

City Enabling Environment on Environmental and Climate Governance (CEE-ECG) in Philippines

Executive Summary





About the Urban-Act Project

The Integrated Urban Climate Action for Low-Carbon and Resilient Cities (Urban-Act) is a regional project funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) over the period April 2022 to December 2027. This regional project aims to support the transformation towards low-carbon and resilient urban development in Asia and the Pacific while contributing to countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Urban-Act is implemented in five pilot countries (China, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand). Regional partners of Urban-Act Project are the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG ASPAC), the TU Dortmund and the University of Stuttgart, as well as national consortium partners in each of the five (5) partner countries.

What is the CEE-ECG?

The City Enabling Environment on Environmental and Climate Governance (CEE-ECG) is an attempt to understand which “enablers” and “actors” underpin the transformation of 21st-century cities and thereby attenuate, drive, or shape challenges to implement climate action in cities today. The ‘enablers’ that the assessment examines are ‘core enablers’ – policies, law, institutions, governance systems, fiscal autonomy, and levels of public engagement that hamper or unleash urbanisation’s potential for climate action. It assesses the “de jure” – national legislation and policies – that allow local governments to benchmark themselves against the minimum standards required for cities and local governments to contribute significantly to global climate action efforts. This assessment uses a country perspective of analysis to deliver a significant contextual review of the function of local governments. However, a national-wide overview is needed because their performance depends mainly on the country’s nature. This document serves as both a benchmark and a guide for improving urban climate governance, ensuring that cities are better equipped to contribute to national and global climate goals at five Urban-Act pilot countries.

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DISCLAIMERS

This CEE-ECG is a preliminary result used as the baseline for the Urban-Act project that highlights key areas of focus including legal and regulatory frameworks, governance and policy support, bureaucratic capacity, climate financing, and public participation. The final assessment will be finalised by the end of the Urban-Act project implementation, and it is open to receive/gather feedback from various stakeholders.

Environmental and Climate Change Governance

The Philippines has established a comprehensive environmental and climate change governance framework grounded in its democratic political structure. The 2009 Climate Change Act (Republic Act 9729) as was the cornerstone of the country's climate policy, mandating the integration of climate change considerations into national and local governance. This act led to the creation of the Climate Change Commission (CCC), which was responsible for formulating policies and coordinating government programmes related to climate change. The CCC developed the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change (NFSCC) and the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP), which set time-bound targets for climate adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk reduction. The Philippines has also demonstrated its commitment to international climate agreements, such as the Paris Agreement, by submitting its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the United Nations in 2021. Several government agencies, including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Energy (DOE), collaborate to implement climate policies, ensuring a multi-faceted approach to climate governance.

Political Structure and Organisation

The Philippines operates under a presidential system with a clear separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The President, elected for a single six-year term, serves as both the head of state and government, overseeing the implementation of national policies. The bicameral Congress, composed of the Senate and the House of Representatives, plays a crucial role in shaping legislation, including climate-related laws. The independent judiciary, led by the Supreme Court, ensures the rule of law. The Philippines also has a robust local government system, with the smallest administrative unit being the barangay. Climate and environmental governance are primarily overseen by the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and supported by other agencies such as DENR, DOE, and the Department of Agriculture (DA). The CCC leads the country's efforts in climate change adaptation and mitigation, while interagency coordination is facilitated by the Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation, and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR).

Local Government and Decentralisation System

The Philippines' decentralised governance system empowers local government units (LGUs) to take significant responsibility for addressing climate change. The Climate Change Act of 2009 (RA 9729), along with its amendment in 2012 (RA 10174), strengthened the role of LGUs in climate action. LGUs need to formulate Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs) that integrate climate adaptation and mitigation into local development plans. The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Local Government Academy (LGA) provide guidelines and support for LGUs in this process. These guidelines cover scenario planning, data collection, and integrating climate considerations into broader local planning efforts. The LCCAPs are designed to align with the Philippines' commitments under the Paris Agreement, ensuring that local actions contribute to national and global climate goals. The decentralised system allows LGUs to tailor their climate actions to local needs while benefiting from national-level support and guidance.

