Office of the President of the Philippines
CLIMATE CHANGE COMMISSION

Secretary Emmanuel M. De Guzman
Climate Change Commission

OPENING REMARKS

Coaches' Training on the
Enhanced Guidebook on LCCAP
August 21, 2017, Davao City

DILG Regional Director, Dir. Alex Roldan, LGA Executive Director, Dir. Marivel Sacendoncillo, Ms. Adelaida Mias-Cea of UN Habitat, resource speakers, distinguished guests, fellow workers in government, ladies, and gentlemen: good morning.

This is the last leg of our training on the Enhanced Guidebook on the Local Climate Change Action Plan or LCCAP. On behalf of Climate Change Commission, let me extend my sincerest appreciation to all of you for taking the time to participate in this very important event.

It is only fitting that we culminate this year's series of coaches' training in the city where our President hails from. A model local government unit of discipline, Davao City remains exemplary in implementing local systems and action plans that secure the wellbeing of our people.

In his second State of the Nation Address, the President reiterated his earlier pronouncement that climate change is a priority of his administration. He had asked all government agencies to look into the impacts of climate change, particularly, on our food security, and to address this vulnerability.

As we gather here today in Davao, I hope that our President's words resonate with us as we heed the call for greater and more ambitious climate action. With this undertaking, I hope that we could effectively equip our local government units the right tools and knowledge as they formulate their own LCCAPs.

Climate context and scenario

All of us here today can attest on how climate change has drastically affected and will continue to affect the lives and livelihoods of the Filipino people. We have undergone cycles of destruction and reconstruction in the past, which has stalled our economic growth.

As an archipelagic country situated along the typhoon belt, the Philippines is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Every year, we are ravaged by an average of 20 typhoons, that in recent years have increased in intensity.

Typhoon Yolanda alone in 2013 inflicted more than P89 billion pesos worth of damages to public and private infrastructure and lands. It claimed 6,300 lives, left 28,688 injured and 1,062 missing, and displaced 3.4 million families away from their home.

Sea level rise, which causes storm surges and floods, is also one major threat to our country, where the rise is three times higher than the global average level. This puts at risk 60% of our LGUs covering 64 coastal provinces, 822 coastal municipalities, 25 major coastal cities, and an estimate of 13.6 million Filipinos that would need relocation.

Just last year, the Philippines experienced one of the most severe droughts ever recorded. Because of this, about 6,000 affected farmers held a protest in Kidapawan, North Cotabato to demand food aid from the government.

These are just some examples of how climate change has affected the lives and livelihoods of our people. Extreme weather events, magnified by climate change, have become the new norm and will continue to wreak havoc in our country.

However, it is worthy to note that all these tragedies from extreme weather events brought about by climate change had happened below the global warming level of one degree Celsius since the industrial revolution.

If we were to follow a business-as-usual perspective, our world's temperature would increase to 4 degrees—a level that is too high to be even considered acceptable for us.

If Super Typhoon Yolanda had occurred at the warming level below one degree Celsius, imagine how much stronger and devastating would typhoons be at 4 degrees. How much more destruction must we endure? How many more lives must we lose and put at risk to these natural hazard impacts?

Climate action is social justice

Our country faces a herculean task of reducing climate change and disaster risks, particularly at the local community level. We are challenged to move forward in a balanced and systematic fashion—such that we do not only adapt, but come out even stronger and more resilient.

Our rural countrymen—those whose livelihoods depend on our fickle environment—are the ones who suffer the worst due to climate change. Poverty breeds vulnerability. If we fail to address this risk, sustaining our people's livelihood and well-being will take a long time, or perhaps, will forever remain elusive.

There is no other recourse but to end this vicious cycle of poverty and risk, to liberate our poor from this bondage through effective disaster risk reduction and responsive climate action. This is social justice in action.

Prevailing local capacity gaps

In 2015, the community of nations found common ground for action in three major international agreements, namely: the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. These frameworks set the overarching direction in mainstreaming efforts on climate change adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk reduction.

In the international arena, the Philippines has been regarded as the voice of the climate vulnerable. Our unwavering Filipino spirit through numerous disasters that come our way has inspired the world to pursue greater climate action.

With this voice, we have led the Climate Vulnerable Forum—an alliance of countries highly vulnerable to a warming planet. This same group created the Vulnerable Twenty or V20, consisting of Finance Ministers from member states of the CVF, resolved “to act collectively and decisively to promote the mobilization of public and private climate finance from wide-ranging sources.”

Together with the member-countries of the CVF and V20 that sought for climate justice, we have triumphed over giants as we successfully championed the 1.5-degree climate goal in the Paris Agreement.

We have already made our mark in international negotiations as we held accountable the developed countries for contributing the most to global warming and called for greater responsibility in providing technical and financial support to developing countries. For us, climate-vulnerable, this is climate justice.

Adhering to the principles of the Paris Agreement—especially on limiting global temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius and pursuing efforts to attain climate justice—complements our efforts here in our country. We have already enacted

landmark laws that set our direction towards a climate-resilient Philippines, but more work needs to be done.

As mandated by Republic Act 9729 or the Climate Change Act of 2009, all local government units must craft their own Local Climate Change Action Plan or LCCAP, which will help them to prepare and respond effectively to the adverse effects of climate change in their communities.

