

STATEMENT

Delivered by
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Minister

for the
International Day of Forests
“Forests and Energy”

Tuesday, 21 March 2017, 10:00 am -1:00 pm
Economic and Social Council Chamber, UNHQ, New York

Thank you Chair and we thank the panelists for their insights on gender and the role of women and on emerging technologies on biomass and alternative fuels

52.7% or more than half of the Philippines’ total land area is classified as “forest land. And as such we value the celebration of the International Day of Forests.

As source of fuel wood, charcoal, biomass and watersheds for hydropower generation, forests play a vital role in providing sustainable energy and in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

This forest ecosystem of goods and services highlights the interlinkages of Goals 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all) and 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss) as well as of the Paris Agreement.

In this vein, the Philippines has revised its 25-year Master Plan for Forestry development to strengthen resilience of forest ecosystems and communities to climate change; effectively respond to demands for forest ecosystems goods and services and promote responsive governance.

Fuel wood gathering and charcoal making are major sources of income for our indigenous and local communities. We recognize that increased demand for fuel wood and charcoal threatens natural forests. To address this, the Plan targets development of fuel wood plantations of about 125,683 hectares for the period 2017-2022 and 158,977 hectares for the period 2023-2028.

Priority watersheds will also be protected and rehabilitated to ensure continuous supply of water for irrigation, energy and domestic and industrial uses. About 102,000 hectares are targeted to be reforested in existing watersheds for the periods 2017-2022 and 2023-2028.

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Allocated speaking time: 3 minutes

The projected net carbon benefit of implementing these and other forest protection and rehabilitation or plantation development activities would be equivalent to 302,278,878 tons of carbon.

Finally, we assure you of the Philippines' continuing commitment to the protection of forests, and to the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and its six (6) Global Forest Goals.

Thank you, Mr. Chair and we congratulate you on this celebration.