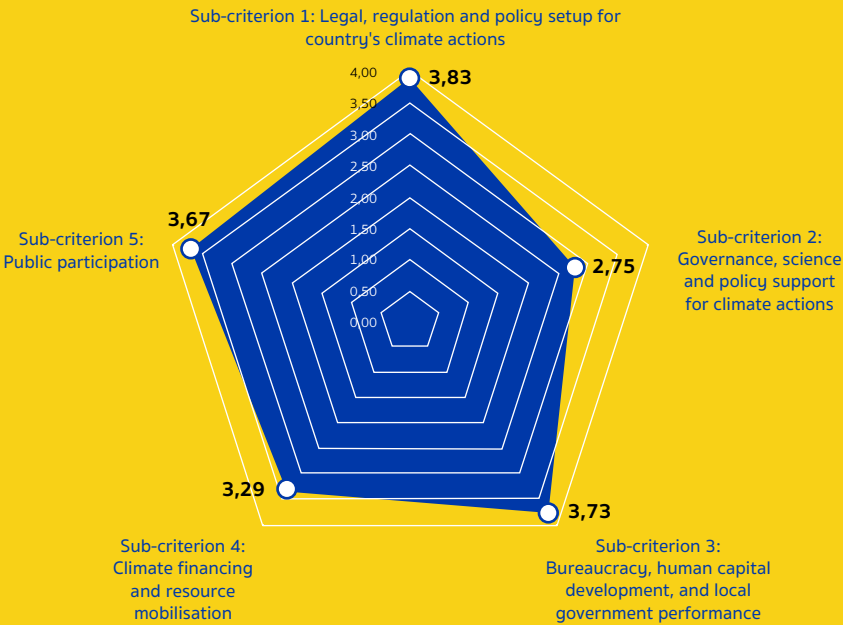
Coordination Mechanism between State and Non-Governmental Actors

The Philippines has established a comprehensive coordination mechanism involving state and non-governmental actors in its climate action efforts. The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) were developed through an inclusive process that involved various stakeholders, including local governments, civil society, and the private sector. The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Inter-Agency Committee on Climate Change (IACCC) oversee the coordination of climate policies across government agencies. The CCC, chaired by the Secretary of Finance, includes an advisory panel with NGO representation and regularly engages with non-governmental organisations for consultations. The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) also critically aligns climate policies with the national development agenda. Through the NDC Partnership, NEDA and the CCC secured funding for economic modelling to inform the NDC, ensuring that climate action is integrated into broader socioeconomic planning. This collaborative approach helps to strengthen the country's climate resilience by leveraging the expertise and resources of a wide range of stakeholders.

The Results of CEE-ECG in Philippines

The Philippines’ CEE-ECG ranking reflects a strong overall performance, with an average score of 3.46 out of 4, indicating robust climate governance. The country excels in the legal, regulatory, and policy framework for climate action, achieving a high score of 3.83 in this area, demonstrating its commitment to creating a solid foundation for climate initiatives. However, the assessment highlights a notable weakness in bureaucracy, human resource development, and local government performance, where the score is 2.75. This suggests that while the Philippines has made significant strides in establishing climate policies, there are challenges in the implementation and capacity-building at the local government level that need to be addressed to enhance overall climate governance.

CEE-ECG Score of Philippines by Sub-Criteria



Sub-criterion 1: Legal, regulation and policy setup for country’s climate actions

The Philippines has made considerable strides in aligning its national legislation with international climate commitments. The country ratified the Paris Agreement on March 6, 2017, and has integrated the Sendai Framework into its disaster risk management system through Republic Act No. 10121. The conservation of biodiversity is also addressed under Republic Act No. 9147, which governs the protection of wildlife resources. In terms of climate change documentation, the Philippines submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UNFCCC on April 15, 2021, and developed the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change 2010-2022. This framework emphasises the critical role of local governments in climate action, supported

by the development of Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs). Climate change is also prioritised in the Philippines Development Plan 2017-2023, which recognises the strategic importance of addressing climate issues at both the national and local levels. The country has also established a comprehensive National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) for 2011-2028, addressing the challenges posed by global climate change. Additionally, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) for 2015-2028 highlights the relationship between biodiversity and climate change, underscoring the importance of integrating biodiversity considerations into regional planning.

