

Headline: Pinoy scientists support March for Science in US

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We in Agham-Advocates of Science and Technology for the People support the March for Science of the vanguards of science and technology in the United States.

Less than a week in office, US President Donald Trump has intensified his anti-science and anti-people moves. His efforts to cover up scientific truths about climate change and related issues directly affect not only Americans but all peoples around the world as well.

Inspired by the Women's March last Jan. 20, scientists in America and around the world are set to conduct similar actions to counter Trump's alarming denunciations of proven scientific facts—such as climate change—as mere hoaxes.

On the same day as the inauguration of Trump, a prominent climate change denier, the White House website's page on climate change disappeared and was replaced by a page titled "An America First Energy Plan" that is keen on "eliminating harmful and unnecessary policies such as the Climate Action Plan."

His baseless criticism of the Paris Agreement and vow to pull out of the treaty in his first 100 days are manifestations of his denial of the United States' historical accountability as the largest carbon emitter in the world. His nominee for state secretary, Rex Tillerson, is the chief executive of the oil and gas company Exxon Mobil, a big corporate carbon emitter of up to 3.22 percent of global emissions from 1751 to 2010.

Trump has also advanced controversial projects such as the Keystone XL and Dakota Access Pipeline, projects that sparked widespread resistance due to their environmental risks and possible displacement of indigenous tribes.

To restrict scientific information from the general public, he reportedly issued a gag order to various government agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Health and Human Services, barring scientists from making public their research findings through news releases and social media sites. The EPA has also received a freeze order on all its grants and contracts—a move that could significantly disrupt the agency's core function of protecting human health and environment.

We believe that this orchestrated effort to silence the scientists is a move that will negatively impact the lives of millions of human beings, particularly members of vulnerable sectors who will not have access to essential information such as those needed for disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Trump's seeming bias for corporate profit will unleash an era of far more aggressive liberal policies that will favor destructive technology at the expense of people and the environment. His rejection of the truth about climate change and refusal to hold multinational corporations accountable for their historic carbon emissions, along with the endorsement of pollutive energy sources such as coal, will worsen the climate crisis. Already vulnerable countries such as the Philippines will become even more helpless in the face of disasters. Expect similar or worse disasters, such as those caused by Supertyphoon "Yolanda" (international name: Haiyan) in the Philippines and Hurricane Katrina in

the United States, in the near future.

We in Agham call on Filipino scientists to unite with their fellow scientists in the United States whose right to pursue scientific endeavours and responsibility to promulgate scientific knowledge are being curtailed.

We will hold propeople and proenvironment events here in the Philippines to coincide with the March for Science in Washington, DC. We must not allow Trump's violation of rights to trump the voices of the American scientists. We must express our utmost support to them by reechoing their demands of making science and technology serve the interest of the people.

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