

# Conference calls for climate resilience, green growth in South

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*In Photo: The news conference at the Conference on Climate Resilience and Green Growth in Mindanao held last week in Davao City was attended by (seated, from left) Roly Pinsoy (MinDA), Dr. Ancha Srinivasan (ADB), Abul Khayr Amalon Alonto II (MinDA), Commissioner Noel Gaerlan (CCC), Dr. Candido Cabrido (Searca TA 8493 Team) and Araceli de la Fuente (DENR); (standing, from left) Dr. Takayuki Hatano and Nelflor Jo Atienza (CTI), Julius Francisco (WCI) and Dr. Lope B. Santos III (Searca).*

DAVAO CITY—The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) called for the adoption of climate resilience and green-growth approach for the development of Mindanao.

This was made in the Conference on Climate Resilience and Green Growth in Mindanao: Road Map to Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Development held last week at a hotel in this city.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and a consortium of the Philippine government-hosted Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (Searca) supported the initiative.

The joint statement read by the CCC Commissioner Noel Gaerlan, together with Dr. Ancha Srinivasan, principal climate-change specialist at ADB, and representatives of Sec. Abul Khayr Dangcal Alonto of MinDA and Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit Jr., Searca director, said they shall “pursue holistic and integrated climate resilience and green-growth road map, based on principles of ecosystems-based development planning, environmental protection, utilization of green and low-emission technology, adaptive infrastructure development, consideration for women, children and indigenous peoples and other marginalized communities and creation of livelihood options and green jobs to uplift the lives of our people in the Philippines in general and Mindanao in particular”.

Gaerlan said there is an urgency to approach local development planning at three fronts: climate and disaster risk preparedness, environmental stability and economic growth in the light of the changing and worsening climatic conditions, which are important ingredients in “building resilience”, thus, saving lives.

He emphasized that “CCC is aggressively promoting risk- and science-based approach, convergence and integration of various government efforts toward development of climate-adjusted national and local development plans.

Alonto, in his keynote speech delivered by MinDA Chief of Staff Abul Khayr Amalon Alonto II, emphasized that Mindanao, as a food basket, is threatened by the impact of climate change, that the recent occurrence of heavy flooding in several areas in Mindanao has claimed lives and properties and has become a serious concern to everyone.”

Alonto revealed that MinDA’s strategic priorities include climate-change adaptation and mitigation, promotion of clean and green technologies, sustainable management of natural resources and critical ecosystems and promote public awareness and capacity building for environmental sustainability.”

Ancha Srinivasan of ADB noted in his opening remarks that “by integrating locally appropriate and gender-responsive climate-change mitigation and adaptation actions in comprehensive land use and development plans, Mindanao and its LGUs [local government units] can lead others in simultaneously addressing poverty and climate change and in achieving sustainable development goals by 2030”.

Saguiguit said that “Mindanao has vast potentials for agro-industrial development, which can contribute to our nation’s food and nutrition security and poverty alleviation, however, these potentials are confronted with the adverse effects of climate change.”

Saguiguit also emphasized that “agriculture remains to be the driver of Mindanao’s development and a major backbone of the Philippine economy”.

He added: “Our best option against this challenge is to adapt and heighten the resiliency of agriculture to the effects of climate change.” The conference was supported by ADB and the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction-funded project titled “Climate Resilience and Green Growth in Critical Watersheds”, implemented by the CCC and commissioned to a consortium composed of Searca as lead organization, CTI Engineering Japan, Woodfields Consultants Inc. and Ergons Project Management.