

**Harnessing Cities' Share in the Implementation of the  
Environment and Natural Resources' Component of the  
Philippines' Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)**

**CONCEPT NOTE**

Initial situation

The Philippines is among the Southeast Asian countries experiencing rapid economic growth and urbanization. Megacities in the ASEAN face severe urban challenges and are a major contributor of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Thus, the need to accelerate climate change initiatives in these big cities is imperative. In the first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submitted by the Philippines to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) last April 2021, the Philippines set a GHG emission reduction and avoidance of 75%. 2.71% of which will be unconditional, and 72.9% conditional.

As the strategic priorities identified in the NCCAP – namely, the Environmental and Ecological Stability, Human Security, Sustainable Energy, Climate-Smart Industries and Services, and Knowledge and Capacity Development – also fall under the sectoral development concerns of the CDP, Local Government Units (LGUs) are able to enhance their programming, project identification, investment programming and prioritization towards adaptation and mitigation. This complements the Climate Change Act with Memorandum Circular No. 2014-135 (or the Guidelines for the Formulation of the LCCAP, as released by the DILG. Section 3.3.5 of the Memorandum Circular) that strongly suggests LGUs to identify mitigation options to help reduce their carbon footprints and contribute to efforts in addressing climate change.

To successfully implement the NDCs, it is crucial for the international community to provide the necessary support, especially to local governments. Hence, the “Ambitious City Promises” (ACP) Project, was implemented in the Philippines in 2019 to 2021 by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability in cooperation with the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG), funded by the German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), through the International Climate Initiatives (IKI). The ACP supported selected local governments in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, to set their City Promise, in which cities established ambitious and overarching climate mitigation plans.

Description

The ACP Project supported major cities in the ASEAN to establish strong commitments characterized by concrete targets, enhanced multi-stakeholder engagement and integrated strategies. In the Philippines, cities play a crucial role in strategizing climate mitigation plans and several local governments have already completed their city-wide GHG inventories. Thus, the activities were customized based on the city's status, from capacity building on data collection to

pilot activities. The selected model city for this project was Pasig City, while satellite cities were the cities of Marikina and Paranaque.

### Methodology employed by the ACP Project

Development of the Pasig City Promises, together with other ASEAN Cities (Jakarta and Hanoi) were guided by the common formulation process that is flexible in order to adapt to local circumstances, from (a) setting up institutional structures (b) undertaking assessments and setting of baselines; (c) building capacities of the local government (d) stakeholder engagement (e) setting GHG reduction targets and identifying priority measures; (f) laying the foundation of implementation. The City Promise is described to have the following characteristics: ambitious GHG reduction targets, inclusive, integrated and cross-sectoral, actionable for all partners, and measurable and verifiable. ACP identified the seven (7) priority urban sectors, as shown in Figure 2, which will be revisited and reviewed if deemed appropriate to the context of a particular City during the replication process.

