of mutual interest in order to bridge the gap and realize this long-term objective,” Mr. Marcos said.

RCEP is the largest FTA with participating countries including the 10 ASEAN members, Australia, China, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.

Former President Rodrigo R. Duterte approved Philippine participation in RCEP last year but must be ratified by the Senate to take effect.

The Philippines and Myanmar are the last RCEP countries that have yet to finalize their participation in the agreement. — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**



TITLE :

PAGE

DATE

GREEN FUND

Marcos wants more progress in climate change reparations



Story on p.2

PRESIDENT Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. meets with Belgian King Philippe at the Royal Palace of Brussels on Tuesday (Brussels time). Marcos expressed his desire to push for a new Philippines-Belgium Joint Plan of Action for 2023 to 2027. Photo courtesy of the OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Tuesday (Brussels time) called for "more progress" in the commitment of rich nations to set up a "loss and damage" fund to support poorer countries severely impacted by climate change.

Marcos made this remark during the Association of Southeast Asian Nations - European Union (ASEAN-EU) working luncheon with EU leaders and businessmen in Brussels, Belgium.

In his speech, the President acknowledged the agreement of nearly 200 countries at the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to create a funding mechanism to compensate vulnerable nations for "loss and damage" from climate-related disasters.

Marcos said he viewed with "some optimism" that "the concept of damage and loss has now been accepted by all parties involved."

However, he said, several questions in terms of funding remain unanswered.

"This still brings us to a very difficult and fundamental question, and when you speak of damage and loss, how do we quantify that damage and loss? What are the rules that we apply? When does it begin?" he said.

"We really would like to see much more progress in terms of that, the financing, with the mitigation and the adjustment of our countries who are at great risk to the effects of climate change."

Marcos pointed out that climate action is particularly important to the Philippines, which has been "regarded as probably

one of the most, if not the most, vulnerable countries in the world to the effects of climate change."

"Since that seems to be the case and that is what we are facing in the Philippines, we are very much in need of the assistance of Europe, of all the first world countries and to be able to adjust our economy, our communities to the onset of the effects of climate change," he said.

The COP serves as the decision-making body responsible for monitoring and reviewing the UNFCCC implementation. Meanwhile, European Council President Charles Michel agreed with Marcos on the need to operationalize the green fund on climate change and the damage and loss policy.

"We couldn't agree with you more," Michel told Marcos during their meeting on the sidelines of the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit.

He said the EU is ready to work with the Philippines and the ASEAN on climate change, particularly on the transfer of green technology, which involves improving resilience to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Marcos earlier said the Philippines is prioritizing renewable energy options, such as hydropower, geothermal power, solar, and other low-emission energy sources.

The Green Climate Fund was designated as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC.

It aims to encourage the paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development by providing support to developing countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions while at the same time adapting to the effects of climate change.

PNA



02-15-22

TITLE: _____

PAGE: _____

DATE: _____

EDITORIAL

Climate change tab

THE injured party deserves commensurate compensation.

In the case of the climate crisis poorer countries which bore the brunt of the environmental degradation are entitled to reparations.

The richer or industrialized countries are the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases blamed for global warming.

Thus, President Marcos has called for "more progress" in the commitment of rich nations to set up a "loss and damage" fund to support poorer countries severely impacted by climate change.

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STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



TITLE:

PAGE

02-15-22

DATE

Climate change affects your kids' health

WHEN it comes to climate change, no one is exempt from experiencing its impact on their health—and our children are bearing the most brunt.

Burning fossil fuel to operate our vehicles; cutting down trees; clearing vast tracts of land; dumping garbage on landfills; and other human activities all contribute to the

release of carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere. These and other gasses trap the sun's heat, creating what is known as a greenhouse effect, and in turn, global warming. Global warming is just one of many consequences of climate change. Note the rising sea waters, warmer oceans, melting glaciers, intense droughts, and

more devastating storms. "While it may not be apparent at first, climate change directly affects our children's health," said Dr. Romina Gerolaga, from the Department of Pediatrics of the top hospital in the Philippines, the Makati Medical Center (Makati Med). "Our kids' immune system and organs are not quite fully developed; children

breathe at a faster rate and therefore, this increases their exposure to toxic air pollutants, which can damage their lungs."

