



NEWS ROUNDUP

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

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Discussing key themes such as:

- AI and its expanding climate handprint, powering adaptation solutions, enabling greater energy efficiency, biodiversity protection, and circular innovation.
- System-wide transformation: AI is enabling real progress on sustainability across value chains, from manufacturing and transport to agriculture and buildings, and helping to create positive value for companies that are addressing their climate risk exposures.
- Progress is uneven, particularly due to challenges in scaling clean energy solutions globally. Infrastructure bottlenecks, policy delays, and financing barriers risk slowing down momentum. The next 24 months, through 2027, will be decisive in closing this gap.
- Market pull for innovation: AI is growing fast and creating new markets for advanced clean technologies, reducing commercialization cycles from decades to years.

The research revealed a call for immediate attention

- 87 percent say AI is central to achieving net zero goals
- 45 percent plan to meet energy needs primarily through onsite generation
- 97 percent describe AI as a net positive for accelerating progress towards net zero goals
- 29 percent extend net zero commitments to their full value chain

It speaks directly to the key stakeholder groups (Hyperscalers, Utilities, Developers, Investors and Governments) who stand at the crossroads of AI acceleration and climate responsibility. Each faces a different version of the same challenge: how to advance AI without undermining sustainability and how to use sustainability as a competitive advantage.

In the Philippine context

SUSTAINABILITY trends in the country are increasingly aligned with global developments, particularly the growing recognition of AI sustainability in the Philippines and its potential to play a meaningful role in advancing environmental efforts. This shift in perspective reflects a broader understanding that, when applied responsibly, technology can help address complex environmental challenges while supporting long-term development goals.

This belief is reinforced by local research and initiatives that demonstrate tangible results. For example, a research team from a leading academic institution has launched a project that uses AI and data analytics to improve water resource management. Their work demonstrates how advanced models can provide deeper insights into water behavior and quality. This highlights how AI in sustainability strategies enables more informed and effective environmental decision-making.

Beyond academia, government institutions are also integrating AI into sustainability initiatives. The Department of Science and Technology, for instance, is incorporating AI into regional development programs in the CARAGA region, encouraging its use alongside circular-economy practices to help build smart, sustainable communities. Collectively, these initiatives reflect the growing confidence of Filipino scientists, policymakers, and communities in AI as a research-driven, practical tool for achieving long-term sustainability goals.

Alongside these efforts, AI is emerging as a valuable enabler in the country's energy transition. It can support the management and integration of renewable energy sources, optimize performance, and improve energy forecasting. AI-powered technologies can help Philippine utilities better balance supply and demand across the grid's many islands and optimize energy systems.

Despite these promising developments, challenges remain. "Decisive action is required to ensure that AI's growth supports, rather than compromises, the Philippines' climate and sustainability goals. By advancing policies, investments, and talent development, the country can transform technological progress into a catalyst for green growth, responsible AI adoption, and long-term sustainable development," said Technology Consulting Principal and Data, AI and Innovation Lead Doris Aura B. Pastoriza.

Ultimately, while AI and climate change present powerful opportunities to accelerate sustainability efforts in the Philippines, long-term impact will depend on balanced implementation, strong governance, and continued investment in clean energy and human capital. By aligning innovation with responsible planning, the country can harness AI not only as a technological advancement but as a strategic driver of inclusive and sustainable growth.

This excerpt was taken from the KPMG Thought Leadership publication "AI's dual promise: Enabling positive climate outcomes and powering the energy transition."

DAILY TRIBUNE

[From boardrooms to climate accountability: SEC's role](#)

By: Rogelio V. Quevedo

International climate law is sending a clear message to regulators that climate governance now requires credible oversight of private corporate conduct. Recent advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights sharpen that expectation.

The ICJ warned: “A State may be responsible where, for example, it has failed to exercise due diligence by not taking the necessary regulatory and legislative measures to limit the quantity of emissions caused by private actors under its jurisdiction.”

Meanwhile, the IACHR emphasized that “business enterprises are called on to play an essential role in addressing the climate emergency.”

Together, these statements articulate an “enhanced” regulatory due diligence standard.

It is objective in character, evaluates the adequacy of regulation of corporate behavior, is stringent given the severity of climate risks, and is demonstrated through adherence to procedural safeguards, including risk assessment, reliance on scientific standards, and precaution.

In the Philippine setting, this is where the Securities and Exchange Commission becomes central.