<p>1.1</p> <p>The Philippines has ratified the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework into Republic Act No. 10121, and CBD through Republic Act No. 9147.</p>	<p>1.2</p> <p>The Philippines' climate documents, including its NDC, National Framework Strategy on Climate Change, and national climate action plan, emphasise the crucial role of local governments in climate action, with guidelines provided to support LGUs in developing Local Climate Change Action Plans.</p>	<p>1.3</p> <p>The Philippines has prioritised climate change in its national planning through Development Plan 2017-2023 acknowledges climate change as a strategic issue and underscores the importance of the role of local governments in climate action.</p>
<p>1.4</p> <p>Indonesia's Law 33/2004 provides a regulatory framework for fiscal decentralisation, allowing local governments to use the Special Allocation Fund (DAK) for climate actions that align with national priorities, particularly for developing or improving public service infrastructure.</p>	<p>1.5</p> <p>The Philippines has designed a comprehensive National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) for 2011-2028, recognising the climate change challenge and emphasising the role of local governments.</p>	<p>1.6</p> <p>The Philippines meets biodiversity requirements with a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, emphasising the link between biodiversity and climate change and the role of local governments in regional planning.</p>

Sub-criterion 2: Governance, science and policy support for climate actions

The Philippines has partially met the requirements for climate action reporting, with the National Climate Change Action Plan for 2011-2016 and the National Framework Strategy for Climate Change 2010-2022 outlining mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. While the country has centralised databases for climate change information, there is a need for more robust digital reporting systems and the dissemination of climate-related data at the local level. The Climate Change Commission (CCC), the primary policy-making body, plays a crucial role in coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating climate action across

the country. Supported by the Climate Change Advisory Council and the National Technical Expert Panel, the CCC integrates scientific expertise into policy development. However, there is a lack of legal mechanisms to establish multi-stakeholder collaborations at the local level for climate, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and biodiversity action planning. Additionally, the Philippines has indicated a need for incentives to enhance market mechanisms that would allow local governments to engage businesses in climate action initiatives.

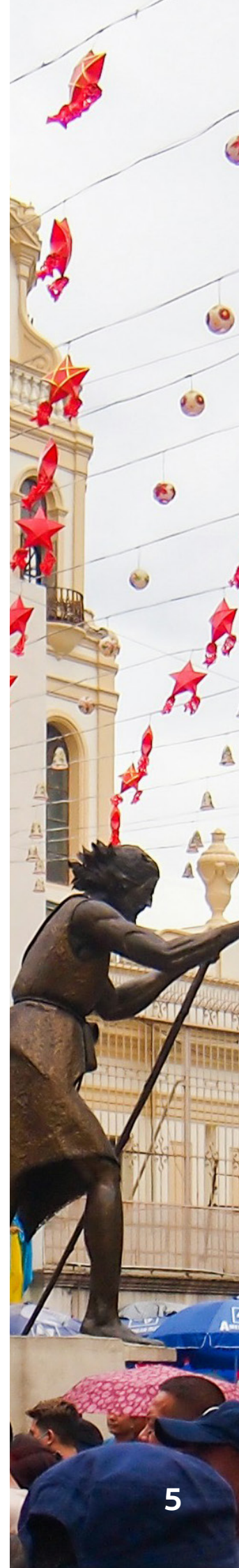
2.1 - 2.2 The Philippines partially meets climate action reporting requirements with national reports and frameworks but lacks clear evidence of local government involvement in climate change risk assessments.	2.3 - 2.6 The Philippines has a national climate change database but no indications in digital reporting system, a centralised mechanism, and the ability to disseminate climate data at the local level for NDC and NAP implementation.	2.7.2.9 The Philippines excels in research coordination on climate change through the CCC, the government's main body for overseeing climate programs and action plans.	2.10 - 2.13 The Philippines' national climate strategy involves multiple government bodies and stakeholders through the CCC, but local governments lack a legal basis for multi-stakeholder scientific collaboration in climate planning and an incentive mechanism to access business services for climate action.
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Sub-criterion 3: Bureaucracy, human capital development, and local government performance

The Philippines has established a dedicated government body, the Climate Change Commission (CCC), which operates under the Office of the President and coordinates the nation's climate policies. However, there is no national law that enables local governments to create specialised agencies for climate action. The League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP) provides a platform for collaboration among cities to address climate change, however there is no comprehensive framework for mobilising citizen participation in local climate

initiatives. The National Framework Strategy on Climate Change 2010-2022 outlines institutional strengthening mechanisms for climate action, but specifics on vertical and horizontal integration within the bureaucracy remain unclear. The Philippines has made progress in implementing electronic governance for climate action, with the passage of House Bill No. 7327, but further integration and development are needed to fully utilise these digital tools at the local level.

