

Headline: Study: Philippines among countries most affected by climate change

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The Philippines is one of the countries that suffer the most from extreme weather events, which exact a high death toll and economic losses, a study by an international think tank said.

Analyzing data from 1991 to 2010, Germanwatch, a climate and development organization, said the Philippines ranked 10th among countries when it came to exposure and responding to severe weather caused by climate change.

All the countries identified to be most affected in the past two decades were developing countries, the study noted. Aside from the Philippines, these were Bangladesh, Burma (Myanmar), Honduras, Nicaragua, Haiti, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, Pakistan and North Korea.

"This year's analysis underlines that less developed countries are generally more affected than industrialized countries, according to the Climate Risk Index. With regard to future climate change, the Climate Risk Index can serve as a warning signal indicating past vulnerability which may further increase in regions where extreme events will become more frequent or more severe through climate change," the report said.

The Philippines, a country of about 94 million, sits on the earthquake-prone Ring of Fire. It is also on the path of typhoons that form in the western Pacific. The country is visited by about 20 storms every year.

During the observation period, the Philippines had the biggest number of meteorological events recorded at 270. Bangladesh trailed behind at 251 weather events.

The death toll from various weather-related disasters in the Philippines reach an average of 801 deaths per year. For every 100,000 Filipinos, 1.03 is killed by a meteorological disaster, according to the Germanwatch report.

Severe weather catastrophes also led to economic losses for the country. The report said the Philippines lost \$660 million every year from the disasters.

The Germanwatch study was released a week before world leaders conduct another round of talks under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UN FCCC) in Durban, South Africa.

The UN FCCC seeks to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2050 from 1990 levels to stop the planet from heating up. Scientists said that a 2-degree-Celsius increase in global temperatures would cause extreme weather events that would be disastrous to many countries.

The Durban summit also aims to have an agreement post-Kyoto Protocol and establish a Green Climate Fund for countries vulnerable to climate change.

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