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15TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES
CONVENTION ON BIODIVERSITY

High-level Segment
“Ecological Civilization – Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth”

PHILIPPINE COUNTRY STATEMENT

Hon. Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga

Secretary

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Head of Delegation

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Actions and Commitments

The Philippines envisions a future where biodiversity is restored and maintained to sustain healthy, resilient Filipino communities while delivering benefits to all. The post-2020 GBF must ensure clear linkages to national policy mechanisms and implementation that recognize the intersections between climate change, biodiversity, and sustainable development.

On conservation, we have planted and maintained over a million hectares of degraded forestlands, while more potential protected areas have been identified to bring us closer to our development goals and 30 by 30 targets. These areas include scientifically determined ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) and we regard these efforts as a source of nature-based solutions to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

On sustainable use, ecotourism jobs have more than doubled in the last five years, promoting practices, products and services that enhance biodiversity. Regulations for Mainstreaming Biodiversity-Friendly Agricultural Practices and Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems, have likewise been implemented.

Our high endemism and rate of species discovery, drive our will to strengthen the Nagoya Protocol’s implementation to complement practical bilateral and multilateral benefit-sharing mechanisms for the utilization of genetic resources, associated traditional knowledge and Digital Sequence Information (DSI).

Despite these efforts, much remains to be done across all the land and seascapes to ensure the balance between advancing human development and protecting biodiversity.

On means and tools of implementation, recent estimates show a more three-fold increase in public expenditure for biodiversity, with agrobiodiversity expenditures increasing 9-fold. However, these estimate likewise indicate at least a Php 14 billion annual biodiversity funding gap exists, particularly for protection and restoration. We expect this gap to remain deeply significant, if not larger than previously determined.

We intend to achieve our highest goals while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth, and the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. Development is not sustainable if the vulnerable are left behind.

Call for support

Our President has said that “the preservation of the environment is the preservation of life.”

Mindful of our common but differentiated responsibilities, we join the call for the fulfillment of commitments, specifically for the establishment of a global biodiversity fund that will mobilize resources for biodiversity. We are grateful for the support of our ASEAN neighbors, including the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity, and other bilateral, regional and global partners, for capacity building, scientific cooperation, and technology transfer that enables 1) ecosystem risk assessment, 2) the creation of a geospatial database of biodiversity resources and, 3) the establishing of the natural capital accounting system, 4) quantifying loss and damage from climate change, and, 5) measures and safeguards to ensure equitable benefit-sharing from traditional knowledge and genetic resources.

We hold sacred our stewardship of one of the world’s most megadiverse countries and one that hosts the center of the center of global marine biodiversity. We are, however, compelled to address the intersecting crises of biodiversity loss, climate change and inclusive to achieve resilient, and sustainable development. We will therefore invest in urgent and transformative change and one day hope to host a CBD CoP in Manila.

Our vision of living in harmony with nature and building a shared future for all life on earth can only be realized through common values, concerted efforts, and the sustained commitment of all. We must now look beyond restoration, and together work towards investing in the regeneration of life on land and below water to achieve a nature-positive world.