

31 August 2022, Wednesday



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

# **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**





## The threat of quarrying in Masungi



Canadian Ambassador Peter MacArthur, Ben Dumaliang (trustee and founder of Masungi Georeserve Foundation) and Daphne Oseña Paez. PHOTO FROM DAPHNE OSEÑA PAEZ

LAST week I was invited by the Masungi Georeserve Foundation Inc. to be the emcee of the Environment Champions luncheon co-hosted by the Canadian embassy in Manila. The event brought together different players from government, civil society and local communities in a brief morning forum to discuss the lessons from Masungi's conservation efforts and the challenges it continues to face. After lunch, the participants, including Canadian Ambassador Peter MacArthur, went walking on the edge of the Discovery Trail to see some Philippine native trees. The Philippine government was represented by Secretary Robert Borje, vice chairman of the Climate Change Commission, Undersecretary Miguel Cuna for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and Undersecretary Margarita Gutierrez for the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). The Masungi we've come to know as the award-winning geotourism site with hanging bridges, *duyan* and rope courses that run through the limestone cliffs, was a project initiated by its mother organization Blue Star developers since 1996. As part of their project with government, Blue Star and the Masungi Foundation embarked on a conservation program that not only protected the mountain environs but also allowed the forest to heal by planting native trees in the 2,700-hectare site. The results of this decades-old program are enjoyed now by guests who sign up for the Discovery Trail, an adventure that is so unforgettable for anyone who still has good knees.

What the geotourism site has shown the world is the possibility and success of having low-impact adventure tourism. These experiences provide great learning about ecosystems and the watershed, while not sacrificing their Instagram and YouTube-worthiness. The spiderweb-like wire mesh installation above limestone mountain tops called Sapot allows adventurers access to a 360-degree viewing deck. There is a *Duyan*, an 80-meter long rope hammock that allows you to walk and rest on top of a canopy of trees on the rainforest.

Research and education are important pillars of conservation. We have been made aware of the incredible species discovered and found in Masungi. The latest was the "mottle-winged" flying fox last week. Another significant native fauna is the rare purple jade vine that only blooms in March or April. Nikki Realubit, founder and head of Buhay-ilang Research, Education and Conservation Inc. shared the results





## URBANISTA

**DAPHNE  
OSEÑA PAEZ**

of a baseline expedition in January 2022. It shows over 68,000 native trees planted and nurtured. There are 17 ranger stations inside the reforestation area, including eight checkpoints in critical areas.

This is all very nice, to have organizations and foreign embassies supporting and highlighting the success and lessons from Masungi. However, there are critical issues and low-hanging fruit that continue to threaten the protected area. In 2017, President Rodrigo Duterte and the then Acting Environment Secretary Gina Lopez supported the protection of the Masungi Geopark Project and imposed a no mining, no quarrying policy. They were able to make many advances in fighting poachers, loggers and small-scale quarrying within the area. But it seems the protected park is in danger again.

There are currently quarrying companies claiming that their mineral production sharing agreements awarded 24 years ago over these protected areas are still valid. If these companies are given the license to quarry, the Masungi Georeserve and the Upper Marikina watershed will be affected and damaged. That afternoon, Masungi's Ben Dumaliang and representatives of the Dumagat Indigenous peoples showed me the mountain peak that will be visibly destroyed should quarrying be continued. If this happens we can say goodbye to the native animals, flowers and trees that have found a home in Masungi, not to mention the catastrophic effects these mining activities may have on communities below. Landslides and Ondoy-level floods don't happen without a cause.

While I celebrate the beauty and success stories of Masungi, I can't help but wonder why a high-profile nature reserve is still grappling with its protection status. Quarrying in Masungi will definitely affect us all in Metro Manila. Here's hoping the two undersecretaries of the Environment and Local Government departments report these critical low-hanging fruits to their respective secretaries. Here's hoping President Bongbong Marcos exercises the same, if not stronger, will to protect Masungi, the Upper Marikina watershed, and Metro Manila and its environs. The laws are there. We just need to enforce them.



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## DOST, DENR tackle priorities in Cabinet meet

The priority programs of the science and environment departments, including efforts related to food, energy and water security, were tackled during the seventh Cabinet meeting of the Marcos administration yesterday.

Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles said the Department of Science and Technology (DOST)'s priorities are the creation of technology-based enterprises and jobs for regional development, food security and resilience, health security, water security as well as environmental protection and energy.

The priorities of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources

(DENR) include the enhancement of the natural capital accounting system, valuation of ecosystem services, budget realignment and strategic collaboration with other national government agencies, local governments, the private sector, academe and other stakeholders.

Angeles said the DENR also aims to bolster science and technology in environmental and natural resources management, including the Balik-Scientist program of DOST, improvement of sensors, sensor networks and analytics and promoting green and blue jobs in environmental and natural resources management.

- Alexis Romero





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## NATIONWIDE ROUND-UP

### Cabinet tackles DENR, DoST priorities

PRIORITY programs of the Environment and Science and Technology departments were discussed during a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday, according to the presidential palace.

Among the priorities of the Department of Science and Technology (DoST) is the creation of technology-based enterprises "for regional development," Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles told a televised news briefing.

Plans on food security and resilience, health security, water security and environmental protection were also tackled by DoST officials at the meeting, she added.

Ms. Angeles said the Environment department discussed plans to enhance the natural capital accounting system, "including the valuation of ecosystem services."

It also talked about budget realignment and collaboration with other agencies, local governments, the private sector, academe and other stakeholders. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**





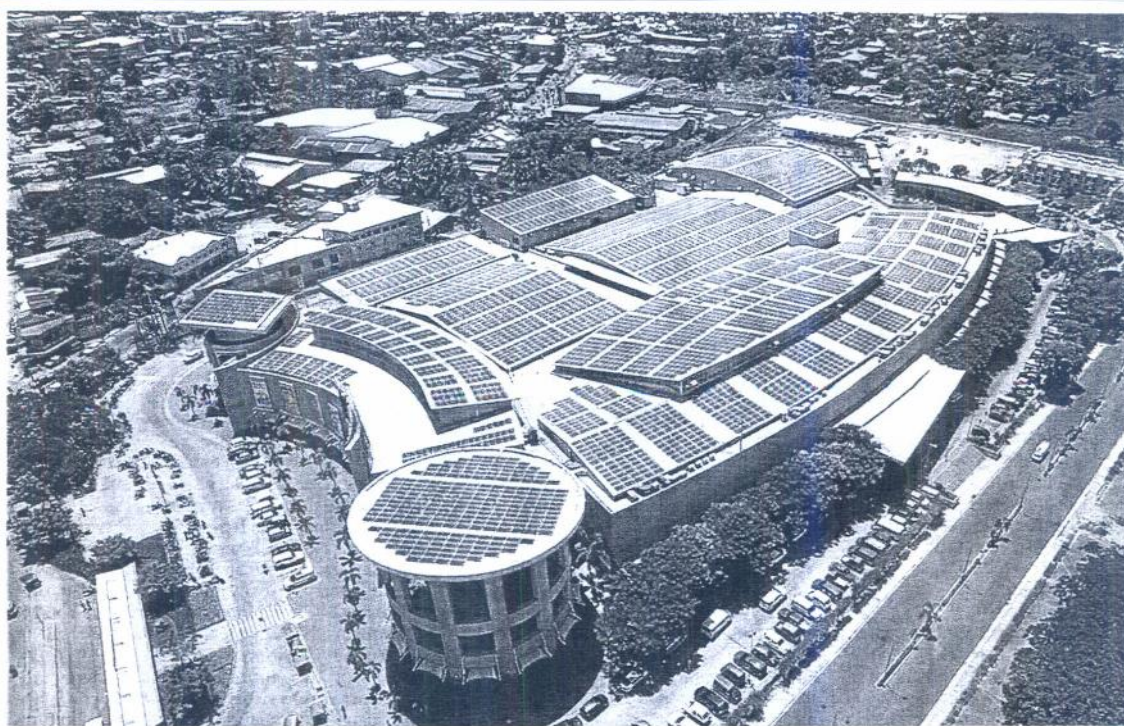
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# The greening of corporate Philippines



ENERGIZING ROOFTOP Robinsons Place Dumaguete is among the 24 solar-powered Robinsons malls with a combined generation capacity of 30.79 megawatts. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

carbon dioxide equivalent

By Miguel R. Camus  
@miguelrcamusINQ

**T**he country's top corporations are ramping efforts to switch to cleaner renewable energy (RE) sources as rising global temperatures and climate change pose an existential threat to the planet's future.

