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Headline: Legarda named climate change adaptation champ

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An international environment treaty has named Sen. Loren Legarda as a National Adaptation Plan (NAP) champion during the 23rd UN Climate Change Conference (COP23) in Bonn, Germany.

Legarda's designation as a NAP champion was the "first in the process" of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to promote resilience and facilitate alliances to climate change adaptation, said Youseff Nassef, director of the UNFCCC's adaptation committee.

"I am inspired by the designation of the UNFCCC as NAP champion. With this, I will work harder in building the Philippines' resilience through developing and financing adaptation projects," said Legarda, the head of the Philippine delegation to the COP23.

She pointed out that adaptation basically meant enhancing the country's resilience, policies, projects and programs against the impact of climate change.

Being the chair of the Senate committee on finance and, at the same time, chair of the committees on climate change and foreign relations was an advantage as such posts allowed her to put climate and environment provisions in the Philippines' General Appropriations Act, said Legarda.

"I am proud that we are able to make our national budget a climate budget with special and general provisions on adaptation, such as the establishment of multihazard early warning systems, rainwater harvesting, seed banks, rooftop gardens ... and practice drills for response and preparedness," she said.

The senator also announced her plan to host an Adaptation Summit in the country next year with fellow NAP champion Fekitamoeloa Katao 'Utoikamanu of Tonga as guest of honor.

The summit aims to showcase best practices in adaptation and launch a mentoring process for small vulnerable communities in the Philippines, said Legarda.

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