

Keyword: global-warming

Headline: Healthy climate good economics

Byline: Philippine Daily Inquirer

Published Date: 03:43 AM October 17, 2011

Section: opinion

Word Count: 470

Content:

The recent typhoons that wrought havoc on our beautiful country are testament enough that global warming and climate change know no boundaries.

The typhoons caused death and destruction, flooded towns and cities, damaged agricultural lands, degraded vital ecosystems and endangered more species, and ultimately displaced people and robbed them of livelihoods.

By now we should know: No amount of adaptation can replace a life, restore an ecosystem, or repair a forest.

How can the government help the people affected? How can the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change assist in bringing back the lives lost and the communities devastated?

Is there any way to stop the record heat that has plagued Europe or the fires that flared in the United States?

No amount of adaptation funding can undo the damage. Yet we allow full-scale operations in mining and extraction that will benefit, certainly not the planet, but only a few.

The collapse of the economic order shows that the old development model has only succeeded in destroying our ecology and natural capital and increasing poverty.

The United States has over 46 million people under the poverty line and over 14 million people without jobs. Europe is on the verge of collapse as Greece, Italy and Spain, among other countries, face austerity measures that will cause their citizens to suffer. How long will they last?

The "Arab Spring" has affected North Africa and is expected to spread further. China has reported a bubble in the property sector. Inflation has reached record highs in India, China and the rest of the world economy.

As I write this, Wall Street is being occupied by people disgusted at how the world economy is being handled. It is just a matter of time before social unrest spreads and the battle for resources begins.

Have we not learned from the past? From Easter Island and the empires that became extinct due to ecological imbalances? We need to act now and tell our leaders to mitigate and reduce greenhouse gases, to stop REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) and the trading of carbon.

We need to restore the world's ecosystems. We need to protect our air and water, our forests, seas and biodiversity, to ensure food for us and the future generations.

It cannot be overstated: A healthy environment ensures good economics.

We need to change our thinking. We need to stop mining and extraction and start protecting our natural capital. We need to stop crimes against nature and the planet.

We need a new development model that is ecologically based—or else.

—ANTONIO M. CLAPAROLS,

president,

Ecological Society of the Philippines,

53 Tamarind Road,

Subscribe to our daily newsletter

By providing an email address. I agree to the Terms of Use and acknowledge that I have read the Privacy Policy.

Forbes Park, Makati City