Manufacturers, retailers and property giants are collectively curbing the use of dirty power sources at a time when investors and stakeholders demand more sustainable business practices.

This is also in step with the Philippine government's commitments to the Paris Climate Agreement and the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties or COP26.

Former President Rodrigo Duterte signed the Paris climate pact in 2017. The country later pledged to reduce emissions by 75 percent by 2030.

Coal power plants still supply most of the country's energy needs and it will take years before enough RE supply could replace and support future demand. Nevertheless, companies have started to embark on meaningful steps to achieve cleaner and more sustainable operations.

2024," Holcim says in its latest annual report.

PLDT Inc. says it will boost renewable energy usage in operations. This will involve the use of solar power and fuel cell for cell sites and the use of hybrid generators and invest in environmental programs such as carbon footprint offsetting initiatives, the telco giant says in its annual report.

#### 'Net-zero' aspiration

In July, Manila Electric Co. subsidiary, Spectrum, announced the completion of the "energization" of solar facilities for five PLDT business centers in the Visayas.

PLDT is working with the telco organization GSMA and partners on setting emissions targets "with a clear goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050."

It is also reviewing a host of alternative energy sources such as "fuel cell, solar power solutions and marine renewable energy using ocean currents."

Fuel-cell powered cell sites can be an "environment-friendly alternative that will simultaneously address connectivity issues in challenged-grid areas nationwide."

"The system is based on





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cleaner and more sustainable operations.

#### Solar on malls

Among these is Sy-led SM Prime Holdings, which is equipping malls with 10.6 megawatts of solar rooftop capacity and watcher catchment facilities to cut water usage.

"Your company committed to increase the share of RE in its electricity consumption by up to 50 percent across its various business segments by the end of 2022, in support of the Department of Energy (DOE) program to move up the RE supply component of the country to 35 percent by 2030," SM Prime says in its latest sustainability report.

"In this initiative, SM Prime will have more than 50 facilities under the DOE's Retail Competition and Open Access scheme utilizing RE and providing affordable and clean power to its tenant-partners, minimizing carbon footprint emission in our operations," it adds.

Ayala Land Inc., part of conglomerate Ayala Corp., says its main strategy to cut emissions is to source RE via power purchase agreements with electricity suppliers.

The builder says eight more buildings shifted to RE in 2021 for a total of 65 buildings representing 85 percent of total gross leasable area, its sustainability report shows.

This also cut net emissions by about 164,000 metric tons of

carbon dioxide equivalent.

Ayala Land adds that commercial properties alone reached carbon neutral status, a year ahead of its target in 2022.

Ayala Corp. as a conglomerate announced a commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. This includes controllable emissions from fuel, refrigerant and electricity use and all other emissions from its value chain, including those of its suppliers, tenants and customers.

Robinsons Land now has 24 malls with solar power facilities with a combined capacity of 30.79 MW, equivalent to planting 1.43 million trees and cutting greenhouse gases by 86,359.41 metric tons.

#### RE-powered factories

Food and beverage giant Universal Robina Corp. (URC) of the Gokongwei Group recently announced "more ambitious" sustainability targets, which includes accelerating the shift to RE.

Earlier this year, the maker of C2 iced tea and Jack 'n Jill snacks signed agreements with various power generation firms to supply 20 of its factories with geothermal, solar and hydro energy. These include facilities in Pasig, Laguna, Cavite, Pampanga, Antipolo and Bulacan, as well as facilities in Cebu and Negros Occidental.

Overseas, URC installed so-

lar panels in six factories and four warehouses at its compound in Samut Sakhon province, southwest of Bangkok. Its Vietnam subsidiary is also installing a 3 MW solar rooftop system in its coffee plant located in the Vietnam Singapore Industrial Park Binh Duong.

David Lim, chief sustainability officer of URC, says the goal is to "have all our plants utilize electricity from 100 percent RE by 2025."

#### Snowballing efforts

Retailers are taking similar steps to incorporate RE and energy efficient features in their stores.

Tycoon Edgar "Injap" Sia II's MerryMart recently sealed a 15-year lease deal with Ayala Land to build full-size eco-friendly supermarkets in Nuvali, Laguna, and Ayala Cresendo Tarlac projects.

The stores will feature roof solar panels, LED lighting, bicycle and electric car charging facilities.

The Villar Group's AllHome retail chain is also incorporating sustainability features in its stores.

"We consider areas that can optimize our investment in solar panels. As of 2021, nine stores have been installed with solar panels, with six of the large-format stores newly installed with solar panels," the group says in its latest sustainability report. This conversion to RE sources

**Knowing full well that the industry has the duty and capability to decarbonize, TMP drives its local network's efforts toward accomplishing the Toyota Global Environmental Challenge**

**Toyota Motors PH**

has provided an estimated 8 to 10 percent energy savings to the stores' consumption.

Toyota Motor Philippines (TMP) pledged to cut carbon emissions "completely" and to use 100 percent RE in its manufacturing plant by 2035, according to the latest report of Ty-led GT Capital Holdings.

"Knowing full well that the industry has the duty and capability to decarbonize, TMP drives its local network's efforts toward accomplishing the Toyota Global Environmental Chal-

lenge," says the company.

"It also aims to offer a wider range of sustainable vehicle choices by introducing more models equipped with electrified vehicle technology in the Philippine market," it adds.

Top cement producer Holcim Philippines says the use of alternative fuels and raw materials in cement production is key to lowering its carbon footprint and its consumption of nonrenewable resources in its operations.

#### Cutting grid dependence

In November last year, Holcim sealed a 20-year deal with multinational RE company Blueleaf Energy, which will make it the first cement maker in the country with onsite solar power plant. Under the deal, Blueleaf Energy will deliver solar power to Holcim's manufacturing hubs in Bulacan and La Union. It will also finance, build, operate and maintain the solar energy facilities with a combined capacity of 29 MW and generation of more than 50 gigawatt hours every year. This will supply up to 15 percent of the two Luzon plants' energy requirements by 2024.

"The transition to renewable energy source will cut dependence on the Luzon power grid with mostly coal-fired power plants. Construction of the solar facilities will commence in 2022 and the solar set-up will be fully operational by

"The system is based on methanol-powered fuel, which can be combined with solar, wind and other renewable resources to present a sustainable, cost-effective ecosystem," says PLDT.

Globe Telecom of the Ayala Group is targeting 50 percent carbon reduction by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050. To cut indirect emissions, it has shifted 13 high-energy utilization sites to RE, such as its headquarters and several other corporate facilities and data centers through power purchase agreements with electricity suppliers.

Globe is also exploring "alternative technologies" to generator sets as backup power sources.

