

**SATR Presentation on the Strategic Framework and Structure  
of the Presidential Task Force on Climate Change (PTFCC)**

19 October 2007 – 2<sup>nd</sup> PTFCC MEETING

As Chair of the Presidential Task Force on Climate Change, I have convened this meeting to arrive at a meeting of minds on our climate change response framework and on the structure of the PTFCC.

All our departments have been invited to take part in the First National Conference on Climate Change Adaptation in Legaspi, Albay starting Monday. I feel that it is important for each of our Agency representatives to go there consciously as a member of the Task Force. As a starting point, we need to make sure that we are on the same page with respect to our general directions moving forward.

By this time, there should be no reason to dwell at length on the science behind the issue of climate change and global warming and the sense of urgency attendant to confronting it.

What we should be clear on is how climate change would likely impact the Philippines and, consequently, on how we should address the problem.

Scientific studies indicate that as a country we contribute very little by way of greenhouse gas emissions which give rise to global warming. Ironically, our archipelago—by reason of terrain and location—is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

From your handouts, you would note that nature has given us fair warning these past several decades in the form of warming and precipitation trends, the frequency and intensity of typhoons, the occurrence of devastating floods and landslides, the alternation of severe El Niño and La Niña events, and the seasonal outbreak of health hazards like dengue and red tide.

If these adverse trends worsen, our food and water supply, along with the health, livelihood and settlements of some communities, could soon be at risk.

It is precisely to assess the magnitude and proximity of the threat and to mount an appropriate and cohesive response that our Task Force has been formed.

In my view, operations of the Task Force should be premised on the following principles. First, they have to be aligned with the global action agenda on climate change. Second, they should be

comprehensive and holistic in character—involving the total community, including the bureaucracy. As such, they should serve to synchronize currently disparate efforts across disciplines, agencies and sectors under one common strategy for maximum impact. To facilitate program or project initiation and implementation, there will be a strong bias for local efforts and interventions.

Taking off from these principles, we can now agree on a climate change response framework and map out the road ahead.

The core of the proposed response framework hinges on a critical balance between mitigation and adaptation measures. Both are critical in addressing the current and imminent risks brought about by climate change.

While the Philippines might not contribute significantly to total greenhouse gas emissions, it has to do its share in mitigating climate change as part of the global community. On this score, the DOE, in collaboration with the members of the Task Force, will take decisive action, for instance, to achieve the climate-friendly energy supply mix.

At the same time, the Task Force will design adaptation responses to address vulnerabilities of specific sectors and areas. Focus will be on disaster-prone settlements, high-risk population centers, and food production areas.

In view of the magnitude of the challenge, the country would need to harness financial resources and technology solutions to address the causes and effects of climate change.

Recognizing the massive infrastructure and technical requirements to pursue its twin goals, the Task Force is committed to search for financing mechanisms in support of local and sectoral initiatives. These include ODA funds, market-based incentives, subsidies targeted at lowering costs for power generation using solar, wind and other clean technologies, and innovative lending schemes.

To carry out mitigation strategies, local communities would need access to climate-friendly technologies to establish low-carbon infrastructure for transportation, energy, agriculture, industry, and settlements. On the adaptation side, farmers, for instance, would need to be introduced to technologies for developing drought-resistant crops and the like. The Task Force will facilitate transfer of technology through bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements.

The enabling interventions on the financial and technology fronts would enhance the capacity of the Task Force to rally stakeholders from diverse sectors around its core advocacy. By addressing the main constraints to effective mitigation and adaptation responses, it can focus on social mobilization as a key strategy to achieve the critical mass necessary for maximum impact.

In the months to come, we will engage various clusters of stakeholders—from home and office builders to local government officials, from car manufacturers to mall owners, from appliance makers to the academe—to assemble a critical mass of climate change response advocates who can make a genuine difference.

We expect widespread social mobilization to yield benefits on several fronts:

- First, we can look forward to effective governance of the Philippine climate change response by setting in place the right policy environment and a system for tracking the progress of multi-agency efforts to plug vulnerabilities.
- Second, pro-action and cooperation among diverse stakeholders would ensure a unified and coherent national response.
- Third, ordinary citizens would be more open to adopting lifestyle changes, which can help in reducing carbon emissions.
- On the international level, Philippine stakeholders, working in concert, can highlight the urgent need for industrialized states to fulfill their mitigation commitments so as to avert devastation and dislocation in their home land.

To be consistent with the proposed response framework, may I propose the following refinements in the organization of the Task Force.

First, the PTFCC Chair and Vice Chair would enjoy the benefit of counsel on matters like technology solutions, financing schemes and social mobilization strategies from a Board of Advisors.

Day-to-day operations will be handled by a Climate Change Office. Headed by an Executive Director, this office will handle policy development, project monitoring and evaluation, information and education, and administrative support.

All the Task Force members will be involved directly in program planning and implementation. In keeping with the principles stated earlier, we have opted not to group programs along functional areas. Instead, cross-sectoral PTFCC flagship programs will be classified into

four areas—mitigation, adaptation, financing and technology—consistent with the proposed climate change response framework.

These flagship programs—and the projects under them—would not preclude the initiation or continuance of mitigation and adaptation measures that fall under the exclusive ambit of any of the line agencies.

That ends my brief presentation. I now open the floor for discussions.