

**Secretary Emmanuel M. De Guzman
Climate Change Commission**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**2ND NATIONAL CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION**

22 November 2018

Esteemed colleagues in the Commission fellow workers 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 climate challenge

The science is unequivocal: Climate change is speeding up, moving faster than us. We need faster and bolder responses from all if we are to win this fight for human survival and security. We must rise up to the 1.5 degrees Celsius challenge to survive and thrive together.

The recent Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 Degrees Celsius of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns that a further half-degree warming can bring unprecedented dangers to the world. Food and water will be scarcer. Most of today's corals will die. Diseases will prevail. Poverty will worsen. Societal crises will ensue. This happens in one or two decades time if the business-as-usual trend of carbon emissions continue.

The Report affirms the Philippine's strong advocacy for the 1.5 Paris Agreement goal, on behalf of the 48 nations of the Climate Vulnerable Forum at COP21 in 2015.

With the runaway global warming, the increasing trend of climate risks, and the inadequacy of current global commitments to action, climate change has become the most defining challenge of our time.

It is in this context that today's national convention becomes more crucial as a platform for all key stakeholders to define where and how we must move forward.

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

The CCC delivers on its mandates

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Climate Change Commission led the framing and drawing of the National Climate Change Action Plan which we now updates pursuant to law, and complement with the Nationally Determined Contributions. The body has worked hard to breathe life to the law that created it as well as the amendatory law that created and lodged the People's Survival Fund in the Commission.

We have also led in exploring new ways of thinking and doing in order to build the capacity and the climate resilience of our local communities. We have been piloting in the countryside a number of innovative and transformative ideas in our unrelenting search for sustainable solutions to the persistent problem of vulnerability and to the vicious cycle of poverty and risk. They include the initiatives under REBUILD and RAPID.

We have also operationalized the National Integrated Climate Change Data and Information Exchange System or NICCDIES as our climate data platform, which connects and inter-operates with the system for climate change-related data of various government agencies. With this, we have initiated the creation of a national integrated risk information platform, along with a national loss and damage registry, that serves the risk information requirements of national and local agencies.

With our 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 excitingly continue to pursue them.

As we advocated the multi-stakeholder convergence on adopting the post-2015 global development frameworks, way ahead of anyone else in the country and the international community, the Commission, pursuant to its mandate, initiated the rollout of the Communities for Resilience Initiative or CORE. It endeavored to set the standards and systems for the capacity building of local governments and key stakeholders on science-based development planning, risk financing, and building community resilience to climate change.

The Local Climate Change Action Plans, which our law asks from local governments, which numbered 137 in 2015, now number 1,379, a ten-fold exponential increase in three years. I was told that no other country in the world is like the Philippines in this regard.

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, and enhancing local plans with ecosystems-based adaptation and mitigation framework, the quality of which the Climate Change Commission, together with the Department of the Interior and Local Government, will assure based on a set of standards that we will promulgate soon. These are among the dozen standard CORE modules we continue to develop for training local government officials and planners in partnership with the higher educational institutions in the country.

We have advocated for Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs) to deliver on five key result areas:

First, strengthening local risk governance — to fully understand prevailing risks and aim local actions and investments at reducing them;

Second, enhancing the resilience of rural livelihood — to prepare our communities to adapt to the climate outlook and withstand the impact of weather extremes and rising sea levels on people’s lives and livelihood.

Third, preserving the integrity of our ecosystems — our mangroves, our corals, our forests — to care for and nurture as they protect us from harm and support a healthy environment for all.

Fourth, ensuring that our indigenous peoples’ culture remains rich and resilient. With some of our most vulnerable communities living within ancestral domains, their life-ways must be preserved as well as enriched along with their lives, livelihoods and environment. This is the rationale behind our development of a framework for converging multi-stakeholder efforts for our IPs through our initiative called Comprehensive Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resilience Program or CICARP.