"With its commitment to set science-based targets aligned with the 1.5-degree celsius levels, Globe aims to secure approval of its science-based targets with SBTi (Science Based Target Initiative) by 2023," says the company.

More financial institutions are also joining the global effort to lower greenhouse gas emissions by cutting financial access for dirty power producers.

Security Bank Corp. recently pledged to end funding for coal-fired power projects in the country by 2033. Bank of the Philippine Islands earlier became the country's first lender to commit to halve its coal financing in its portfolio by 2026 and reduce it to zero by 2032. RCBC has stopped lending to new coal-fired power plants. INQ





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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

# ROAD TO CLEAN ENERGY

## PH heeds renewable energy imperative

By **Jordeene B. Lagare**  
@jordeenelagare

The Philippines may have turned over a new leaf with the change in leadership but it still holds the same aspiration of harnessing—and increasing the utilization of—greener sources of energy.

A law was passed more than a decade ago to accelerate the development of renewable energy (RE) resources. However, the country is still heavily dependent on fossil fuels until now.

Government data show that coal-fired power plants remain the most heavily used source of energy, accounting for about

half of the energy mix, while nonconventional energy sources come at a distant second.

Taking into account the country's vulnerability to natural disasters due to its geographic circumstances, the government is giving it another shot by making RE the top climate action agenda.

"We must take advantage of all the best technology that is now available, especially in the areas of renewable energy," says President Marcos in his first-ever State of the Nation Address.

"The technology on renewable energy is progressing rapidly. And many of these technologies are appro-

appropriate for the Philippines," Marcos adds.

### Call for liberalization

The Department of Energy (DOE) has taken its cue from the President's pronouncement. It has realigned its list of priorities, among which is relaxing foreign ownership restriction to funnel more investments to the RE sector.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla says at least two executive issuances need to be addressed: the foreign investment negative list (updated annually), which outlines foreign ownership cap in key economic activities; and the 60-40 percent provision favoring local control

in the Constitution.

Under the implementing rules and regulations of Republic Act No. 9513, otherwise known as the Renewable Energy Act of 2008, "the exploration, development, production and utilization of natural resources shall be under the full control and supervision of the State."

It states that foreign RE developers can undertake RE development through an RE service/operating contract with the government, as mandated by Article XII, Section 2 of the Philippine Constitution. Their ownership stake, however, is limited to 40 percent.

The DOE is looking into the possibility of allowing 100 per-

cent foreign ownership of RE projects.

"We need to address the industry's needs and definitely one way of doing that is to open up renewable, for example, to 100 percent foreign ownership so that foreign locators can actually also develop their own sources of power," says Lotilla.

All these and more will be brought to the DOE's newly formed Law and Energy Advisory Panel, which will guide the agency on various reform initiatives and legal matters, including the promotion of indigenous and low-carbon sources.

### Target mix

The government's ambition

is to increase the share of RE in the country's power generation mix from 29.4 percent to at least 35 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2040. The updated target, encapsulated in the National Renewable Energy Program (NREP) 2020-2040, aims to achieve energy security, sustainable development and inclusive growth and mitigate the impact of climate change.

To attain its goal, NREP calls for new RE capacity totaling 52,826 megawatts, broken down as follows: solar (27,162 MW); wind (16,650 MW); hydro (6,150 MW); geothermal (2,500 MW) and biomass (364 MW). It also calls for the development of new gas

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## PH HEEDS RENEWABLE ENERGY IMPERATIVE

**FROM B2-1** plants—deemed as a cleaner energy source that will still be critical during the transition to RE—with a total capacity of 18,859 MW.

The Marcos administration has maintained the moratorium on greenfield or new coal-fired power plants, a policy first instituted by the DOE under the Duterte administration.

It has also allowed full foreign ownership of large-scale geothermal projects through the Financial and Technical Assistance Agreements, as long as the minimum investment is \$50 million.

### Green is in

Many companies have joined the RE bandwagon amid the uncertain investment environment and challenges of constructing new power plants.

So far, First Gen Corp. is the largest clean and RE independent power producer with a total installed capacity of 3,495 MW as of end-2021. It owns power plants that utilize natural gas, geothermal, wind, hydro and solar power.

ACEN Corp., the listed ener-

gy platform of the Ayala Group, has a "bold ambition" of building 20 gigawatts of attributable RE capacity by 2030. It has lined up 18 GW of projects across the region.

Aboitiz Power Corp. is targeting to significantly expand its "cleanenergy" portfolio by building an additional 3,700 MW of RE assets, resulting in a 50:50 balance between RE and thermal capacities by 2030.

The country's largest power distributor, Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), through its power generation arm Meralco PowerGen Corp., intends to build 1,500 MW of RE projects in the next seven years.

It has also committed to securing 1,500 MW of its power requirements from RE sources in the next five years.

Solar Philippines of businessman Leandro Leviste plans to develop 10 GW of solar projects in various parts of the country by 2025.

SMC Global Power Holdings Corp. of Ramon Ang-led San Miguel Corp. is actively identifying and pursuing RE investments.

Alsons Consolidated Re-

## SUMMARY OF PROJECTS UNDER THE RENEWABLE ENERGY ACT OF 2008

(AS OF DEC. 31, 2021)

RESOURCES	NO. OF PROJECTS		POTENTIAL CAPACITY		INSTALLED CAPACITY MW	
	COMMERCIAL	OWN-USE	COMMERCIAL	OWN-USE	COMMERCIAL	OWN-USE
HYDROPOWER	414	2	12,113.480	1.560	1,106.776	—
OCEAN ENERGY	8	—	24.000	—	—	—
GEOTHERMAL	37	—	883.200	—	1,928.070	—
WIND	108	1	14,822.030	1.000	442.900	0.010
SOLAR*	267	40	19,991.630	9.990	1,310.690	6.640
BIOMASS	61	21	219.140	3.100	614.106	175.271
SUBTOTAL	895	64	48,053.48	15.650	5,402.54	181.192
GRAND TOTAL	959		48,069.13		5,584.46	

\*CAPACITY IS IN MW

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY WEBSITE

1770 GRAPHICS

sources Inc. of the Alcantara Group is hopping on the trend by scaling up its RE presence in the next few years.

Vivant Corp., the listed company of the Garcia-Escaño Family of Cebu, also wants to play its part by bolstering the

RE share in its power portfolio to 20 percent by 2023 and further to 30 percent by 2030.

Emerging Power Inc., the RE unit of listed mining company Nickel Asia Corp. and Shell Overseas Investments B.V. of the Shell Group committed to

work on 1 GW of RE projects by 2028.

Cebu-based SPC Power Corp. sought regulatory approval to venture into the RE space as it wants to acquire or develop about 300 MW of RE projects.

For its part, Alternergy Holdings Corp. is pushing for 1,245 MW of RE capacity in the next five years.

### Key hurdles

Various studies have shown the Philippines is lagging behind the global push for green energy and the government itself admitted this reality.

The NREP identified certain factors that hampered the country's RE push, including the delayed implementation of policy mechanisms, complex permitting process, grid interconnection issues, RE resource development and limited access to financing and exposure to climate-related risks.

At this rate, only time will tell whether or not the government will finally be able to transition from fossil fuels to RE resources and subsequently contribute to global efforts to reach "net-zero" emissions by 2050.

Meanwhile, Mr. Marcos has reiterated his administration's intention to adopt nuclear energy, which can significantly change the energy mix moving forward. **INQ**





# PH at the forefront of global shift from coal to RE

Local firms leverage off ADB's Energy Transition Mechanism

By **Ronnel W. Domingo**  
@RonWDomingoINQ

**T**he global movement to phase out the use of coal in power generation is gaining greater momentum, with the Philippines arguably close to the vanguard.