The SEC is not an environmental regulator. It does not set emissions caps. But climate change is now a financial and governance risk. And the SEC regulates governance, disclosure, and market integrity.

Recent SEC issuances reflect this expanding role.

The Code of Corporate Governance for Publicly-Listed Companies embeds board accountability, risk management systems, and sustainability oversight within governance frameworks.

It requires boards to establish effective risk management structures, a foundation for integrating climate-related risks.

The Sustainability Reporting Guidelines (SEC Memorandum Circular No. 4, s. 2019) require listed companies to disclose environmental, social, and governance (ESG) impacts.

While not climate-specific, the framework compels corporations to publicly account for environmental exposure and management strategies, strengthening transparency and deterring greenwashing.

The SEC has also reinforced independence and competence at the board level (Memorandum Circular No. 7, s. 2026). Through its corporate governance issuances, the SEC has imposed strict term limits for independent directors, preserving objectivity and preventing long-term entrenchment. True independence is critical when boards must scrutinize long-term environmental and transition risks.

Further, the SEC has sought public comment on requiring continuing education and training for independent directors. In an era where climate risk involves complex financial modeling, regulatory

developments, and scientific projections, ongoing education ensures that board oversight evolves alongside emerging systemic risks.

These measures may not be labeled as “climate regulation,” yet they directly support enhanced regulatory due diligence.

They strengthen board independence, improve risk disclosure, and elevate governance standards.

In doing so, they demonstrate that corporate actors within Philippine jurisdiction are subject to structured oversight.

By embedding risk management, sustainability disclosure, independent oversight, and director competence in corporate practice, the SEC contributes to a governance architecture capable of responding to climate risk.

Climate accountability is no longer confined to environmental statutes. It resides in boardrooms, financial disclosures, and regulatory supervision. The SEC’s expanding role reflects that reality — and positions Philippine corporate governance within the evolving global standard.

MINDA NEWS

[CONVERSATIONS: Climate change is not one storm, not one flashflood](#)

By: Bobby Timonera

Two weeks ago, after Basyang battered my hometown of Iligan, we were not covering an abstract concept called climate change. We were covering flooded homes, fallen bridges and flood-control projects, soaked schoolbooks, and families waiting for the waters to recede, and wait some more for relief to come.

For a few days, I wore my rubber boots, cameras hanging on my shoulders, and once again walked on flooded city streets and villages — as I did more than 14 years ago when Sendong killed hundreds of Iliganons — taking photographs of children helping out in removing the mud from their homes, the elderly being carried to safety, residents crossing a makeshift bridge as a strong current rages underneath, houses damaged by floodwaters.

The images we produce are not just decoration. The films are not just videos. They are documentation. They are testimony. They are witness.

Photographs, we know, capture what statistics cannot. They preserve memory. They make distant crises closer and visible to us. They restore names and faces to policy debates.

For 25 years, we have used words and images to weave together these stories.

Climate change is not one storm, not one flashflood. It is wave after wave. And journalism must keep sailing, like the vinta that has symbolized our work, that you can see in our logo. We do not calm storms, but we document them. We ask who is responsible, we amplify the situation of those who are affected, especially the unheard voices.

They are the fisherfolk who notice changing currents. Farmers who adjust planting seasons. Mothers who carry children through floodwaters. Indigenous communities protecting forests. Youth organizing climate strikes.

We in MindaNews do not do parachute journalism. We do not see disaster as a spectacle. We look at its context, its history, and we follow-through.

For 25 years, we have been reporting on conflict and climate, from peace talks to rising tides. We see the pattern — the issues are connected.

Climate reporting is not seasonal. And thus it requires institutional memory, digging into our archives, and following up years later.

Climate stories are political. Environment degradation often involves power. It is thus independent journalism's duty to protect the truth.

Disaster stories keep repeating year after year, and many of us — journalists included — may already have disaster fatigue. I remember writing about the Philippines being the most disaster-prone country when I was a young reporter in the 1990s. Here I am, almost 40 years later, in my senior years, still risking life and limb to cover disasters right in my hometown.

And for years I've been posting on social media the struggles we had at home every time strong rains come and floodwaters enter our house. [But, unlike the flood-control projects that cost billions, we have devised our own that has kept our house dry the past 10 years even as floodwaters flow on our street.]

But we cannot stop reporting about climate change. Because we see hope. We see the youth helping out mitigate the effects of climate change. We see communities rebuilding, the indigenous people taking leadership on environmental issues.

