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Climate Change Commission

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**High-Level Roundtable Discussion on Operationalizing Landscape-Based
Integrated Area Development**
29 June 2018

Good morning.

Climate change is driving disaster risk around the world alongside poverty, rapid urbanization, and the decline of ecosystems.

For the past three years, the global average temperatures have been record high. This rising trend in global temperature augurs ill for climate vulnerable developing countries like ours.

This means more weather extremes like super typhoons, intense rainfalls, and prolonged droughts.

Moreover, this means and inevitable rise in sea levels where the highest has been observed to occur in the country, more than three times the global average, thereby increasing the risk of flood and storm surge in our coastal towns and cities and causing sea water to intrude into farmlands killing crops.

This also means more health problems with the resurgence of vector borne diseases and the rising incidence of heat stroke, among others.

These and the projected decline in labor and food productivity, the looming water crisis, and the propensities for conflict over scarce resource inevitably pushes millions of our people into poverty every year.

As climate change and disasters erodes our hard-won development gains and sets back economic progress, we see the need to shift focus from managing disasters themselves to managing disaster risk.

Nexus of CCA-DRR and its effective integration with development planning

Managing disaster risk entails the integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in the country's development plans.

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In this regard, we in the national government has gone a long way in converging strategies and complementing efforts to effectively address risks at the local level.

For instance, the Duterte Administration's 2017-2022 Philippine Development Plan recognized the widespread impacts of climate change and espoused the need for a nationwide climate and disaster vulnerability and risk assessment to deal with the impacts of natural hazards.

Pursuant to the Climate Change Act of 2009, the Climate Change Commission promulgated the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change (NFSCC) for 2010-2022, which aims to build a roadmap for a national program on climate change.

In 2011, the CCC translated the NFSCC into the National Climate Change Action Plan or NCCAP to set the directional plan for the government on implementing short, medium, and long-term climate actions in seven thematic areas, which includes food security, water security, ecological and environmental stability, human security, climate-smart industries and services, sustainable energy, and knowledge and capacity development.

The 2011-2018 National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, meanwhile, prioritized the development of a joint work plan for disaster risk management and climate change adaptation.

While these plans already in place, more work needs to be done in translating them into tangible actions on the ground to manage disaster risk and incite risk-informed local development planning.

Integrated area development approach

In looking for ways to operationalize the nexus of CCA and DRR with our development goals, we recognize that fragmented planning and implementation could not fully help us prevent the worst impacts of climatic disasters from emerging and build the resilience of our communities.

Hence, we are challenged to mainstream and institutionalize an integrated area development approach to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in the planning process of the government.

This approach minimizes the trade-offs that program implementation of one local government brings to another. With a larger planning lens, conflicts will be resolved and uncertainties in the climate change and disaster impacts will be reduced.

CCC programs and initiatives using IAD approach

For us in the Commission, integrated area development approach enables more effective and efficient adaptation as it likewise facilitates wider knowledge base, as well as cost and benefit sharing among covered areas.

Hence, this is the approach we used in launching the Communities for Resilience or CORE Program in 2015 as the Commission's flagship capacity building program on climate change.

The CORE initiative specifically aims to strengthen the planning capacity and overall resilience of LGUs along the country's 18 major river basins.

The hydrological, economic, and environmental resources in these major river basins areas are particularly sensitive to temperature changes, rain-induced floods, drought, sea level rise, extreme weather events, and other water- and weather-related hazards.

The CORE program neither aims to reinvent the wheel nor duplicate past and ongoing efforts by other government and non-government actors in the disaster and climate change communities.

Rather, it seeks to build on existing partnerships, adopt tested tools and methodologies, and harmonize different approaches from various sectors, including non-government organizations, private sector and the academe in building the areas within the major river basins.

Through CORE, we are also advocating for the enhancement of Local Climate Change Action Plans together with DILG-LGA and UN Habitat.

Given that disaster risk reduction is the first step to adaptation, we remind local leaders that LCCAPs should be founded on risk assessment to properly address the drivers of risk and vulnerabilities.

We prescribe that LCCAPs should be founded on the following CCA-DRR strategies: strengthening local risk governance, ensuring the resilience of rural livelihood, protecting and preserving the integrity of ecosystems, promoting the resilience of culture and indigenous peoples, capacity building and planning for early recovery.

Another kind of integrated area development approach we are mainstreaming in the Commission is the ecosystem-based adaptation, which we believe will contribute to the implementation of the country's Nationally Determined Contributions.

We have also established the Comprehensive Integrated Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Program for the Indigenous Peoples or CICARP— was initially implemented in Mt. Pulag as a model for sustainable area development for IP communities. This program shall be replicated in the provinces of Negros Occidental in the Visayas, Sarangani, Bukidon and District 3 of Davao City here in Mindanao.

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Through convergence of efforts of government agencies, local governments, and the private sector, CICARP is pursuing the efficient and effective delivery of relevant basic services in the seven thematic areas of the National Climate Change Action Plan: food security, water sufficiency, ecosystem and environmental sustainability, human security, sustainable energy, climate-friendly industries and services, and knowledge and capacity development.

Other government initiatives

It must be noted, however, that the CCC is not the sole government agency using the integrated area development approach.

The Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, to which the CCC acts as Secretariat, has already approved a resolution adopted 18 major river basins as priority areas of the government.

In relation to this, the River Basin Control Office under the DENR has initiated the formulation of the Integrated River Basin Management and Development Master Plans for 26 principal river basins and has established a National Steering Committee, to which the CCC is a member.

The HLURB, meanwhile, has espoused the use of a ridge-to-reef approach or an integrated ecosystems planning framework in its supplemental guidelines to mainstream CCC and DRR in the Comprehensive Land Use Plans.

Strengthen area-based institutional arrangements and processes

In pursuing all these initiatives, we in national government recognize the need to strengthen area-based institutional arrangements and processes.

Currently, LGUs at the city and municipality levels are working individually to formulate the mandated sectoral and development plans—with the burden of consolidation, integration, synchronization and harmonization is at the provincial and regional levels.

Yet these regional and provincial spatial approach misses the natural resources management aspect, especially basing considerations on ecosystems in planning for CCA and DRR.

To this end, we in the Commission are converging with other agencies to strengthen local risk governance through our CORE Program and other projects like projects such as RAPID) and Rebuild.

In doing so, we are guided by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change—three post-2015 global development frameworks that puts premium on a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

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Ladies and gentlemen, no one government agency can do the work alone. We have to ensure the synergy of government actions at all levels.

We in the Commission hope that we maximize this opportunity we have today to plot our way forward.

Let's discuss how we can operationalize landscape-based integrated area development to scale up our collective efforts and how we can further collaborate on more initiatives that build community resilience to disaster and climate change.

Thank you.