3.1-3.3 The Philippines' Climate Change Commission, under the Office of the President, is the sole government body responsible for climate change policy, with no national law allowing local governments to create their own specialized climate agencies.	3.4 - 3.5 The Philippines' League of Cities (LCP) is a government-supported multi-stakeholder network for climate action, but lacks a comprehensive framework to help local governments mobilize citizens for climate initiatives.	3.6 - 3.8 The Philippines' National Framework Strategy on Climate Change includes institutional strengthening for local governance, but lacks details on integration within the bureaucracy, while e-governance for climate action has been fully implemented through House Bill No. 7327.
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Sub-criterion 4: Climate financing and resource mobilisation

The Philippines has established a national budget allocation for climate action through Law No. 10174 of 2012, which created the People's Survival Fund (PSF) to support local governments and community organisations in enhancing resilience to climate change. This fund also serves as a mechanism for private financing of climate initiatives. However, there is limited evidence of security mechanisms and incentives at the local level to manage climate funding risks. The CCC is responsible for developing and coordinating climate change policies and ensuring that local governments align their actions with national plans. The introduction of Climate Change

Expenditure Tagging (CCET) at both national and local levels provides a system for tracking climate-related expenditures, although there is no dedicated research fund for climate issues. The Philippines has authorised local governments to implement various fiscal measures for climate action, detailed in Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs). These plans outline strategies for integrating climate change into local development and investment programs. The implementation of budget labelling through Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 2013-01 further supports the tracking of climate-specific revenue and expenditures within the national budget.

<p>4.1</p> <p>The Philippines' national budget for climate action (Indicator 4.1) on No 10174 of 2012. This Law establishes the People's Survival Fund (PSF) to address climate change issues.</p>	<p>4.2</p> <p>In the Philippines, local government climate initiatives are funded through the People's Survival Fund, which supports long-term community and ecosystem resilience to climate change.</p>	<p>4.3</p> <p>Philippines has established mechanisms for private funding of climate initiatives on national levels.</p>
<p>4.4</p> <p>The Philippines has not been yet implemented security mechanisms and incentives to manage climate funding risks at the local level.</p>	<p>4.5</p> <p>The CCC is tasked with policy development and oversight of climate programs, while local governments, as mandated by RA 9729, are responsible for creating and implementing climate action plans in alignment with national frameworks.</p>	<p>4.6 & 4.8</p> <p>Republic Act No. 10174 established the People's Survival Fund for LGU climate adaptation projects, while Joint Memorandum Circulars from DBM, CCC, and DILG implement Climate Change Expenditure Tagging to track and improve climate program effectiveness.</p>
<p>4.7</p> <p>There is no dedicated research fund for climate issues.</p>	<p>4.9</p> <p>LGUs lack an accountability mechanism to report resource use and contributions to initiatives like NDCs and NAPs.</p>	<p>4.10</p> <p>The Philippines allows local governments to implement fiscal measures for climate action through the Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP) and tracks climate-related expenditures via budget labelling, guided by Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2013-01.</p>

Sub-criterion 5: Public participation

The Philippines currently lacks national regulations explicitly requiring public participation in climate action governance, making it unclear whether local governments are mandated to integrate such participation into their climate policies. However, Republic Act No. 10174, which established the People's Survival Fund, does recognise the importance of incorporating gender perspectives into climate actions. The country also has legislation, such as Republic Act No. 10121, that emphasises the role of vulnerable communities in disaster risk reduction, although it does not specify the responsibilities of

local governments in this regard. Climate education and public awareness are addressed through the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, which integrates climate change concepts into the K-12 curriculum. The Philippines also maintains a National Integrated Climate Change Database and Information Exchange System, which provides public access to climate adaptation and disaster risk maps, though the system is not yet fully integrated, and there are no incentives for local governments to maintain the database.

