

Headline: Climate change and people power

Byline: Desiree Llanos Dee

Published Date: 05:12 AM February 13, 2018

Section: opinion

Word Count: 4527

Content:

Climate change affects everyone on the planet, yet those least responsible bear the brunt of the consequences. But people and communities worldwide who are at most risk and living on the frontline of climate change are now rising to assert their right to a stable climate and a healthy environment.

Those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, caused by modern society's addiction to fossil fuels, refuse to stand idly while the carbon polluters continue to use their power over governments and consumers to delay the end of the fossil fuel age. People are finding various ways, including legal means, to demand that corporations be held to account for fueling the climate crisis, and that governments fulfill their duty to protect the lives and livelihoods of citizens.

The movement is strong and diverse, and includes groups of senior women in Switzerland; youth groups in the United States, Norway, Portugal and Colombia; fishing, farming and coastal communities in the Philippines; a citizen group in the Netherlands; and individuals from Peru, New Zealand and Pakistan.

This tells us what actually brings us together; who is at risk and who is responsible; what is at stake, what people love and fight for, and what they strive to protect. It tells us that people, when united, can overcome the power of corporations and government inaction in the fight for a better world. It reminds people of their own power.

On Feb. 14, the Day of Love, Greenpeace's Rainbow Warrior will sail into Manila in the name of climate justice. She will connect people from the Philippines with other communities worldwide who are fighting for a stable climate. She will collect and connect their stories from Manila to Batangas, to Guimaras and Tacloban, and find stories yet untold.

As the Rainbow Warrior leaves our shores, the eyes of the world should be on the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) on March 26-27, where something unprecedented and of crucial importance to everyone will begin. For the first time anywhere in the world, a national human rights institution will begin the public-hearings phase of its inquiry into the contribution of certain companies to climate-related human rights harms driven by their business of extracting and marketing fossil fuels.

In 2015, representatives of communities in the Philippines, one of the countries most at risk from the impacts of climate change, took action to give themselves and other communities around the world the chance for a better future. Fishers from Alabat, communities living in the shadow of the Bataan coal power plant, survivors of Super typhoon "Yolanda," and civil society groups, including Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines, asked the CHR to investigate the oil, coal, gas and cement firms responsible for a large share of industrial carbon emissions.

The CHR's inquiry into the big carbon polluters will continue until the end of 2018, with hearings in Europe and the United States as well. This will give the companies an opportunity to engage with the CHR and prove to people affected by climate change worldwide that they are committed to being part of the solution.

By early 2019, Commissioner Roberto Cadiz, head of the CHR investigation, expects to be able to issue recommendations on how the companies in question could ease the human rights impacts of their future operations. Others, like responsible investors, can help by putting pressure on them to comply.

As people all over the world confront greed-driven corporations and negligent governments, other shifts are also taking place to hasten the end of the fossil-fuel age. Banks and financial institutions are diverting billions of dollars from fossil-fuel investments. US cities, including New York, San Francisco, and Oakland, as well as Paris are either suing fossil-fuel firms for climate adaptation costs, or looking into the option.

You are invited to sail with the Rainbow Warrior as it connects people demanding climate justice. You can join the growing global movement to reclaim our right to a stable climate and healthy environment and protect our right to clean air and water, safe food, sustainable livelihoods, healthy oceans, and life itself.

Desiree Llanos Dee is the climate justice campaigner of Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines. For information on the Rainbow Warrior's port stops, visit [www.greenpeace.org.ph/balangaw](http://www.greenpeace.org.ph/balangaw).

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