There are some ways parents can still protect their kids from climate change's ill effects.

* Eat more vegetables. More plants on your plate. Shifting to a more plant-based diet is good for not just your kids' health but

also the environment.

* Protect your child's skin from the sun. The sun casts its damaging UV rays from 10 am to 4 pm, the expert points out. Playing in the shade also shields them from direct heat and the sun's harmful rays or schedules their playtime or outdoor walks during the early mornings.

* Improve air quality.

Though you cannot control air pollution outdoors, you can certainly keep the air in your home clean by purging air and allowing better air flow; and if possible, by investing in a portable air purifier or a high-efficiency air filter.

* Prevent diseases. Stop dengue in its tracks by clearing your immediate surroundings of standing water, where mosqui-

toes typically breed. When going out, you can also apply a mosquito repellent for extra safety.

Climate change can be such a complicated issue, especially now that it is hitting home and affecting the most vulnerable in your household. That is why Dr. Gerolaga reminds you to get help from health experts when it comes to your child's health.



Senate denounces China over WPS harassment

The Senate has adopted a resolution denouncing what it called the continued acts of harassment and encroachment by China in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

The adoption of the still unnumbered resolution was triggered by a privilege speech of Sen. Francis Tolentino, who said the voice of the Senate must be heard

when President Marcos meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Jan. 3 bearing the document from the chamber.

"Mr. (Senate) President, let me stress that this is high time that the government prioritizes South China Sea, West Philippine Sea, as the Philippines has become

Turn to Page 2

Senate From Page 1

the laggard among claimants, a status that threatens not only the country's sovereignty but also the livelihood of thousands of Filipino fishermen and the nation's energy and food security," Tolentino said, addressing Juan Miguel

Zubiri.

"With one strident voice, Mr. (Senate) President, let us continue to denounce the brazen intrusions into our maritime territory and do all within our power to assert our rights... we shall not surrender quietly to an invasion of our free and democratic nation," he added.

Tolentino noted that the

rule of law is behind the Philippines with the 2016 arbitral ruling and yet Beijing's assertiveness continues despite numerous diplomatic protests over such activities.

China, he said, is becoming more brazen in its actions toward Philippine maritime forces in the WPS, from aggressive maneuvers by China

Coast Guard (CCG) vessels in Bajo de Masinloc to interfering in the provision of humanitarian supplies to government personnel abroad the BRP Sierra Madre in Ayungin shore.

"Let us continue to strengthen and solidify our strategic alliances towards this end for at the end of day... this is not a fight not only for

territory, the environment and for invaluable resources," the senator said.

He said continuously denouncing Beijing over its violations in the WPS "is about taking a stand against suppression, which is sadly increasing in many parts of the world."

Tolentino showed pictures and videos of incidents in

recent months wherein CCG vessels interfered with the Coast Guard's efforts to retrieve rocket debris, including one that fell within the Pag-asa Islands' territorial sea.

Philippine personnel initially detected the space debris some 800 yards west of the main station of Pag-asa.

- Paolo Romero



Protecting 30% of the planet to save nature is not as simple as it sounds

MONTREAL — From the lush Amazon rainforest to the frigid Arctic Ocean, the world's landscapes — and all the wildlife they contain — are under threat, and the world needs to set aside a third of all land and sea territories to save them, UN experts say.

The call is central to the global agreement being hashed out this month at the UN biodiversity summit in Montreal. If approved at the end of the summit next week, governments would be agreeing to set aside 30% of their land and sea territories for conservation by 2030 — doubling the amount of land area and more than tripling the ocean territory currently under conservation.

More than 110 countries have come out in support of the 30-by-30 goal, including Canada, the United States and France.

Proponents argue that the goal is crucial to reversing the destruction of nature. Currently, more than 1 million species are at risk of

extinction, while the global insect population declines at up to 2% every year and about 40% of the world's remaining plant species are in trouble.

But as is often the case with science-based policy, the details matter to whether a 30% global conservation goal can truly save the world's imperiled species and places.

"The danger, as with all these sorts of events populated by politicians, is they want a simple number," said Stuart Pimm, a biologist at Duke University. "They would like to be able to leave Montreal and say we're going to protect 30% of the planet. But that alone is not enough."