And we see like-minded people and institutions taking up the cudgels for the environment. Institutions like the Ateneo, the artists like Bevs and company, researchers, fellow journalists, ordinary citizens.

As MindaNews marks 25 years, we do not celebrate from a distance. We stand in floodwaters, in evacuation centers, in communities rebuilding. We continue to write stories. We continue to sail through waves. And we continue to listen to voices that deserve to be heard.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[President Marcos inspects 'Oplan Kontra Baha' operations in Naga City](#)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Saturday conducted an inspection of ongoing Oplan Kontra Baha (OKB) operations in Naga City, demonstrating the administration's commitment to addressing the country's perennial flooding problems.

Upon arrival in Naga City, President Marcos first visited the Jesse M. Robredo Coliseum, then proceeded to Sagop Creek in Barangay Triangulo to personally inspect dredging, waste-clearing, and cleaning activities in the area.

President Marcos was joined by Naga City Mayor Maria Leonor "Leni" Robredo during the inspection.

Speaking before the media, President Marcos said the dredging and cleanup activities are part of the government's ongoing efforts to address persistent flooding in areas along the Bicol River Basin.

"These are the beginnings of the perennial na flood problem here in Naga and in the rest actually along the Bicol River. Alam naman natin ito'y ang basin. Maraming mga construction, hindi lamang 'yung private sector construction kundi ang pagpagawa nito ng mga ibat-ibang — 'yung linipat ang dinaanan ng tubig kaya naging mas grabe," President Marcos said.

The President pointed to heavy siltation, which has significantly reduced the river's depth and carrying capacity, leading to recurring flooding in the area.

President Marcos said that according to Mayor Robredo, some areas that previously did not experience flooding are now being affected, citing both environmental changes and the increasing impact of climate change.

The Chief Executive stressed that the government is determined to address flooding in the city but admitted that it will take a comprehensive, long-term approach.

"Malaking trabaho ito. It will take time but marami na tayong mga intervention na puwedeng gawin... This is only the beginning," the President said.

After visiting Sagop Creek, the President proceeded to Sitio Magaya-gaya Creek in Barangay Concepcion Pequeña to also inspect ongoing dredging and clearing operations in the area.

The OKB operations in Naga City, which began on February 18, 2026, are scheduled to be completed on July 31, 2026. The initiative covers 29 rivers and creeks and two lakes, handling a total water volume of 26,621,370.51 cubic meters.

The project also includes cleaning and clearing the city's drainage system, which spans 250.51 kilometers, with 75,152.19 cubic meters of sediment slated for removal.

To support these operations, the DPWH and local government have deployed 27 dredging units, 30 dump trucks, and 1,525 personnel equipped with protective gear.

Oplan Kontra Baha is an ongoing initiative by the Marcos administration to reduce flooding and protect communities nationwide by improving the management of waterways and drainage systems, with operations currently underway in Metro Manila, Cebu, and Bacolod.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Marcos admin working on long-term solutions to flooding](#)

By: Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Saturday assured the public that his administration is working on long-term solutions to address flooding in the country.

Marcos inspected ongoing operations under Oplan Kontra Baha (Against Flooding), the national government's flood mitigation initiative, at Sagop Creek in Naga City's Triangulo village.

He also inspected Concepcion Pequeña village.

"This is only the beginning. Ito, desiltation lamang ito. Kagaya ng mga ginagawa natin sa ibang lugar (This is just desiltation. Like what we are doing elsewhere), this is not going to be one time," he told reporters after the inspection.

"We will keep doing this until we have the more long-term solutions at hopefully on the road, if we design everything properly, hindi na natin kailangan paulit-ulit na binabalik-balikan (we won't have to go back and forth over and over again)," Marcos added.

Led by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Oplan Kontra Baha aims to reduce flooding through rapid on-the-ground interventions.

Flood mitigation measures include declogging of canals, removal of illegal obstructions along waterways, river dredging, rehabilitation of pumping stations, maintenance of flood-control structures, and mobilization of equipment and personnel in flood-prone areas.

Marcos acknowledged that much more remains to be done, considering the effects of climate change that trigger unpredictable flooding.

"This is what we are trying to remedy. Malaking trabaho ito (It's a big job). It will take time but marami na tayo mga intervention na pwedeng gawin (but we have many interventions that we can do), such as the pools that we are going to put up," he said.

