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Headline: Asean told: Address climate change

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PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte renewed his call to neighboring countries to take swift action to address climate change "anchored on the principles of justice and fairness" during his recent intervention at the just concluded China-Asean Special Summit.

Pointing to the 26th Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), the President underscored that developing coastal states such as the Philippines "contribute the least to global warming," [but] they "bear the brunt of the adverse effects of climate change."

"The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties or COP26 has just wrapped up. We hope that urgent climate action anchored on the principles of justice and fairness will follow suit," Duterte said during his intervention.

"Our peoples depend on the oceans and seas for livelihood. Let us protect and preserve the biodiversity and the marine environment through sustained cooperation. This includes support for the work of the Asean Center for Biodiversity hosted by the Philippines," he added.

This was not the first time the President called for a unified action to address climate change.

At the 76th United Nations General Assembly last September, Duterte urged "rich nations" to "deliver on their financial pledges to address the impacts of climate change in developing countries."

According to him, it is a "moral obligation that cannot be avoided" by powerhouse countries and that they should follow up on their promise to extend climate financing.

He cited the cost to transition to a green economy is too high for developing countries to afford technology transfer and capacity-building in the developing world.

Prior to COP26 last October, Duterte noted that the Philippines is one of the more than 40 countries at COP26 that have committed to shift away from the use of coal, tagged as the world's dirtiest fossil fuel.

At the 16th East Asia Summit joined by the United States and Japan during the 38th and 39th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summits and Related Summits, also held last month, the President called for "climate justice" for the country.

The Philippines, he said, is "battered by extreme weather events like typhoons that are increasing in frequency and intensity" that affect livelihoods, claim lives and destroy infrastructure.

"We adapt. We try to build back better, only to be hit by another big disaster," he added.