In Asia alone, the Philippines may be considered a leader, if only because the rest of the region has not yet gotten off the drawing board while a working model is already emerging in the country.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) may be considered the spearhead of the movement in the region mainly through the Energy Transition Mechanism (ETM) that was launched in November 2021. But the global thrust to wean the power industry from the carbon-rich fuel took its first steps four years earlier with the launch of the Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA).

Formed in November 2017 to rev up the phaseout of coal-fired power generators, PPCA's founding members include Canada, the United Kingdom and several other governments and private entities. Four years later, 28 new members have added their voice to call for the transition from coal to clean energy.

A similar move also took root

in Chile when, in June 2019, the government worked with the major power producers in the country to retire all coal-fired power plants by 2040. This is part of Chile's effort to become carbon neutral by 2050 and has financing support from the Inter-American Development Bank.

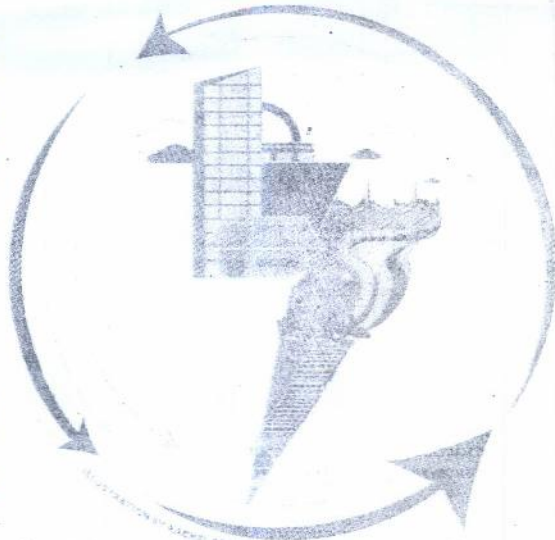
One of PPCA's members is the government of Germany which had passed in July 2020 a law that shuns coal and mandates the retirement of all coal-fired power plants by 2038.

For this, the German government has earmarked investments of 40 billion euros to promote economic activity in areas that would be affected by the coal phaseout.

Also antedating the PPCA by a few months, Germany and its peers in the G7 group of advanced economies made a commitment in May 2021 to decarbonize their energy sectors by the next decade or in the 2030s.

The following month, June 2021, Germany along with the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada pledged \$2 billion to the Climate Investment Funds (CIF).

The amount represents one-fifth of the \$10-billion multilateral fund that was established in 2008. Part of the CIF is meant to finance the phaseout of coal,



through the Accelerating Coal Transition window.

#### ETM initiative

In November 2021, after several months of preparation, the ADB formally launched the ETM initiative in partnership with the governments of the Philippines and Indonesia.

When the ETM debuted, then Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III said the Philippine ETM

project would hasten the retirement of coal-fired plants in the country by 10 to 15 years.

Coal accounts for 54 percent of the Philippines' energy mix, which makes it the largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the Philippines. In 2019, coal accounted for 48 percent of the carbon dioxide emissions in the country.

As its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris





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Agreement, the Philippines has committed to a projected GHG emissions reduction and avoidance of 75 percent, referenced against a projected business-as-usual cumulative economy-wide emission of 3,340.3 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, for the 2020-2030 period.

As a public-private finance vehicle, the ETM is aimed at both reducing coal-fired power generation through accelerated plant retirement, and boosting the growth of renewable energy (RE) using an "equitable, scalable, and market-based approach."

According to the Department of Finance, the Philippines has a unique opportunity in Mindanao to pilot the ETM project—through the Mindanao Coal plant owned by the state-run Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.—at the same time as the government is in the process of rehabilitating the Agus-Pulangi hydropower plants to improve their generating capacity.

As early as then, the ADB had proceeded to the feasibility study stage of the ETM-backed project for the Philippines to look more closely into the financial aspect of the project and estimate the value of the significant share of the Philippine coal fleet that could be retired early.

This study is expected to take

about two years to complete, with the aim of closing on the pilot fund by the end of 2022.

Formally called "ETM South-east Asia Partnership," the initiative was touted as a first of its kind in the Asia-Pacific.

**Globally endorsed**

The partnership was endorsed by senior Cabinet-level officials from Denmark, the United Kingdom and the United States as well as leading global financial institutions and philanthropies.

ADB president Masatsugu Asakawa describes Indonesia and the Philippines as having the potential to be pioneers in the process of removing coal from the region's energy mix.

The ADB committed to support the national governments of Indonesia and the Philippines to establish enabling policies and business conditions to improve the program's governance, carbon reduction and just transition goals.

During this pilot phase, slated to take two to three years, the ETM will raise the financial resources required to accelerate the retirement of five to seven coal plants in Indonesia and the Philippines, while facilitating investment in alternative clean energy options within these countries.

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## PH AT THE FOREFRONT OF GLOBAL SHIFT FROM COAL TO RE

### FROM B2-3

According to the ADB, a full feasibility study is underway to finalize the financial structure of ETM, identify candidate coal plants for inclusion in the pilot program, and design activities that will maximize the social and economic opportunities of climate action, while minimizing and carefully managing any disadvantage.

And yet, while all these sound tentative so far, the private sector in the Philippines has announced progress in implementing a project along the lines of ETM's objectives and design.

Even before the ETM concept had been finalized and formally launched, the Ayala group's power generation platform AC Energy Corp. (Acen) had been considering it as a possible means to offload their 270-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Batangas within three years.

The divestment of the facility, fully owned by Acen subsidiary South Luzon Thermal Energy Corp. (SLTEC), is part of plans to make Acen's portfolio 100-percent renewable energy by 2025.

As early as October 2021, Acen president Eric Francia said they planned to leverage the ETM that will enable the early retirement of coal plants and recycle capital into renewable energy projects.

This was because in the same month, the Acen management had decided to use the ETM model for the early retirement of their remaining coal plant by 2040, 15 years ahead of the SLTEC facility's technical life.

Six months later, in April 2022, Acen announced that it has secured a P13.7-billion senior secured term loan facility for the SLTEC plant.

The loan facility is being made available by the Ayala group's Bank of Philippine Islands as well as Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. It is intended to refinance SLTEC's outstanding P9.8 billion loan facility, fund the partial redemption of capital in SLTEC held by ACEN, subject to regulatory approvals; and finance other transaction-related expenses. ACEN, in turn, shall use the proceeds of the equity redemption to reinvest in renewable energy projects.

Acen touted this transaction as a pioneer energy transition financing in the country, which adopts ADB's ETM concept.

More recently, in July, Acen said it has secured financial commitments for about P3.7 billion worth of shares in SLTEC.

Subject to regulatory approval, the shares will be acquired by ETM Philippines Holdings Inc. (EPHI) and The Insular

Life Assurance Company Ltd.

EPHI is a special purpose vehicle that allows financial investors to invest in energy transition by accelerating the retirement of coal-fired power plants, and to fund the development of new clean energy technologies.

ACEN will use the proceeds from the divestment to invest in more renewable energy projects.

"We are pleased to see that, along with strong support for climate financing from various financial institutions, groundbreaking initiatives such as the ETM are gaining momentum across the Asia-Pacific region," Acen chief financial officer Cora says Dizo.

Commenting on this, ADB vice president Ahmed Saeed says energy transition will not be possible without responsible and proactive private-sector actors.