Naga City was selected as a pilot area for Oplan Kontra Baha due to its high susceptibility to flooding within the Bicol River Basin, highlighting the need for focused and sustained flood-mitigation efforts.

The program focuses on the town's 10-kilometer Sagop Creek, a major waterway closely monitored by the local government.

The creek's channel passes through five villages that are highly vulnerable to flooding, particularly Del Rosario, Concepcion Grande, Concepcion Pequeña, Triangulo and Tabuco.

As of Friday, initial clearing and desilting operations in Naga City have resulted in the removal of 2,350 cubic meters of silt, vegetation and solid waste from priority waterways, including Sagop Creek, sections in Barangay Concepcion Pequeña, the Bicol River (Esplanade section), and Milaor Creek along Maharlika Highway.

The ongoing operations are part of immediate measures to restore hydraulic capacity in flood-prone areas.

Apart from the cleanup operation in Naga City, the DPWH has led similar initiatives in Metro Manila, Cebu and Bacolod. Similar efforts will be scheduled in Laguna, Iloilo City and Cagayan de Oro.

THE GUARDIAN

[Less snow, or more risk? What you need to know about avalanches and climate change](#)

Avalanches kill about 100 people in Europe each year, with vast masses of ice, snow and rock regularly crashing down on hikers and skiers who have been caught unawares.

The structure of the snow, angle of the slope and variation of the weather can dictate whether a gentle disturbance – like a gust of wind or the glide of a snowboard – can trigger a deadly shift in the mountain.

How dangerous are avalanches?

Experts say the risks of an avalanche should be thought of like a flood: you have to consider both the chance of the hazard and the damage it will do.

“Avalanche risk in the European Alps is nowadays mostly for mountain practitioners who trigger avalanches themselves,” said Nicolas Eckert, a climatologist specialising in mountain risk at Université Grenoble Alpes. “However, such accidental avalanches are only a small portion of the total number of avalanches.”

Avalanche hazard levels are particularly high after heavy snowfall, and weather conditions earlier in the winter can prove decisive to the strength of the snow.

“Limited early-season snowfall can lead to the formation of persistent weak layers within the snowpack,” said Giacomo Strapazzon, a medical doctor and director of the Mountain Clinic at the Institute of Mountain Emergency Medicine. “Once these weak layers become buried under subsequent snowfalls, they can create highly unstable conditions that favour human-triggered avalanches.”

Experts say the danger is compounded because many people engaging in winter sports recreationally are unfamiliar with warning bulletins and fail to adjust their behaviour accordingly.

Are avalanches getting more deadly?

Each year, about 100 people die in avalanches in Europe – a trend that scientists have found to have stayed broadly steady over the last four decades. Fatalities fell slightly in 2023-24, when 87 people died, and again in 2024-25, when 70 people died. European Avalanche Warning Services (EAWS) had already recorded 99 deaths by the middle of February 2026.

Experts say exposure to avalanches has been rising with an increase in the number of off-track skiers, who are exposed to greater danger than those on controlled tracks. But this shift has not resulted in a rise in deaths because it has been compensated by better warnings, safety equipment and – in recent years – stable snow conditions.

“Overall, we have seen a slight decline in the annual number of fatalities, despite a massive increase in the number of ski touring days undertaken in Switzerland,” said Kurt Winkler, a scientist at the Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research in Switzerland. “This massive decrease in risk cannot be explained by climate change. Other factors, such as faster rescue operations and better avalanche forecasts, appear to be far more important.”

Is climate change making avalanches worse?

Ski resorts across the continent have begun to close due to a lack of snow, with half of Europe's 2,200 ski resorts projected to suffer "very high risk" to snow supply if global warming hits 2C above pre-industrial levels. Studies suggest climate change will make avalanches smaller and less common, as rising temperatures melt snow and shorten the season.

"However, due to the higher water-holding capacity of warmer air, heavy snowfall events might increase in magnitude – especially at high elevations," said Elias Zubler from Switzerland's Federal Office of Meteorology and Climatology. "The model projections show a general decrease in the frequency of heavy snowfall events, but an intensification of events is possible, especially at high elevations and in the core winter season."

Such a rise in high-elevation avalanches could pose a serious risk to skiers, who make up most of the deaths, and mountaineers. Climate change is also likely to result in a higher share of avalanches with snow that is wet and dense, allowing them to pack more punch.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[DENR update on forest leasing set to expand job opportunities](#)

By: Jerod Orcullo

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) issued an administrative order that sought to make changes in the ownership of forest land within the country.

