



Tebtebba

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NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN

The Imperative of Ensuring the Human Rights Based Approach in all Climate Change Decisions and Actions.

In its resolutions on human rights and climate change the Human Rights Council has repeatedly emphasized that the impacts of climate change “will be felt most acutely by those segments of the population who are already in a vulnerable situation.” There is no question that indigenous peoples are one of those sectors of society who are highly vulnerable. This is why indigenous peoples actively advocated to ensure that the human rights-based approach should be at the center of climate change policies, programs and actions.

Most indigenous peoples live in environmentally fragile areas such as remote mountainous areas, low lying coastal areas, the Arctic which suffer serious disasters when climate change related events such as incessant rains and typhoons, rising sea waters, high temperatures, droughts and floods, among others Climate change is one of the worst forms of injustice and is there is no question that it is a human-rights issue. It negatively affects people’s rights to health, housing, water and food and for indigenous peoples, in particular, their right to self-determination and right to culture. It also has indirect impacts as much needed resources are diverted from crucial public services such as health, education and agrarian support to climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Indigenous peoples in the Philippines have shared the direct impacts of climate change, which include severe land erosion because of the stronger typhoons which occur more frequently which has led to destruction of their crops, their houses. Many of them still do not have titles to their collective lands and territories and when they are forced to evacuate to safer grounds, they face the threat of having their lands taken over by vested interests after the disasters. Since their identities and cultures, as well as knowledge, are directly linked to their traditional lands, being deprived of these lands and territories lead to cultural displacement as the places which they consider sacred and where their deities and sacred spirits reside and where they perform their rituals. Being separated from the members of their communities also can lead to loss of their languages.

Their right to self-determination, which is to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, is also violated with these adverse climate change impacts. Many indigenous peoples still use their own customary governance systems, including customary laws, to govern their relationship with each other, with nature, and with their neighbors. Being displaced from their ancestral territories will drastically affect these as their governance, knowledge, and justice systems, some of which are place-based, will be undermined. They cannot continue to pursue their own visions and actions to implement their self-determined development.

Climate change exacerbates the gross inequalities between rich and poor states and between rich and poor people. Ensuring climate justice and enhancing respect, protection, and fulfillment of human rights are crucial imperatives that should be integral in all climate

change actions, decisions, and policies. Climate justice requires that climate action is consistent with existing human rights agreements, obligations, standards, and principles. This is what the human-rights based approach to climate change means. Meaningful participation in all climate change decisions and actions has to be ensured. Nationally-determined contributions to climate change developed by States should ensure such participation. Aside from active participation, indigenous peoples have to be primary beneficiaries of climate action, and if their rights are violated they must have access to effective remedies.

Tebtebba (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education) fully supports the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on "the Obligation of States in Respect of Climate Change. It also thanks the Government of the Philippines through the Climate Change Commission for its written statement in support of this. We commit to continue working with state and non-state actors who are willing to ensure the integration of human rights in all climate change policies and actions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Tauli-Corpuz', with a stylized, flowing script.

VICTORIA TAULI-CORPUZ
Executive Director



Statement of the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) on the effects of Climate Change on Children

The Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) acknowledges that climate change poses substantial risks to children's well-being and future, as evident from the observations and concerns shared during its community consultations on environmental issues. Urgent action is required to address these challenges and safeguard the rights of children.

Children across the Philippines have identified key environmental problems, including the destruction of marine life, excessive garbage, illegal logging, deforestation, poaching, and mining activities. These issues not only endanger the environment but also affect the health and safety of children and other living beings.

To address these challenges, the CWC emphasizes the importance of government intervention, stronger policy implementation, strengthening of partnerships with civil society organizations, and accountability for environmental damages. Local and national governments must prioritize environmental sustainability and allocate resources for advocacy, monitoring, and enforcement of laws.

Additionally, there is a need for increased education and awareness about climate change adaptation and mitigation (CCAM) among children and young people. The CWC supports initiatives that empower children to participate in meaningful conversations, policy-making processes, and climate actions. It also promotes the use of social media and other platforms to amplify children's voices and engage the wider community in CCAM efforts.

By working together as one society, we aspire to ensure a safe, sustainable and nurturing environment for our children. The CWC remains committed to supporting children's rights and advocating for policies and programs that address the impacts of climate change on children and their communities.

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