

**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
OF THE PHILIPPINES:**

NATIONAL INQUIRY

on the

Impact of Climate Change

on the

Human Rights of the Filipino People

and the

Responsibility therefor

of the

“Carbon Majors”



AN OVERVIEW OF THE PETITION AND THE NATIONAL INQUIRY

The Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (CHRP) is an independent National Human Rights Institution, created under the Philippine Constitution. The Commission is mandated to investigate, motu proprio or upon the filing of a complaint, all forms of violations of human rights of the Filipino people.

The Commission is also mandated to monitor compliance by the government with its domestic and international human rights obligations, such as those involving treaties, conventions, and customary international law.

The Philippines is a signatory to the following conventions, among others:

1. The Paris Agreement
2. The Kyoto Protocol
3. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
4. The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

THE PETITION

A petition has been filed before the Commission, praying for an investigation on the responsibility of the so-called private “Carbon Majors” for allegedly contributing to climate change, which, it is further asserted, is impacting the human rights of the Filipino people.

The petitioners seek to establish how climate change is related to the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters and how human rights are affected by it.

The case is novel in its attempt to haul the respondent “carbon majors” in one “global petition” involving human rights. It seeks to promote, as well, the notion that businesses have an obligation to respect human rights, as enunciated under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

THE CONDUCT OF A NATIONAL INQUIRY

For the first time, indeed, a Petition casting the issue of climate change within the framework of human rights has been filed with a National Human Rights Institution.



The Commission, accepting the petition in accordance with its general mandate to **uphold the human rights** of all Filipinos and, towards this end, to **investigate and monitor** all matters concerning the human rights of the Filipino people, has launched an inquiry, entitled: *“National Inquiry on the Impact of Climate Change on the Rights of the Filipino People and the Responsibility therefor of the “Carbon Majors.”*

By its very nature, climate change is not a localized issue or phenomenon. It is experienced across borders in varying degrees by people from all backgrounds.

In conducting this inquiry, the Commission is fully cognizant of the principle of territoriality in regard to the exercise of jurisdiction over any state or party and does not attempt to disregard the same. It rather merely seeks to inquire if climate change impacts human rights and, if so, whether the “carbon majors” (and other duty bearers) have a responsibility therefor.

Key stakeholders, including those from other territorial jurisdictions, have been encouraged to participate in this process. The method of inquiry shall be more dialogic, rather than adversarial, without, however, sacrificing due process of law. The inquiry, it is hoped, would result in the improvement and/or development of measures to further protect and promote human rights in this era of climate change.

