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# Achievable? PH finally submits Paris Agreement pledge

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The Philippine government has committed to reduce the country's greenhouse gas emissions by a whopping 75 percent between 2020 and 2030 as part of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

This was bared in a statement Thursday night, April 15 by the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC). ICSC is a Manila-based international policy group advancing climate resilience and low carbon development.

The NDC represents the country's pledged actions to help achieve the goal of the Paris Agreement, which is to limit the rise of global temperature to 1.5-degree Celsius (maximum of 2.0-degree Celsius) from the pre-industrial era, and in effect prevent global warming. Manila is a signatory to the 2015 international accord.

Of the 75 percent target, which would come from the agriculture, wastes, industry, transport, and energy sectors, 72.29 percent is conditional while the remaining 2.71 percent is unconditional, meaning it will be undertaken without international funding or other support.

According to ICSC, the government also said that it shall "endeavor to undertake equitable adaptation strategies with mitigation co-benefits and ensure their contribution to the national pandemic recovery."

Rex Barrer, climate governance lead of ICSC said it's high-time that the Philippine NDC was officially submitted to the United Nations (UN).

"We may have missed the December 31 [2021] deadline, but that never stopped the national government in doing their part to reach the country's adaptation and mitigation targets," he said.

A possible source of criticism is the low unconditional number (2.71 percent), which the group acknowledged.

“We recognize the frustration over the low unconditional number, but we also take hope in the Department of Energy’s (DOE) commitment to continuously update its pledge as reflected in the current effort to improve on the Philippine Energy Plan (PEP).

“The coal moratorium already demonstrated their leadership last year. The challenge now is to see the NDC process as a means by which the modernization of the electricity sector is realized, driven by genuine competition and premised on greater reliance on flexible generation,” Barrer said.

“To this end, we are committed to support the government’s goal to rapidly modernize the country’s power sector and to ensure sooner rather than later the integration of transport modernization strategies into long-term energy development,” he said.

Barrer said the Philippines plans to achieve the 75 percent reduction in emissions through enhanced access to climate finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity building.

“With this, we reiterate the call for rich, high-emitting countries to be accountable and provide the needed resources and support for the mitigation efforts of developing countries. We only account for 0.3 percent of the world’s emissions, and we can only do so much on our end.

“We are still a long way from that goal. It is now time to turn this pledge to transformative action,” he said.

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