And fifth: Strengthening early recovery planning — to battle the disruption caused by disasters, so that our people may recover quickly from any disaster and go on with their lives and continue contributing to nation-building as soon as possible.

People’s Survival Fund

We believe that LGUs that know and understand well their climate risk problem and their priority interventions, along with the technical support that the Commission provides, they are enabled to access the PSF grants. This is the case with the six LGU recipients of the PSF grants.

- **P 39.08M** for the Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Response as Coping Mechanism to Resiliency in Lanuza, Surigao del Sur
- **P 80.7M** for the Siargao Climate Field School for Farmers and Fisherfolks in the Municipality of Del Carmen, Siargao Islands, Surigao del Norte
- **P 33.89M** for the Building Resilience through Community-based Ecological Farming in San Francisco, Camotes Island, Cebu
- **P 38.1M** for the Promotion of Resiliency and Climate-Informed Gerona in Tarlac
- **P 28.5M** for the Establishment and Sustainable Management of River Ecosystem in Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte
- **P 104M** for the Saub Watershed Ecosystem Rehabilitation and Flood Risk Reduction for Increased Resilience in Sarangani

In this regard, we are strengthening our technical support and peer-to-peer learning services to the LGUs as well as networking with higher educational institutions in order to train and mentor more LGUs in the quickest possible time in developing quality and responsive PSF project proposals, under the initiative called Accelerated CORE Training for Local Governments or ACT LOCAL.

Responding to emerging challenges

Ladies and gentlemen,

As the country's climate policy landscape continues to change, the Commission is quick to rise to the challenge – such is the case with the National Policy Review on Energy, the development of standard and certification systems for green jobs, the development of a national climate risk management framework, the 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 society and economy in this era of climate change and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Towards low carbon transition

Our Convention promotes common understanding of the latest climate science, the rationale for faster and bolder climate action, and the good practices and opportunities in transforming our sectors towards a low carbon and green economy.

Along with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement forms part of the universal and transformative vision for a sustainable world.

When all manage to hold the temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius, extreme climate impacts are avoided and economic growth is ensured. We can breathe cleaner and healthier air. We create green jobs and spike employment. Energy access and security are enhanced. Our long-term goal is achieved, and climate action becomes global.

Taking the low-carbon development pathway supports economic growth. Green growth is possible. California, for example, grew its GDP by 35% as it cut its carbon emissions by 13% since 2006.

The ways forward

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.

For the sustainable development path ahead, we shall move forward together with you in lockstep.

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

We shall promote science and risk-based policy development and planning at national and local levels.

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

We shall invest in social preparations for low carbon transition and exponential transformation of all sectors towards a green economy.

And we shall facilitate efficient access to international climate finance, primarily the GCF, and the transfer to the country of leading-edge technology and knowledge on adaptation and mitigation to support local government initiatives.

To support local development and investment planning, the Climate Change Commission has endeavored to deliver a number of reports in time for our Convention. 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 first National Business Climate Action Report for Sustainability. These reports could effectively inform decision making in all sectors and help make any national and local development and investment plans climate risk-sensitive.

Closing

Ladies and gentlemen,

We, Filipinos, are among the most 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, therefore, 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. We must be of one mind and purpose: To make our development sustainable, our society climate-resilient. The Commission shall continue to bring everyone here together — key stakeholders in national and local governments, the private business and finance sector, the academe and civil society — to ensure a dynamic synergy as we pursue greener and more resilient pathways towards a sustainable future.

As the Climate Change Commission commemorates its 9th year, we laud and take pride of our collective actions and achievements, and gratefully acknowledge the generous support we have received from the visionary leader that authored the country's landmark climate change law. The Commission thanks 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 today 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 gladly welcome all of you to the Second National Convention on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, with the theme, 1.5 Degrees Celsius Climate Challenge: Strengthening Community Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change.

Thank you. Mabuhay po kayong lahat!

###