"We commend the Ayala group and Acen for the signing of this groundbreaking transaction, which is consistent with ADB's [ETM] to provide a pathway from fossil fuels to renewable energy," says Saeed. "Their actions demonstrate that we can all accomplish more together, and that we have no time to wait when it comes to the accelerated decommissioning of coal-fired power." INQ





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ROAD TO CLEAN ENERGY

WEDNESDAY / AUGUST 31, 2022  
WWW.INQUIRER.NET

# A review of decarbonization initiatives in the Philippines

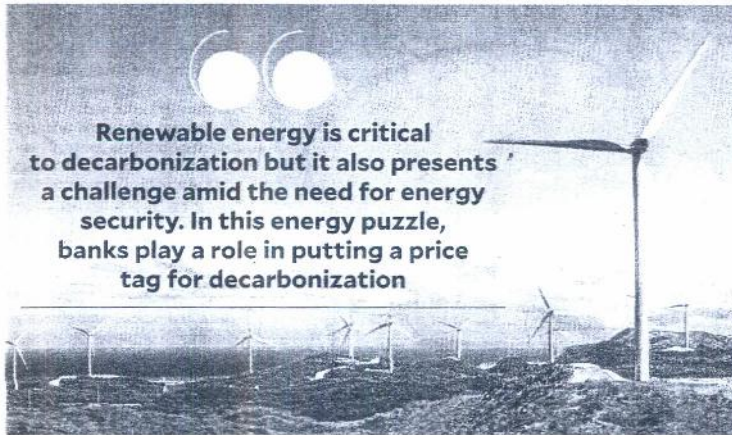
By Jose Mari B. Lacson  
@InquirerBiz

Listed Philippine companies are gradually integrating strategies that take action on climate change. However, choosing which path or solution to integrate can be challenging given the complexity of climate change. Climate change is complex because its causes and effects are tied to human activities and the global economy, and management is always faced with a tradeoff.

Do we target the cause: increased greenhouse gases, or do we address the effects of climate change—a long list of potential disasters like flooding, food shortage, droughts, etc.? In our review of sustainability reports over the past three years, the preferred strategy is to combat the rise of carbon emissions. While we see decarbonization still in their initial stages, there has been a significant shift to emphasize the reduction of the carbon footprints of many companies.

There are several ways by which decarbonization strategies are being integrated and it can be varied across industries. For some, decarbonization entails investing in renewable energy (RE) production or consumption while others prefer carbon capture initiatives such as tree-planting activities.

The use of RE in energy consumption is gradually growing and we have observed that property companies have been leading the charge in this space. A good portion of this improvement has come from the installation of solar panels on top of the roof decks



**Renewable energy is critical to decarbonization but it also presents a challenge amid the need for energy security. In this energy puzzle, banks play a role in putting a price tag for decarbonization**

HARNESSING WIND The 150-megawatt wind farm of EDC Burgos Wind Power Corp. in Ilocos Norte is the largest in the country. —PHOTO FROM FIRST GEN CORP. WEBSITE

of some malls. While we cannot specifically identify how much energy is consumed by malls, we do observe some mall developers increasing RE consumption from low single-digit levels to high double-digit percentages.

The use of solar panels to augment energy consumption is only one aspect of RE consumption in companies we have reviewed. Purchasing RE from the open access is now becoming more prevalent based on sustainability disclosures. Office-centric property developers and real estate investment trusts (REITs) have reported some buildings at 100-percent RE usage, purchasing electricity from RE sellers under the open access system.

This may be driven by de-

mand from sustainability-centric tenants since it is not true across all office assets. Nevertheless, it signals to the property industry that demand for green energy from high-value tenants is increasing, and it's a source of potential competitive advantage since RE supply is limited in the near-term and availability may not be feasible in areas where transmission reach is challenging.

This means that the power industry needs to accelerate its development of RE assets to meet rising demand. We see the shift to RE across all conglomerates that have power in their portfolio. Some have invested outside the Philippines while others have committed to local RE. Nevertheless, the capacity growth targets

for RE are encouraging.

## Energy security

The road for RE is still being paved. While solar is clearly a preferred platform today, companies are already investing in alternative technologies such as wind and batteries or studying the feasibility of others, such as hydrogen and tidal/wave energy. The important point is that the power industry recognizes the need for energy security and the urgency of reducing carbon emissions.

RE is critical to decarbonization but it also presents a challenge amid the need for energy security. In this energy puzzle, banks play a role in putting a price tag for decarbonization. Most of the large

banks are supportive of RE with the issuance of sustainable bonds and via financing green projects. These projects lead to the avoidance of carbon emissions.

However, given our generating capacity is 35-percent powered by coal, to achieve substantial decarbonization, this may require gradually reducing exposure or exiting from coal as an energy source. Banks managing access to capital for coal power and mining companies have been tagged as a catalyst for decarbonization. However, less than a handful of banks have affirmed commitments to reducing loan exposure to coal generation assets within a set period. There is no regulatory requirement or timetable set for banks to exit coal, for now.

Coal power plants, despite their climate impact, provide baseload or stable capacity, a quality that some RE technologies cannot replace. A transition from fossil-fuel based energy sources to RE requires a phased approach. In the meantime, coal-based companies may opt for clean energy alternatives such as liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the medium-term while the Philippines decarbonizes its energy mix.

## Balanced approach

Lastly, RE is not the only action companies can take. Telecommunication firms provide examples of complementary approaches to decarbonization. One telco partnered with a foundation that engages in long-term tree-planting activities, which is a carbon-capture approach. This means for every ton of carbon emission produced, the firm can offset a por-

tion with carbon captured by the tree. However, effective carbon-capture requires that the tree grows and survives to maturity. This is why a partnership with a forester or forest specialist is critical to this strategy.

Since telcos are heavy capital-expenditure companies, some take on a capital cost approach to decarbonization. They have studied their respective cost of capital to incorporate carbon risks. If successful, telcos can contribute and participate in emerging carbon markets, particularly if one were to be established in the Philippines. We believe carbon markets will be the future in helping regulate carbon emissions and incentivize the adoption of clean energy, RE and green technologies.

In the near term, we see the emphasis on decarbonization to continue, particularly in the area of RE. The current energy crisis that highlights energy security will encourage more investments to reduce exposure to the volatility of energy markets. That being said, as investors, we advocate a more balanced approach to climate action. Companies should consider carbon pricing, carbon-capture activities, and just as important, the integration and allocation of capital for climate resilience and disaster management. —CONTRIBUTED INQ

Jose Mari Lacson is head of macroeconomics and sustainability research at ATR Asset Management.





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## House panel ipinasa P20 buwis sa plastic bag

Inilabas na ng House committee on ways and means ang panukala na patawan ng P20 excise tax ang bawat kilo ng plastic bag.

Layunin umano ng panukalang Plastic Bags Tax Act (House Bill 4102) na bawasan ang paggamit nito at maparami ang gumagamit ng mas environment-friendly na lalagyan o sisidlan.

Sa ilalim ng panukala, papatawan ng excise tax ang bawat kilo ng plastic bag paglabas nito sa lugar kung saan ginawa o mula sa kustodiya ng Bureau of Customs (BOC).

Ang plastic bag na tinutukoy sa panukala ay ang gawa sa synthetic o semisynthetic organic polymer na mas kilala bilang plastik labo o sando bag.

Gagamitin ang makokolektang buwis upang pondohan ang mga programa ng mga lokal na pamahalaan alinsunod sa Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (Republic Act 9003). **(Billy Begas)**





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# PRA's Bay project approval hit

BY MARIA ROMERO  
@tribunephil\_mbr

The reclaimed areas in Manila Bay, considered the hottest area for offices and businesses in Manila, have become a legal battleground for the country's biggest developers.