Is 30% sufficient?

This driving question ultimately comes down to quantity versus quality.

There is not a strong scientific argument behind 30% as the threshold for staving off species loss, experts said. In real-

ity, it could take a much greater percentage of land or sea — or a lower percentage — depending which areas are selected.

"30% is neither necessary nor sufficient," Pimm said. "If we do things the right way, we protect most biodiversity by being smart — by protecting the areas that matter."

There is a temptation, he said, to conserve vast tracts of land that are already without many people, but also have relatively little biodiversity, such as the Arctic tundra or Saharan desert.

But it is important to protect areas with lots of different species, known as biodiversity hotspots, even if they are more challenging to conserve because people live there or there are extractive industries.

Protecting narrow slices of land and sea such as Australia's Great Barrier Reef or the Andes mountains, can offer far more reward than protecting large swathes of

prairie, for example.

"A numerical target isn't going to work," Pimm said. "If we were to just protect 50% of the planet, and we protect the least populated 50%, it will do very little for biodiversity."

A June 2022 study in the journal *Science* found that at least 44% of global land area would be needed to protect areas with a high diversity of species, prevent the loss of intact ecosystems, and optimize the representation of different landscapes and species. But more than 1.8 billion people live in these areas.

However, co-author Hugh Possingham, a researcher at the University of Queensland, noted that "while there is nothing magical about 30% ... targets help focus the attention of nations."


"I see 30% as a goal that most countries can reasonably achieve by 2030," he said, adding some countries, such as Bhutan, had already passed this goal. — Reuters



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PAGE

DATE


 Republic of the Philippines
 Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD
 1100 Taft Ave., EDSA, Alabang, Muntinlupa City, Philippines 1510

WOODENDRAGON, INC., Applicant. Case No. 22-3479
 x-----x

NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within San Manuel Villaggio Subdivision, Barangay Molino, municipality of Naic, province of Cavite, with the following proposed rates:

PROPOSED TARIFF

Public Tap

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
½"	P 25.40	28.00	30.50	36.80	40.70	43.20

Residential and Institutional

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
½"	P 114.50	25.40	26.70	28.00	29.20	30.50
¾"	P 183.00	40.70	42.70	44.70	46.80	48.80
1"	P 366.00	81.30	85.40	89.40	93.50	97.60
1 ½"	P 915.00	203.30	213.40	223.60	233.80	243.90

Residential and Commercial

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40m3
½"	P 114.50	25.40	26.70	28.00	29.20	30.50
¾"	P 183.00	40.70	42.70	44.70	46.80	48.80
1"	P 366.00	81.30	85.40	89.40	93.50	97.80

Commercial and Industrial

Pipe Size	0-15 m3 (min.)	16-30 m3	31-500 m3	501-1000 m3	Over 1000 m3
½"	P 762.00	63.50	76.20	76.20	76.20
¾"	P 1,220.00	101.60	122.00	122.00	122.00
1"	P 2,439.00	203.30	243.90	243.90	243.90
1 ½"	P 6,099.00	508.20	609.80	609.80	609.80
2"	P 15,248.00	1,270.50	1,524.60	1,524.60	1,524.60
3"	P 27,443.00	2,286.90	2,744.30	2,744.30	2,744.30
4"	P 54,885.00	4,573.80	5,488.60	5,488.60	5,488.60

Bulk

Pipe Size	Per cu.m.
1"	P146.40

Others

Pipe Size	Per cu.m.
¾"	P 73.20

This application will be initially heard by the Board on 9 January 2023. The hearing will start at 9:00 o'clock in the morning at the NWRB-WUD Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

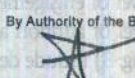
At least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing, applicant shall publish this notice once in a newspaper of general circulation in the province of Cavite and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard. The Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 27th day of October 2022.

By Authority of the Board:

Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
 Executive Director

Affected Parties:

The Secretary
 Sengguniang Bayan
 Naic, Cavite

The Barangay Chairman
 Barangay Molino
 Naic, Cavite

The Homeowners Assn. President
 San Manuel Villaggio Subdivision
 Barangay Molino, Naic, Cavite

MT - Dec. 15, 2022