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Headline: CCC seeks stronger climate education

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The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is seeking increased public-private cooperation to strengthen environmental and climate change awareness and education nationwide.

Emmanuel de Guzman, CCC vice chairman and executive director, said that type of cooperation is necessary for the country pursue sustainable development and build resilience to threats like climate change and the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic.

“Now, more than ever, we must heed science and invest more in public awareness and education on greener, more environment-friendly and more sustainable ways of living,” he said in his message for the 2020 National Environmental Awareness Month (NEAM) this November.

Republic Act 9512 or the “National Environmental Awareness and Education Act of 2008” set November of every year as NEAM.

Covid-19, he said, is so far the strongest warning “we must reform the ways we live and ways we regard our environment.”

“We simply cannot afford a return to business as usual,” de Guzman added.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said available evidence so far indicate the virus causing Covid-19 has a zoonotic source or is of animal origin.

De Guzman also called for full implementation of RA 9512 and RA 9729, or the “Climate Change Act of 2009,” to educate people and inspire public action for the environment and climate.

He noted that RA 9512 provides the framework for interagency and multisectoral cooperation on integrating environmental education school curricula in all levels.

RA 9729, on the other hand, requires inclusion of basic climate change concepts in the country’s primary and secondary education curricula, de Guzman added.

He said full implementation of both laws “has never been this critical” given extent of environmental degradation nationwide, climate change’s threats and danger of Covid-19.

Earlier, de Guzman warned the risks of climate change and pandemics escalate among the country’s most vulnerable and marginalized sectors.

Such risks are particularly high in crowded urban informal settlements, he added.