A property firm has challenged the power of regulator Philippine Reclamation Authority to allow the deferment of

**Turn to page A2**

# PRA's Bay project approval hit

The Makati court, however, 'vacated' and set aside its own ruling last 4 August for the alleged failure of the complainant, ASSERCO, to implead the Office of the President as an indispensable party in the case

**From page 1**

the payment of government fees that paved the way for Waterfront Manila Premier Development Inc., a company controlled by the Gatchalian family, to start a P34-billion project.

The PRA gave the green light to start the major development despite a pending case before the Makati Regional Trial Court.

In a 25 April ruling, the Makati court declared null and void WMPDI's contract to reclaim 318 hectares in Manila Bay for allegedly failing to undergo competitive bidding and evaluation from the National Economic and Development Authority.

The court also indicated that the Gatchalian project will encroach on areas covered by another reclamation project of Asian Seas Resources and Construction Development Corp., a company controlled by the F.F. Cruz group.

In an interview on Tuesday, Bernas said WMPDI's proposal to establish a P34-billion horizontal development within a 318-hectare land along Manila Bay is not legally grounded.





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### Complicated legal tussle

The Makati court, however, "vacated" and set aside its own ruling last 4 August for the alleged failure of the complainant, ASSERCO, to implead the Office of the President as an indispensable party in the case.

RTC Judge Rommel Baybay said: "For petitioners' failure to implead the Office of the President as public respondent, the decision is premature. The decision dated 25 April 2022 is hereby ordered vacated and set aside for being premature."

Thus, it was the turn of ASSERCO to file a motion for reconsideration.

The decision came five years after a joint venture agreement was signed between the City of Manila and WMPDI for the P34.3 billion, a 318-hectare reclamation project.

ASSERCO counsel Jose Bernas said the FF Cruz company is still hoping for a favorable decision on its motion for reconsideration for the court to reverse its ruling.

"How can WMPDI push through with its project when it did not undergo a bidding process and evaluation by the National Economic Development Authority? Aside from that, we believe that the current PRA assistant manager does not have the authority to issue such approvals," Bernas told the *Daily Tribune*.

Bernas also underlined the question of the propriety of PRA officials on holdover capacity, pending the appointment of the new administration's nominees, to issue a contentious ruling.

"Setting aside for the moment a verification on whether the Board issued such approvals or not if it were to be assumed that the Board did issue the approvals, we respectfully submit that the Board members, who currently are seated in an acting capacity, do not have the authority to issue the approvals," Bernas said.

### PRA quandary

Bernas added that the PRA board is still composed of holdover officials pending the appointment of a new set of officers and that they should defer crucial decisions to the new board.

Last 18 August, PRA's Reclamation and Regulation Office general manager, lawyer Joseph John Literal, told WMPDI president Kenneth Gatchalian that the board approved the 60 days extension for the company to settle the second tranche payment of its initial regulatory fee and social environment fund. The extension will last until 18 October.

In response, Bernas sent a letter dated 22 August to Literal's office to question the authority and finality of his decision.

Bernas said as an Assistant General Manager, Literal does not have the authority to issue the WMPDI approval.

The PRA approved WMPDI's request after the Makati Regional Trial Court issued a decision revoking the 25 April order, given the absence of injunctive relief granted in ASSERCO's favor.





## ASEAN COMMITTED TO TACKLE MARINE POLLUTION – OFFICIAL

THE Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) is committed to address marine pollution, among the fastest-growing threat to human health and economic development not just in the region but globally.

"Marine debris is in fact among the fastest-growing threats to human health and economic development. This growing threat is recognized globally," Asean Deputy Secretary General Ekkaphab Phanthavong said on Tuesday in a video address to the 2022 East Asia summit on marine cooperation.

The three-day Manila workshop on maritime and scientific cooperation was geared toward creating healthy and sustainable oceans.

Phanthavong noted that the reduction of marine pollution is a United Nations Sustainable Development Goal by 2025, including marine debris.

"The Asean is committed to strengthening collective action to address this pressing issue," he said.

The Philippines, through the Department of Foreign Affairs, has urged the international community and concerned

experts to address marine pollution since it is an issue that "transcends boundaries and nationalities."

"Picture this, by the year 2050 there will be more plastics than fishes in the sea. The oceans will be overheated and acidified and 90 percent of coral reefs will be wiped out of existence," DFA Acting Undersecretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro said.

"There will be waves of mass marine life extinction, causing enormous disruption in the ecosystem of coastal cities such as Manila, Bangkok, Jakarta, Seoul,

►PollutionA8

### ■ POLLUTION FROM A1

## ASEAN COMMITTED TO TACKLE

Tokyo. Non-coastal states will not be spared from this environmental tragedy," she added.

"All of us gathered around in this forum would bear the same consequences of our wanton neglect of our maritime resources and ecosystems," according to Lazaro, also DFA acting undersecretary for bilateral relations and Asean affairs.

"This is such a bleak illustration of a doomsday scenario if we do not do anything about the environment. This goes without saying that the dire state of our oceans is

something that requires immediate action," she said.

Aside from the 10-member Asean, the summit participants included Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia and the United States.

"We may be individually different from each other in terms of government, or culture or beliefs. But marine pollution is an issue that transcends boundaries and nationalities," Lazaro said.

DFA Assistant Secretary Daniel Espiritu, Asean Philippines national secretariat director general, said

the Philippines has a maritime economy and maritime culture.

"Maritime cooperation will therefore always be a key priority. It's only natural for us to protect the oceans, which provide for the majority of our subsistence," Espiritu also said.

Environment Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga could not attend the summit, but she sent a message to the participants.

She said climate change plays a vital role in "accelerating the deterioration" of oceans, "which threatens our food and

water security."

Yulo-Loyzaga noted that the Philippines has passed the Producers Responsibility Act of 2022 which institutionalized producers' responsibility for plastic packaging waste.

"I hope that this workshop can become a vehicle for all of us to discuss the realities of our maritime situation, explore avenues for cooperation and strengthen our commitment to protect and preserve our oceans," Lazaro said.

BERNADETTE E. TAMAYO





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# Water-related disasters to cost Phl \$124 B

By DANESSA RIVERA

The Philippines stands to lose \$124 billion until 2050 from water-related disasters such as floods and storms, according to a report by global professional services company GHD.

This will translate to an average annual gross domestic product (GDP) loss of 0.7 percent, GHD said in its latest report, "Aquanomics: The economics of water risk and future resilience."

GHD has ranked the nation as the fourth most affected country in the world for water-related disasters, with approximately 20 typhoons entering the country annually, bringing torrential rain and extreme flooding.

And as global warming intensifies, extreme weather events are expected to increase, resulting in greater water risk to the country, it said.

The report showed storms would

have the greatest direct impact on the Philippine economy, with losses reaching \$47 billion, followed by floods at around \$42 billion, and droughts at \$3 billion until 2050.

On a per sector basis, Aquanomics revealed that the agricultural sector is particularly vulnerable, with an average annual output loss of 0.9 percent, or projected annual output losses of over five percent by 2030 and eight percent by 2050.

In terms of value, this would be equivalent to \$23 billion.

In 2020, the sector generated a gross value added (GVA) of about P1.78 trillion, equivalent to a 10.2 percent share of the country's GDP.

GHD said this is the first time that the economic impact of these three types of events has been calculated at a GDP and sector level.

The report said the rising threats to the agriculture sector need to be tackled now with greater focus on water recycling, desalination and

smarter irrigation.

Meanwhile, GHD put focus on water supply and sanitation services, with three million Filipinos currently relying on unsafe water sources and seven million lacking access to improved sanitation.

