

The Necessary Alternatives: Balancing Energy, Health and the Climate Challenge¹

11 November 2015, 9:00 to 11:50 AM
Padilla Room, 2nd Floor, Senate of the Philippines
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

I. RATIONALE

The Department of Energy recently unveiled its targeted 30-30-30 rule for the country's energy mix with natural gas, coal and renewables having the same 30% share with the remaining 10% going towards alternative technologiesⁱ.

At present, coal dominates the country's energy mix and accounts for 42.5% of power generatedⁱⁱ. A study by US consultancy firm IHS projects that this will rise to 56% by 2020 in light of the 23 new coal-fired power plants lined up for commercial operations in the next five years. Barring any intervention, this will further increase to 75% by 2030—the highest share of coal among countries in Asia.

Based on its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Philippines initially pledges a 'conditional'ⁱⁱⁱ 70% greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction by 2030 against business-as-usual scenario--projected at 221 Million tons CO₂e^{iv}, while taking into account mitigation options for energy, transport, forestry, industry and waste sectors.

The country's biggest GHG emissions contributor is the energy sector. Under the BAU scenario, emissions from the energy sector is projected to rise by 400% from 26 to 140 million metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMT) CO₂e^v between 2007 and 2030.

Based on previous public consultations of the Senate Committee on Climate Change, chaired by Senator Loren Legarda, the following points were raised.

- a) There is inadequate public information on how the Philippines' INDC will affect the country's future energy policy, including how to drive energy investments and how the country will achieve its INDC targets^{vi}.
- b) There is growing public concern on the increasing fossil fuel energy projects in the country as it relates to potential impacts to the environment and public health implications.
- c) The current energy policy (including the 'least-cost supply' approach) does not consider 'cost of externalities' eg. environmental and health impacts that could reflect the true cost of energy/electricity and provide better judgement on energy choices.

¹A forum on how the Philippines can meet its INDC target for the energy sector while protecting health and climate

In this regard, the Senate Committee on Climate Change in cooperation with the British Embassy Manila and Health Care Without Harm-Asiaspearheads the forum titled, The Necessary Alternatives: Balancing Energy, Health and the Climate Challenge, with the following objectives:

1. To gain understanding on the implications of energy policies on health;
2. To look into the efforts of the Climate Change Commission, other involved agencies, and non-state actors in identifying areas of possible policy intervention that will help achieve the Philippines' INDC target and explore areas to increase the country's level of mitigation ambition^{vii}; and
3. To open the political space for the health sector to engage on the energy and climate change discourse.

II. CONTENT

1. Presentation on how energy policies affect public health
 - Presentation by Professor Paul Wilkinson, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
2. Presentation on how the Philippines' INDC will affect the country's future energy policy, including drive energy investments, and how the country will achieve its INDC targets
 - Climate Change Commission – Briefing on the Philippines' INDC target highlighting Energy sector, explaining the business-as-usual (BAU) scenario and viability of achieving the targets
 - Department of Energy –How the Philippines' INDC affects the country's future energy policy
 - Energy Regulatory Commission - How government looks at the cost of energy
 - DENR – Environmental Management Bureau – Efforts to strengthen environmental impact assessment and health impact assessment on energy projects. Identification of current gaps.
 - Department of Health – DOH's response to climate change mitigation. How DOH can contribute to PHL's INDC targets eg. DOH is developing guidelines in the use of green technologies in health care buildings and process standards (eg Hospital in Tacloban incorporated energy efficiency and RE technology. There is also an initiative to install solar energy in rural health centers.
3. Presentation of health sector's non-state actors concern energy policy
 - Presentation of community perspectives and experience on coal projects in the Philippines
 - i. Community organizer/People's Organisation presentation general
 - ii. Testimonial of a resident from a coal plant host community
 - World Health Organization - Philippines - Response to climate change - 'Health in the green economy' co-benefits to health of climate change

mitigation (Household energy sector in developing countries). This could also bring out the discussion on energy access

- Presentation of the health sector non-state actors' position on energy
 - o Video presentation
 - o Position paper

4. Philippines launch of Health Care Without Harm's online Paris Platform for Healthy Energy - <http://www.healthyenergyinitiative.org/platform/>

III. TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Relevant legislators and senior official of involved executive agencies eg CCC, DOE, DENR-EMB, civil society, academe and media

IV. METHODOLOGY:

- Technical Input
- Participatory
- Processing/ Synthesis

ⁱ[Fuel mix policy debate heating up: The 'struggle for choice' is real](#), Manila Bulletin, 24 June 2015.

ⁱⁱ As of 2013 data, the Philippines Power Generation mix is composed of Coal (42.5%), Natural Gas (24.9%), Oil based (6.3%), Hydro (13.3%), Geothermal (12.7%), Wind (0.1%), Biomass (0.3%)

ⁱⁱⁱ Conditional refers to if there will be sufficient support in terms of financial investments, technology development & transfer and capacity building.

^{iv} Powerpoint presentation of Climate Change Commission Vice-Chair Lucille Sering at the Senate Committee on Climate Change Budget Hearing on 05 October 2015.

^v[NAMA Proposal Executive Summaries – Prepared for the NAMA Global Financing Summit](#), May 15-17, 2013 Copenhagen Denmark prepared by Center for Clean Air Policy.

^{vi} There is interest from the Climate Change commissioners, Dept of Energy, Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) to look at crafting enabling regulations to support decision making in the power sector on a portfolio basis (rather than individual contract basis) and to include externalities in cost evaluation. A potential area to review is the "least cost definition" which is a criteria for the approval of Power Sales Agreement in EPIRA.

^{vii} Addressing the Philippines energy security through the developing policies that will optimise cleaner (low carbon) technology energy choices