

**Secretary Emmanuel De Guzman
Climate Change Commission**

OPENING REMARKS

**Climate Change Consciousness Week
19 November 2018**

Distinguished leaders of the private business sector and the academe, members of the diplomatic corps, esteemed colleagues in government and civil society, honored guests, friends, ladies and gentlemen:

Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat.

This year's observance of the Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week comes during trying yet exciting times.

The science is unequivocal: Climate change is moving faster than us. Global warming beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius brings unprecedented dangers to the world. Food and water will be scarce. More corals will die. Diseases will prevail. Societal crises will ensue. This is the case in one or two decades time if the business-as-usual trend of carbon emissions continue.

As the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns, a half-degree warming can make unprecedented changes in all aspects of society. However, humanity can avoid the grim future scenario, if all will act faster and bolder to innovate our ways of living, to shift our paradigms, to make our industries carbon neutral, and to transform our society.

It is in this context that our week-long observance becomes more crucial as our forums provide a common ground for all sectors and stakeholders to define where and how we must move forward.

As we all take on the challenge to do more, to advance our climate actions, we take stock of what we have all accomplished through the years, and endeavor to sustain our gains for the nation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the National Climate Change Action Plan, climate change has been mainstreamed into our national plans and policies. Also, about 30 flagship programs of the government contribute to the implementation of the National Climate Change Action Plan.

We have launched and operationalized the National Integrated Climate Change Data and Information Exchange System (NICCDIES) as our climate data platform connecting and inter-operating with climate-related data systems of various government agencies. With this, we have initiated the creation of a national integrated risk information platform, along with the national loss and damage database, that serves the risk information requirements of national and local agencies.

With the National Panel of Technical Experts, we have adopted and promoted the multi-hazard impact-based forecasting and early warning system to reduce disaster losses in the country.

As early as 2015, we conceived the idea of the Philippine Climate Change Resilience Center, and the South South Center of Excellence for Climate Information Services, and we continue to pursue them.

In pursuit of its mandate, the Climate Change Commission initiated the convergence of key agencies and stakeholders to rollout the Communities for Resilience Initiative that has endeavored to set standards and systems for capacity building, risk financing, and education on climate change.

The Local Climate Change Action Plans, which our law asks from local governments and count 137 in 2015, now count 1379, a ten-fold exponential increase in three years.

We are also facilitating roundtable discussions on the adoption of a national climate risk management framework which entails conducting a national stocktake on climate risk data and systematizing, simplifying, and harmonizing datasets for determining the priority interventions of the National Climate Change Action Plan, consistent with the desired integration of climate change risks in the Philippine Development Plan and *Ambisyon Natin*.

We have been working closely with key government agencies and development partners in adopting standard modules for promulgating concepts and methodologies for risk assessment, greenhouse gases inventory, enhancing local plans with ecosystems-based adaptation and mitigation framework, to be quality assured against a set of standards soon to be adopted jointly with the Department of the Interior and Local Government. These are among the dozen standard CORE modules we continue to develop, in partnership with the higher educational institutions in the country.

All these capacity building initiatives of the Climate Change Commission has endeavored to mainstream the post-2015 global policy development frameworks in the national and local climate change planning processes, way ahead of anyone else in the country as well as in the international community.

As the country's climate policy landscape continues to change, the Commission is always quick to rise to the challenge – such is the case with the National Policy Review on Energy, the implementation of Green Jobs Law, the social preparation and sectoral

action planning for the Nationally Determined Contributions, the alignment of our national plans with the 1.5 degrees Celsius climate goal, and many other revolutionary works for transforming our industries and sectors in this era of climate change and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Ladies and gentlemen:

Although young compared to the several decades old agencies of government, the Climate Change Commission has worked hard and done much in pursuit of its mandate quietly – and we ought to do so much more to face the climate resilience challenge squarely.

Our forum will highlight the country's vision, policy directions and priorities, and whole-of-government-and-society actions for sustainable development and a low carbon future. They will also promote common understanding of the latest climate science and best practices on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

To complement our forums are a number of reports the Climate Change Commission has endeavored to deliver in time for our annual observance. These include The Philippine Climate Change Assessments on vulnerability, adaptation, and mitigation; the first National Climate Action Report; the first National Climate Change Action Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Report, and the Business Climate Action Report for Sustainability. These reports could effectively inform decision making in all sectors and help make any national and local plans climate risk-sensitive.

For the sustainable development path ahead, guided by three post-2015 global development frameworks, we shall move our climate agenda forward:

We shall enhance and sustain awareness and understanding on climate change and associated risks, through all media platforms and formal education system.

We shall promote science and risk-based policy and plan formulation at national and local levels.

We shall accelerate capacity building for LGUs and local communities on ecosystems-based adaptation and mitigation planning.

We shall invest in social preparation for the accelerated climate action and exponential transformation of all sectors towards low-carbon development and a green economy.

And we shall facilitate efficient access to international climate finance and the transfer to the country of leading-edge technology and knowledge on adaptation and mitigation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We, Filipinos, are the worst affected by climate change. It is the present generation's moral responsibility to ensure that future generations will survive and thrive in a warmer world. We must sustain the fight for the 1.5 warming threshold. We must sustain our call for climate justice.

Climate action as a collective task has been the mission and leadership resolve of the Climate Change Commission. Everyone here, representing key agencies and stakeholders, must pull together and should be of one mind and purpose: To make our development sustainable, our society climate-resilient. The Commission shall continue to bring everyone together to ensure a dynamic synergy as we pursue greener and more resilient pathways towards a sustainable future.

As the Climate Change Commission commemorates its ninth year, we laud and take pride of our collective actions and achievements, and acknowledge with gratitude the generous support we have all received from the visionary leader that authored the country's landmark climate change law: Senator Loren Legarda, and all the Presidents who have led the Commission as its chair.

Historically, our current chairperson, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, will be remembered as the President of the Philippines who ratified our country's accession to the Paris Agreement.

May our coming together let us gain and sustain the momentum to increase the intensity and depth, and the breadth and impact of our climate actions, and stoke the flames of hope for our people and for humanity.

On this note, I formally welcome all of you to the 9th Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week, with the theme, **The 1.5°C Climate Challenge: Survive and Thrive Together.**

Maraming salamat po, at mabuhay ang sambayanang Pilipino!