

Government efforts to address climate change cited

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MANILA, Philippines - The Philippines recently highlighted the Duterte administration's efforts to address climate change and ocean pollution by prohibiting the indiscriminate disposal of plastic waste and by closing certain mining companies.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III told the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) that protecting the environment is important to ensure human survival and sustainable development.

Pimentel reiterated the Philippine government's commitment to the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goal 14, which focuses on the oceans, seas and marine resources during the annual parliamentary hearing of the IPU held in New York City last Feb. 13 and 14.

The Philippines affirmed its full legislative support for the global agenda to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources as a vital ecosystem to ensure human survival and sustainable development.

Pimentel led the Philippine delegation to the IPU, the global organization of national parliaments and lawmakers that works to establish democracy, peace and cooperation among peoples. Almost 140 national parliaments are members of the IPU.

In his statement, Pimentel informed the meeting of the Duterte administration's efforts to address climate change and ocean pollution.

He said there were mining companies closed because their toxic tailings have severely affected some of the country's watersheds, rivers and coasts.

"We have a concept in the Philippines called 'Ridge to Reef' which we use in our disaster preparedness planning," Pimentel said.

"Because of what we learned (in this meeting), I will amend this concept... to make it 'Ridge to Ocean,' and that from now on, all kinds of planning in the Philippines must include the oceans," he added.

This year's topic seeks to provide parliamentary input to the high-level oceans conference to be held at the United Nations from June 5 to 9, which experts believe can become the game changer that will reverse the decline in the health of the oceans and synergize the oceans' relationship with other 2030 agenda goals such as climate change mitigation, sustainable consumption and production patterns, hunger and food security, health risks linked to pollution and other harmful materials, and governance and the rule of law.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/02/17/1672993/government-efforts-address-climate-change-cited>