Through Department Administrative Order (DAO) 2025-22, the DENR opened the door for communities that rely on forests for their livelihood to have prolonged control over their land which allows them to both protect and benefit from these forests.

Environment Secretary Raphael P.M. Lotilla described the change as a “climate and livelihood strategy” noting that through the Sustainable Forest Land Management Agreement (SLFMA) a more sustainable environment can be established.

“The SFLMA changes all of that. It creates better livelihoods, improves forest governance, and ensures that every hectare of forestland is managed sustainably for generations to come,” he said.

In a study conducted by the Philippine Forestry Statistics in 2022, the total forest coverage in the country was said to have spanned 7.22 million hectares which accounted for over 24 percent of the country’s land area.

However, according to the Climate Change Commission the Philippines had lost nearly 1.42 million hectares of forest land from 2001 to 2022 which translated into 848 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions.

As part of DAO 2025-22, SLFMA allows qualified partners to have the ability to manage a particular land for 25 years. It also aimed to modernize a system that had made ownership and sharing of forest land a lengthy process.

This development was also projected to make room for more business opportunities to arise for public and private organizations alike to invest in forest-centric businesses.

Lotilla emphasized that the effect that the order would have on forestry is two-fold, making room for economic growth and promoting a greener, safer, and more climate-resilient nation.

Read [more](https://tribune.net.ph/2026/02/21/denr-update-on-forest-leasing-set-to-expand-job-opportunities) at:
<https://tribune.net.ph/2026/02/21/denr-update-on-forest-leasing-set-to-expand-job-opportunities>

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“We strengthen protection and enforcement, and at the same time empower communities who depend on forests for their future. It is a governance reform designed to last,” he said.

The environmental agency maintained that this updated system will change how environmental protection is carried out as the people that are responsible in protecting the forests would also be able to benefit from them in the long-term as well.

Laying the groundwork for climate justice

By: Windsor John Genova

Since almost all countries signed on to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, the international environmental treaty for global climate negotiations spawned the annual Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings that produced agreements on limiting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and temperature.

In the COP19 held in Warsaw, Poland, in 2013, a consensus to address loss and damage from climate change was reached. But 11 years would pass before the corresponding Loss and Damage Fund (LDF) was established at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The LDF is intended to compensate vulnerable nations like small island states and the Philippines for economic and non-economic losses caused by extreme weather events like typhoons and droughts, despite such countries' minimal historical GHG emissions.

Funding was supposed to start last year, but Climate Change Commission (CCC) vice chairperson and executive director Robert E. A. Borje says the LDF board, where he is a member, is still discussing the payment modality and mechanism.

"I would assume that it would take around five to seven years before it is approved," he says of the funding process.

Borje, who has been at the helm of the CCC since 2022, reveals that there is already a seed fund of \$200 million for loss and damage, but the Philippines is not getting compensation for the series of weather disasters it suffered last year and in 2024. Beneficiaries simply have to wait for the LDF board members to reach a consensus and finalize the funding mechanics.

For the CCC chief, the situation demands patience, something that he possesses after a long and fruitful career in diplomatic service.

Collective discipline

Before leading the Commission, Borje spent nearly two decades in diplomacy, representing the Philippines in multilateral arenas and serving in posts abroad. That experience is proving useful to global climate negotiations under the UNFCCC, where he serves as the country's National Focal Point and sits on its Adaptation Committee — the first Filipino appointed to that body.

Securing climate finance is just one of his many tasks at CCC. He also works to strengthen data systems, align institutions, train local governments, mobilize youth and adjust private sector incentives.

The son of a Navy admiral and a barangay captain, Borje was raised between discipline and grassroots service. The latter is shown by promoting local adaptation plans to municipalities.

His academic training — a communications degree followed by an Executive Master's in Disaster Risk and Crisis Management — reflects his dual focus: explain clearly, prepare systematically.

At a resilience forum introducing national adaptation strategies, he advised local chief executives gathered there to "build right at first sight," meaning to make resilience deliberate, not accidental."

The phrase captures his philosophy. Prevention over reaction. Foresight over improvisation.

At a business and governance forum, he reminded private sector leaders that “real climate action does not succeed on policy alone. It succeeds when institutions, communities, and individual Filipinos move together.”

The setting mattered. He was asking corporations to view climate risk not as corporate social responsibility but as an operational reality.