"The Philippine Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan calls for a total investment of around P1.1 trillion to achieve universal access to water and sanitation for all Filipinos by 2030. GHD partners with the country's major water utility providers to achieve universal access to safe, sufficient and sustainable water supply," GHD Global Water Lead Rod Naylor said.

GHD said no matter what size or sector, all businesses are dependent on water, which is crucial to enabling circular economies and global supply chains.

It also means no sector is protected against operational disruption in the face of water-related disasters.

"By focusing on economic im-

pacts, as we have done with this study, we aim to help identify and unlock the social and environmental benefits of tackling water risk head-on. As well as highlighting risk, this study explores some of the ways in which our focus countries can adapt to change and build resilience in their water systems. With water risk on the rise, we need to adopt a proactive, holistic and inclusive approach in understanding and addressing fast-developing challenges," Naylor said.

On flood management, the study indicates that investment needs to be targeted to build infrastructure in the right areas and work with nature to channel water away.

GHD's study focuses on seven key countries across GHD's footprint - Australia, Canada, China, the Philippines, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States - and three US regions - the Northeast, Southeast and Southwest.





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## Storms, floods to cost PHL \$124 billion by 2050

By **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**  
Reporter

**STRONG STORMS**, heavy flooding and prolonged droughts may result in around \$124 billion in losses to the Philippine economy between 2022 and 2050, according to research firm GHD.

This translates to an average annual gross domestic product (GDP) loss of 0.7% for the Philippines, GHD said in a statement following the release of its report "Aquanomics: The economics of water risk and future resilience."

The report covered seven countries, including the United States, China and the Philippines, which GHD said will see a combined \$5.6 trillion in losses due to storms, floods and drought through 2050.

The United States and China will face cumulative losses of around \$3.71 trillion, and \$1.1 trillion, respectively by 2050.

The Philippines' total GDP loss of \$124 billion is the fifth-highest among the seven countries, with United Arab Emirates having the smallest GDP loss at \$27 billion.

The Philippines is one of the countries most affected by water-related disasters, with an average of 20 typhoons that bring heavy flooding every year.

"Our data show that floods and tropical storms are predicted to amount to over 90% of direct losses (around \$89 billion) between 2022 and 2050," GHD said.

Broken down, storms have the biggest direct impact on the Philippine economy at \$47 billion, followed by floods at \$42 billion, and droughts at \$3 billion.

GHD said the agriculture sector will likely bear the brunt of the water-related disasters, with estimated annual output losses of over 5% by 2030, and 8% by 2050. The average annual output loss for agriculture is expected to be 0.9% or equivalent \$23 billion between 2022 and 2050.

Storms, SI/8

### Storms, from SI/1

In 2020, the agriculture sector generated a gross value added (GVA) of about P1.78 trillion, equivalent to a 10.2% share of the country's GDP.

The banking and insurance sector is projected to post an average annual output loss of 0.6%, equivalent to \$14 billion, between 2022 and 2050. This is followed by manufacturing (0.3% or \$39 billion), fast-moving consumer goods and retail (0.2% or \$19 billion), and energy and utilities (0.2% or \$3 billion).

"The country's agricultural and retail sectors could be hit hardest, and that these rising threats need to be tackled now with greater focus on water recycling, desalination, and smarter irrigation," GHD said.

GHD also noted the country faces high levels of water pollution, lack of wastewater treatment and inadequate water supply. Many Filipinos also live on coastal plains which make them vulnerable to storms and floods.

"The Philippine water supply and sanitation master plan calls for a total investment of around P1.1 trillion to achieve universal access to water and sanitation for all Filipinos by 2030,"

Rod Naylor, GHD global market leader for water, said in a statement.

#### CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Meanwhile, the Philippine government is being urged to declare a "climate emergency" as rising global temperatures are leading to extreme weather events such as floods, storms, droughts and heatwaves.

"This means that all the institutions of government, national and local, and all civil society and community and people's organizations must come up with a collective response," Antonio Gabriel M. La Viña, a lawyer and environmental expert, said in a text message.

Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities associate for policy advocacy Denise M. Fontanilla said that the government should plan for at least the next 18 years.

"Medium-term six-year plans make us blind to the constraints that climate chaos has already imposed. The V20 Group of Finance Ministers, which includes the Philippines, released a report last June stating that the most

vulnerable economies in the world have lost 20% of their wealth over the last 20 years due to loss and damages brought by climate change," she said in an e-mail.

"If there's anything the pandemic has taught us, it's that as long as we measure progress only with GDP and productivity, and each month we fail to fully integrate resilience into the country's macroeconomic fundamentals, our vulnerabilities will worsen, threatening nothing less than the long-term viability of our economy," she added.

The Climate Reality Project Philippines manager Nazrin Camille D. Castro said the government needs to act fast and immediately deploy climate change adaptation measures.

"Science is unequivocally telling us that the climate crisis is speeding up and moving faster than we are. The recent report by GHD is yet another testament that we need faster and bolder responses to the climate crisis to at least have a chance to fight for the survival and security of the Filipino people," she said in a Viber message.

#### FULL STORY



Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link [bit.ly/Storms083122](https://bit.ly/Storms083122)





# APEC bore brunt of global natural disasters

BY TIZIANA CELINE PIATOS

**O**VER 70 percent of all natural catastrophes worldwide, amounting to annual disaster-related losses worth \$100 billion, occurred in the area covered by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

During a dialogue exploring ways to enhance partnerships toward sustainable economic growth, Thailand's Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs Thani Thongphakdi underscored the seriousness of the economic danger of climate change in the APEC area.

He added that there is a lot on the line if APEC wants to promote effective measures for achiev-

ing more sustainable economic growth.

The APEC Policy Support Unit mentioned that the region can expect gross domestic product (GDP) losses of 0.6 to 11.3 percent by 2050 relative to a no-climate change scenario.

Thani added that the stakes are high for APEC to push for concrete actions to achieve more sustainable economic growth.

He also emphasized the bio-circular-green (BCG) economy model as a post-pandemic growth approach to improving partnerships for sustainable economic growth.

Thailand, which will host APEC in 2022, responded by introducing the BCG economy model, which strives to handle environmental concerns such as climate change, extreme weather and natural catastrophes.

The model usually combines science, innovation and technology to promote the efficient use of resources, maintain and restore ecosystems, and reduce waste in a bid to build a system where the economy and business can thrive.

The said economic model also underscores the intricate interactions between the environment, society and the economy.

"In our journey toward recovery, it is crucial to prioritize investment in building sustainability and resiliency against future disruptions," said Thani, who is also the chairman of the 2022 APEC Senior Officials.

"We need to foster public-private-people partnerships in this area to ensure that our policy encourages sustainable business practices and promotes investment and financing," he added.

APEC has 21 member countries with a combined population of about 2.9 billion and make up over half of global GDP.





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**Halos malubog sa baha ang Asya, tuyung-tuyo naman sa Europe at Amerika...**

## EPEKTO NG CLIMATE CHANGE



NAKARANAS ng ilang araw na pag-ulan ang Metro Manila dahil sa Bagyong Florita, kung saan nagdulot ng danyos ang bagyo nang nagtungo sa Cagayan Valley. Mahigit tatlong libong pamilya ang inilikas pansamantala.

Samantala, bumaha sa ilang lugar sa Cagayan at Isabela. Umabot naman sa Pampanga at Zambales ang pagbabaha dulot ng ulan. Apat ang kumpirmadong namatay sa pagtahak ng bagyo. Ilang bukid ang binaha, kung saan nasira ang mga tanim—nasa mahigit P100 milyon ang halaga ng mga nasirang tanim.