<p>5.1</p> <p>The Philippines has no national regulations or mechanisms requiring local governments to include public participation in climate action governance.</p>	<p>5.2</p> <p>The government acknowledges the significance of a gender perspective in climate action in Republic Act No. 10174. It mandates local governments to integrate gender perspectives into climate actions.</p>	<p>5.3</p> <p>The Philippines' Republic Act No. 10121 emphasises supporting vulnerable communities in disaster risk reduction & management. While it mandates the development and empowerment of these groups to better face disasters (Indicator 5.3), it does not clearly define the role of local governments in this effort.</p>
<p>5.4</p> <p>The Philippines addresses climate education through Republic Act No. 9729, the Climate Change Act 2009. The K-12 Act (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013) strengthens this by integrating climate change concepts into the curriculum across all grade levels, from elementary to high school (Indicator 5.4).</p>	<p>5.5</p> <p>The Philippines has a National Integrated Climate Change Database & Information Exchange System with publicly accessible maps on climate adaptation and disaster risks. However, these systems are not well-integrated, and local governments lack incentives to maintain the database.</p>	

Recommended Actions



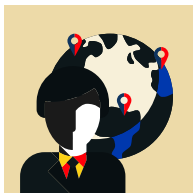
Strengthen local government capacity: While the Philippines has a decentralised system and a dedicated climate change agency, local governments need more capacity and resources to implement climate policies effectively. The central government should provide more financial and technical support to LGUs and ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to develop and implement LCCAPs.



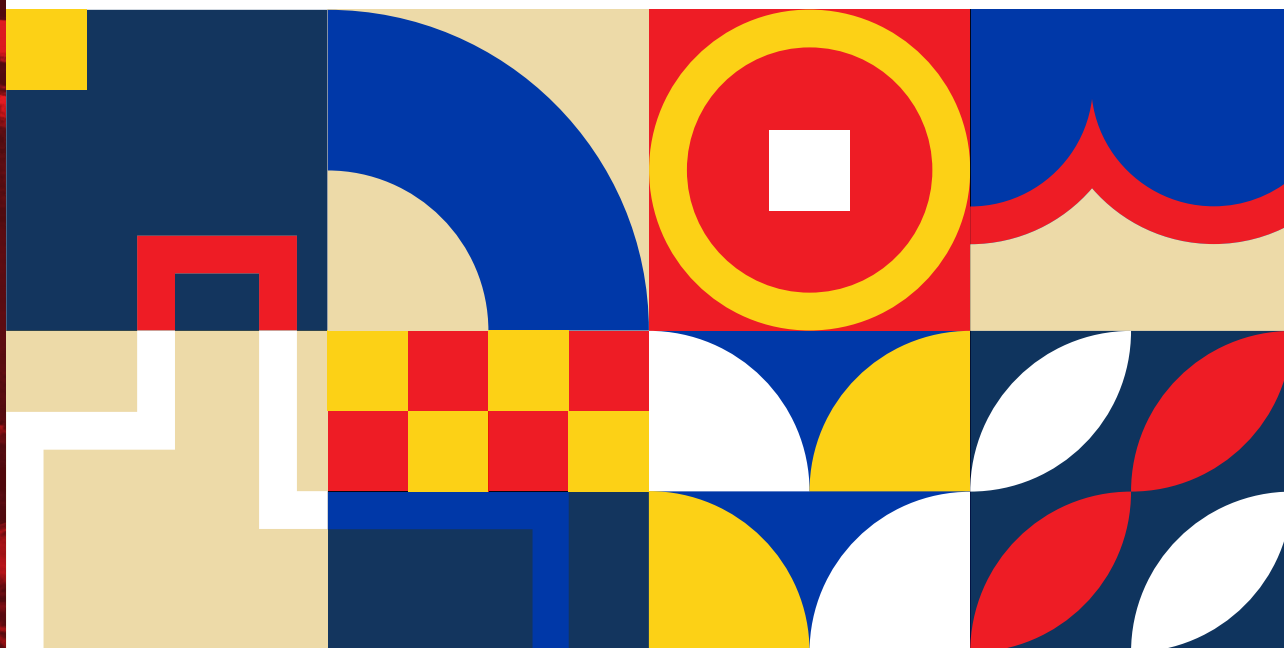
Improve monitoring and evaluation at the local level: While the Philippines has a system for monitoring and evaluating climate action at the national level, more robust mechanisms are needed locally. This would help identify gaps and areas for improvement and ensure that LCCAPs are being implemented effectively.



Enhance data management and integration: While the Philippines has a national database for climate change information, there is room for improvement in data management and integration, particularly at the local level. Developing a more comprehensive and user-friendly platform for data sharing and analysis would enhance transparency and facilitate evidence-based decision-making.



Develop a framework for public participation: The Philippines needs a clear framework for public participation in climate action governance. This would ensure that all stakeholders' voices are heard and policies are developed and implemented in an inclusive and participatory manner.





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