Resilience, he argues, must become embedded in supply chains, infrastructure investments, school curricula, and local budgeting processes.

In other words, climate-safe living will not emerge from one agency. It must grow from collective discipline.

Pushing for responsibility

Colleagues describe Borje as measured and methodical — more inclined to listen than to dominate discussion. In international negotiations, that temperament helps him balance diplomacy with national interest. At home, it allows him to convene agencies that historically worked in silos.

He has received national honors for public service. Yet in interviews and public remarks, he rarely frames his work in terms of achievement. More often, he speaks of timelines — 2030 targets, mid-century pathways, adaptation benchmarks.

He talks about “mainstreaming” climate in development plans — a technical phrase that, in practice, means changing how roads are built, how cities expand, how farms irrigate.

There is honesty in the way Borje discusses climate governance. He does not promise a climate-proof Philippines within a decade. He acknowledges the scale of the challenge — global emissions, economic pressures, political cycles.

Likewise, climate justice will not be achieved in one administration, or even one generation. But it can begin now — in zoning ordinances, corporate disclosures, school programs, adaptation budgets.

The keyword to making this possible is responsibility. Responsibility from local governments to integrate risk into planning. Responsibility from businesses to invest in sustainability. Responsibility from citizens to understand that climate action is not optional.

On most days, Borje’s work does not make headlines. No ribbon-cuttings. No photo-ops. No applause. Instead, he quietly helps construct architecture and systems that anticipate storms before they strike, policies that reduce vulnerability before tragedy unfolds. With his stewardship of the CCC, he is laying the groundwork for giving Filipinos the climate justice they deserve.

PALAWAN NEWS

Nat'l climate official backs IP opposition to Infanta nickel project

By: Ruil Alabi

A Climate Change Commission (CCC) official publicly backed the Palaw'an community of Sitio Linao, Barangay Ipilan in Brooke's Point in opposing MacroAsia's Infanta nickel project on their ancestral land.

During a community meeting on February 19, indigenous leaders and residents voiced firm opposition to mining activities within their ancestral domain, saying the project threatens their environment and livelihood.

Brooke's Point Vice Mayor Mary Jean Feliciano and CCC Commissioner Albert Dela Cruz attended the gathering to hear the concerns of the community and state their positions.

Feliciano said she would stand by her commitment to protect the environment and uphold the rights of indigenous peoples in the municipality.

"Ngayon hindi lang kayo ang nagpunta sa akin, may nagpunta rin sa akin, sabi 'Vice, yong tubig na pinagkukunan namin kulay brown na, kasi yong hinukay nila ang bundok, pag-ulan pumasok na doon yong laterite, kaya ang tubig kulay pula.' Salamat kay Ampo [God], nakilala ko ang Climate Change Commission, kahit pala hindi natin sirain ang bundok natin, pwedeng kumita ang mga tao," she said.

For his part, Dela Cruz said mining is not the answer to community development and argued that it does not bring lasting prosperity.

"Kung nakakayaman ang pagmimina, mayaman na ang Pilipino, kung nakakayaman ang pagtotroso, sana mayaman na ang Pilipinas, bakit ipapakalbo yong mga bundok ninyo, bakit natin ipapaputol ang mga puno ninyo, bakit natin gagawin yon, samantalang di naman kayo yumaman?" Dela Cruz said.

He claimed that large corporations are the primary beneficiaries of mining operations.

"Iisa lang ang yumayaman, yong mga dambuhalang kompanya na madalas nakakonekta pa sa ibang bansa, banyaga, kasama, kasabwat yong mga pilipinong walang puso na ginagahasa ang ating kalikasan at walang puso, pinababayaan kayo," he added.

Dela Cruz also addressed officials who support mining projects.

"Kaya kung may politiko na gustong ipaputol ang puno, ipamina, hindi naman kayo yumaman (mga katutubo), baka sila ang yumaman, ganon lang kasimple, ang pagmimina may pera, huwag nilang sabihin sa akin na hindi sila kumikita, kung hindi sila kumikita, umalis na sila diyan," he said.

Panglima Celso Paida thanked the officials for their support and reaffirmed the tribe's stand against the project.

"Ako ay isang punong-tribo dito na inaasahan ng karamihan, hindi lamang ako ay nagsasalita, kundi ang nakaatang sa balikat ko, hanggang sa nasasakupan ng MPSA, ipaglalaman po namin na talagang dapat hindi na matuloy," Paida said.

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