The lack of LCCAPs and science-risk based local development planning among our local government units hinders our nation from being climate-smart and climate-resilient.

Beyond mere compliance, the CCC advises that local governance be founded on understanding risk and integrating risk assessment in our local development planning processes. We need to strengthen local risk management, governance, and investments for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Risk assessment is key to a science-based LCCAP. This serves as the basis for strategic adaptation and mitigation measures to be implemented within and by the community. Moreover, a cost-benefit analysis defines the priorities for interventions and funding of these measures.

Having a risk-based LCCAP also gives the LGU an edge in accessing climate finance as it provides the context and justification of any funding request from sources, such as the People's Survival Fund—an annual P1 billion peso-fund allocated in the General Appropriations Act for climate change projects by LGUs and accredited NGOs.

Since an LGU has its own unique set of climate and disaster risks, each LGU should undertake its own risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis. Therefore, an LCCAP must be relevant and responsive to the needs of the LGU, not something that can just be copy-pasted by one LGU from another LGU’s LCCAP.

It is in this context that I address all of you here today. We hope that we can count on you to help all of our LGUs, the frontliners in climate crises, to formulate their own LCCAP.

Through this coaches' training on the Enhanced Guidebook on LCCAP, we unveil various processes in preparing and enhancing local climate change and disaster action plans. As envisaged, it will demonstrate skills in applying the Climate and Disaster Risk Assessment (CDRA) as support to local climate change action planning and recognize the concept of mitigation as a function of adaptation and co-benefitting adaptation investments through local low-emission development strategies.

Moreover, this training initiative is supported by formal agreements between the CCC and 36 SUCs to provide technical services to all LGUs, including provincial governments, throughout the country. We have also forged a MOA with DILG-LGA at the launch of this Coaches' Training series.

These trainings are actually part of the second wave of the CCC flagship program called Communities for Resilience (CORE) Initiative that we launched together with key national government agencies and development partners in March 2016 here in Davao City.

Through convergence, we intend to institutionalize this partnership with SUCs, the academe, and with development partners, like the UN Habitat, as we build on the capacity of our LGUs.

In equipping our faculties in SUCs with a set of standard teaching modules on basic analytical and planning tools and modules, we help ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching local officials on risk-and-science-based local development planning.

Through the CCC's National Panel of Technical Experts, in collaboration with SUCs and other partners in the academe, we are now finalizing the first set of CORE modules, which will equip LGU planners with the standard analytical tools for risk-and-science-based local development planning.

The next set to be developed, together with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council and Office of the Civil Defense, is comprised of guidance modules for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation in policy, plans, and program, while promoting early recovery planning.

We are also arranging that these trainings provided to LGUs would come with the academic certification and university credits.

We, in the Climate Change Commission, hope for climate-smart and climate-resilient communities along our 18 major river basins. A National Integrated Risk Information System (NIRIS) comprised of established provincial risk database systems will be key to support our LGUs in local development planning and multi-hazard early warning systems and services implementation.

Rest assured that the CCC will continue to support our LGUs in providing technical services, such as our gathering here today, and in other activities, such as the PSF Training Modules Development, Greenhouse Gases (GHG) Accounting and Inventory, and Climate Budget Tagging.

We can only maximize our potential as a climate-resilient nation through convergences with the DILG-LGA and other government agencies; the UN Habitat and other development partners, and all of the stakeholders who are fighting for our advocacy.

Convergence in linking science, policy, and practice

Our approach has always been to link science, policy, and practice in addressing climate change. We have always recognized the critical role of the academic community.

By law, we are mandated to lead and facilitate policy development and mainstreaming efforts on climate change adaptation and mitigation by our government and other key sectors. And we could only carry out this mandate through an effective multi-stakeholder convergence and a whole-of-society approach.

The Kalayaan Case

Such is the case in the remote island community of Pulot Bae, San Antonio, Kalayaan, Laguna. Within their community, a multi-stakeholder approach—harnessing the efforts from the academe, the public, private, and civil society organizations—has provided better access to livelihood, electricity, clean water, health, sanitation, and education.

We can attain sustainable development through convergences like this. We are already seeing and experiencing change—the kind that was envisioned for our families in the Philippine Development Plan and Ambisyon Nation 2040.

We should give preferential attention to the poorest barangays in the poorest municipalities in the 40 provinces most at risk to the impacts of climate change. With an effective science-and-risk-based LCCAP for all our LGUS, we could do this.

This is the spirit that informs our LCCAPs. Five desired outcomes shall define LCCAPs:

First: Strengthening local risk governance.

Second: Enhancing the resilience of rural livelihood.

Third: protecting and upholding ecosystems integrity.

Fourth: Ensuring that our indigenous peoples' culture remains resilient.

And fifth: Strengthening early recovery planning.

Closing

As I close, let us keep in mind that all of our efforts are part of our great transformation towards a green economy. Our LCCAPs shall effectively articulate climate actions of the local community on adaptation and mitigation, as well as the priorities for resilient investment in the communities. They should serve as a comprehensive guide for our LGUs in pursuit of our collective climate action towards green growth for the country.

There is indeed a lot of work ahead of us. We have come to learn that addressing climate change is not solely the government's responsibility but everybody's business.

Thank you for your kind attention and I wish you a successful training.