



Climate Vulnerable Forum
Foro de Vulnerabilidad Climática
Forum de la Vulnérabilité Climatique



Office of the President of the Philippines
CLIMATE CHANGE COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

Date: 30 April 2015

To: Ms. Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat

From: Hon. Mary Ann Lucille L. Sering, Secretary and Vice Chairperson, Climate Change Commission of the Office of the President of the Philippines for the **Climate Vulnerable Forum**

Subject: **Submission from party members to the Climate Vulnerable Forum on the 2013-2015 Review, inclusive of three independent expert reports on information gaps, a call for strengthening the long-term 2 °Celsius goal to 1.5 °C, and a request for an additional session under the Review prior to the next COP**

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1. This communication conveys a submission concerning the 2013-2015 Review from the Climate Vulnerable Forum, a 20-member* group of developing countries particularly vulnerable to climate change, whose chair *pro tempore* is exercised by Philippines.
 2. This submission is further to conclusions adopted by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) at the UN Climate Change Conference at Lima in December 2014, whereby the SBSTA and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation extended an invitation to parties to submit by 1 May 2015 any other information or gaps in information relevant to the 2013-2015 Review and views on the adequacy of the long-term goal in light of the objective of the Convention and progress towards achieving this goal (FCCC/SBSTA/2014/5).
 3. Human rights, labour (health and productivity) and migration/displacement are information gaps in the Structured Expert Dialogues (SED) of the Review since none of these topics received dedicated or detailed treatment in the SEDs. Considerable and growing scientific or expert knowledge and research nevertheless exists on these topics. This submission therefore includes a series of solicited reports with detailed information as relevant to the Review independently developed by the following three leading expert groups (enclosed) for consideration by parties:
 - a) **UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment on considerations of human rights;**
 - b) **Ruby Coast Research Centre on labour (health and productivity);**
 - c) **The Special Envoy of the Chairmanship of the Nansen Initiative on migration and displacement.**
 4. Each of these reports demonstrates why these topics are relevant to understanding the adequacy of the ultimate objective of the Convention. In particular, the reports clearly indicate that human interference with the climate system has the potential to endanger

* Current members of the Climate Vulnerable Forum: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Kiribati, Madagascar, Maldives, Nepal, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Vietnam.

fundamental human rights, occupational health and productivity, and, the well-being of communities, migrants and displaced people, including through forced displacement.

5. As was highlighted in the 4th SED by scientists presenting the 5th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR5), some 0.5 additional units of risks to physical, biological and human systems were estimated at 2 °C of warming above pre-industrial levels compared with 1.5 °C. Indeed, IPCC AR5 analysis of the comparison between 1.5 °C and 2 °C shows that there are consistent differences of about half of a risk unit or more between these two temperatures. This amplification of risks with additional warming is also consistent with the analysis contained in the reports on human rights, labour and migration/displacement that are conveyed as a part of this submission.

6. A principal key message emerging from the first three SED sessions is indeed that additional magnitudes of warming will only increase the risks of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts. The SEDs highlighted that climate-related impacts are already prevalent at the current degree of warming of 0.85° C above the pre-industrial levels, with increasingly significant adverse effects. In addition, in a world with warming of 2 °C, even high degrees of adaptation would fail to reduce risk to low levels. It was pointed out that there is also no safe limit to the increase in emissions because of the uncertainties about the impact of climate change on complex ecosystems. Experts therefore stressed that any upper limit for global warming can no longer be seen as a guardrail providing protection from dangerous anthropogenic interference. Limitations of scientific evidence concerning these findings, also noted by the SEDs, moreover, must be accounted for in accordance with the Convention's principal on precautionary measures.

7. The Review should additionally account for information only made available subsequent to the conclusion of the SEDs. One example of relevant information not considered by the SEDs is the preliminary data from the International Energy Agency (IEA) published in March 2015 indicating that global emissions of carbon dioxide from the energy sector stalled in 2014, marking the first time in 40 years in which there was a halt or reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases that was not tied to an economic downturn. That information is highly relevant, for instance, to consideration of overall progress made towards achieving the long-term goal.

8. Without preempting the final outcome of the Review following the consideration of additional information not yet considered, the SEDs, complemented by the information included with this submission, demonstrate the difficulty in qualifying the long-term global goal of 2 °C as anything but inadequate in terms of the ultimate objective of the Convention. **In order to compensate for the inadequacy of the current long-term goal of 2 °C, the Conference of Parties would be well advised to strengthen that goal by the maximum feasible amount. On current scientific understanding this means adopting a 1.5 °C (or below) goal.**

9. In order to enable other parties an opportunity to interact with experts in respect of the Review's information gaps outlined in the three enclosed reports, notwithstanding other information gaps identified by further parties, and in order to consider information highly relevant to the Review that has been made available subsequently to the SEDs, **it is requested that an additional session under this Review be convened prior to the next Conference of Parties.**

Encl.

Expert reports on human rights, labour and migration/displacement