Hindi bago sa bansa ang tamaan ng bagyo sa panahon ng tag-ulan. Ilang bagyo pa ang darating ng bansa bago matapos ang taon. Pero sa kabila ng pinsala na madalas

dulot ng bagyo, dala rin nito ang mahalagang bagay—ang tubig. Mahalaga, dahil dalawa lamang ang panahon sa Pilipinas—tag-init at tag-ulan. Umaasa sa panahon ng tag-ulan ang tubig na muling magpupuno ng mga dam, pati na rin ang pagdilig sa mga tanim.

Ikumpara natin ito sa nagaganap sa Europe at Amerika ngayon. Matinding tagtuyot ang kanilang nararanasan. Sa sobrang tindi ng tagtuyot, natutuyo na ang kani-kanilang ilog at lawa. Sa Amerika, bumaba ng husto ang lebel ng tubig sa Lake Mead sa Nevada at Arizona. Nabigla ang awtoridad sa dami ng bangkay na lumitaw sa pagbaba ng lebel. Sa ngayon ay hindi pa alam ang pagkakakilanlan ng mga bangkay. Sa Europe, patuloy na bumaba ang lebel ng mga kilalang ilog tulad ng Danube, Rhine, Loire, Thames at iba pa. Sa pagbaba ng lebel, lumitaw ang maraming bagay hinggil sa kasaysayan ng mga bansa, tulad ng mga barkong pandigma na lumubog at iba pang lumang imprastruktura.

Malaking pinsala sa kalikasan ang nagaganap. Hindi

pa masabi kung darating ang ulan para muling mapuno ang mga nasabing ilog. Lahat ito ay isinisisi sa climate change o ang pagbabago ng klima ng buong mundo. Sobrang ulan sa iba, sobrang tuyong naman sa iba. Nawawala ang balanse ng mundo. Malaki ang epekto nito hindi lang sa kalikasan, kundi sa kabuhayan at ekonomiya ng mga bansang apektado.

Binabaha ang tanim tulad sa Isabela, tuyong naman sa United Kingdom. Malaking isyu ang climate change na hindi rin masosolusyunan agad, lalo na't umaasa pa ang halos lahat ng bansa sa langis at uling para sa enerhiya. Kung hindi magkakaisa ang lahat ng bansa sa pagbabago ng klima, ganitong pinsala ang madalas nating mararanasan.





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# TD Gardo to bring rains over Luzon

By **ROMINA CABRERA**

The trough of Tropical Depression Gardo is expected to bring rains over parts of Luzon today, as the state weather bureau is also monitoring a super typhoon that is expected to enter the Philippine area of responsibility tonight.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said Gardo was monitored 1,185 kilometers east of Northern Luzon as of 4 p.m. and was moving westward at 15 km per hour.

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## TD Gardo From Page 1

It was carrying maximum sustained winds of 55 km/h near the center and gustiness of up to 70 km/h.

While Gardo will not directly affect the country, its trough will bring scattered rainshowers over Aurora, CALABARZON and Camarines Norte.

Gardo is forecast to intensify into a tropical storm today but may degenerate into a remnant low by Thursday as it moves northwestward,

interacting with Super Typhoon Hinnamor.

Meanwhile, Hinnamor, which will be named Henry once it enters the Philippine area of responsibility, was monitored at 1,485 km northeast of Northern Luzon as of 4 p.m. yesterday.

Hinnamor is expected to generally move southwestward over the sea southeast of Ryuyuku islands and enter the Philippine area of responsibility this evening.

Hinnamor carried maximum sustained winds of 185km/h and may reach a peak of 195 km/h and gustiness of up to 230 km/h.

PAGASA said that there is a chance that the two tropical cyclones would merge after interacting with each other over the Philippine Sea.

The agency is not ruling out the possible hoisting of a Tropical Cyclone Wind Signal over extreme Northern Luzon once Hinnamor enters the Philippine area of responsibility.

Meanwhile, PAGASA said Metro Manila and the rest of the country may see isolated rainshowers due to localized thunderstorms.

PAGASA warned of possible flash floods or landslides during at times heavy rains.





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## Supertyphoon may hit PH

By ELLALYN DE VERA - RUIZ

A supertyphoon, packing maximum sustained winds of 185 kph and gustiness of up to 230 kph, may enter the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) on Wednesday evening, Aug. 31.

Once supertyphoon Hinnamnor enters PAR, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) will name it Henry.

While Hinnamnor is closing in on the country, PAGASA said a low pressure area (LPA) east of extreme northern Luzon has developed into a tropical depression and was given the local name, Gardo. ▶ 14

## Supertyphoon may hit PH ◀

As of 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 30, PAGASA estimated the location of Gardo at 1,185 kilometers (km) east of extreme northern Luzon, while Hinnamnor was spotted 1,485 km east-northeast of extreme northern Luzon.

### Interaction between 2 cyclones seen

PAGASA is seeing an interaction between Gardo and Hinnamnor as they are close to one another.

Gardo will initially move west-southwestward, then turn north-northwestward following its interaction with Hinnamnor.

In its 5 p.m. bulletin, PAGASA said Gardo has maximum sustained winds of 55 kilometers per hour (kph) near the center and gustiness of up to 70 kph, while Hinnamnor was packing

maximum sustained winds of 185 kph - considered a supertyphoon.

PAGASA also said Gardo may intensify into a tropical storm within the next 24 hours. On the other hand, Hinnamnor may continue to intensify while over the sea south of Japan and reach a peak intensity of 195 kph.

PAGASA pointed out that Gardo may degenerate into a remnant low by Thursday afternoon, Sept. 1, as Hinnamnor "begins to assimilate" its circulation.

"The extent of tropical cyclone winds of Hinnamnor may continue to expand in the coming days as it moves toward the northern Philippine Sea. As such, the possibility of hoisting a tropical cyclone wind signal over extreme Northern Luzon during the occurrence of this tropical cyclone

within the PAR region is not ruled out," PAGASA said.

### 24-hour weather forecast

PAGASA said the trough or extension of Gardo may bring cloudy skies, scattered rain showers, and thunderstorms over Aurora, Camarines Norte, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon in the next 24 hours.

It warned of "scattered light to moderate to at times heavy rains" that could trigger flash floods or landslides in these areas.

Meanwhile, the rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms due to localized thunderstorms.

PAGASA advised the public to stay vigilant as flash floods or landslides may occur during severe thunderstorms, which are often accompanied by sudden heavy rains, lightning, thunder, gusty winds, and sometimes hail.





## Bagyong Gardo, Henry sanib-pwersa nakaamba

Naging bagyong Gardo na ang low pressure area (LPA) na namataan sa extreme Northern Luzon habang ang binabantayang typhoon na may international name Hinnamnor ay papasok din ng Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) ngayong Miyerkoles ng gabi at tatawagin itong bagyong Henry.

Ayon Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) dalawang bagyo ang papasok sa PAR na magdadala ng pag-uulan.

"The disturbance may degenerate into a remnant low by Thursday afternoon as Hinnamnor begins to assimilate its circulation," paliwanag ng Pagasa.

"Yong interaction po nila is posible pong mas lalaki ang radius o 'yong diameter ng bagyong si Hinnamnor na magiging si bagyong si Henry. So mas lalakas din po ito at mas mag-eehance po siya ng habagat," sambit pa ni Pagasa weather specialist Ana Clauren sa press briefing.

Sa monitoring ng Pagasa, ang bagyong Gardo ay may lakas na hangin na 55kph at bugso na 70kph. Hindi ito inaasahang magla-landfall at bahagyang mahina kaya madali itong mahihigop ng paparating na mas malakas na bagyo. **(Tina Mendoza)**