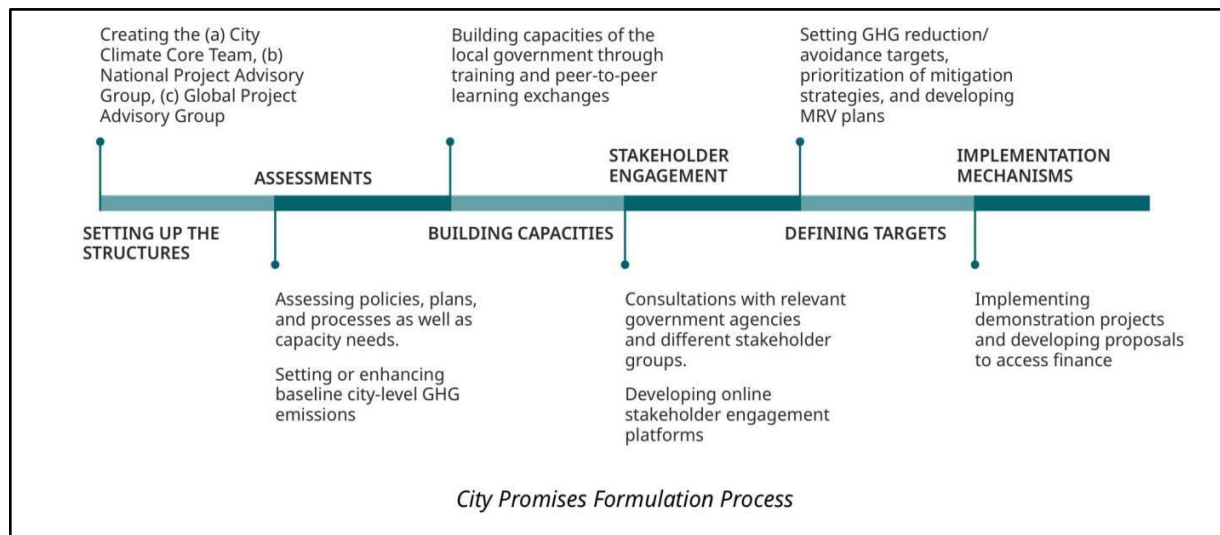


Figure 1. City Promises Formulation Process

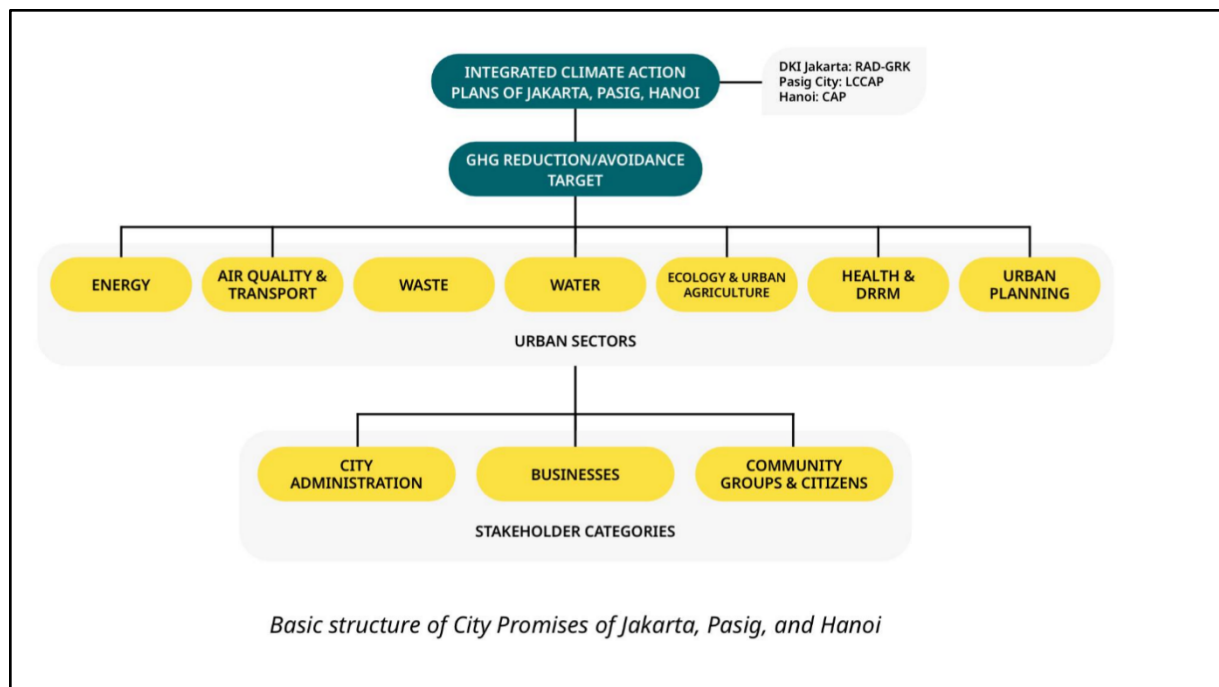


Figure 2. Basic structure of City Promises of Jakarta, Pasig, and Hanoi

### Major Outputs of the Project

1. Create a concrete climate action plan, called “City Promises” (i.e., Promise of Pasig) that set ambitious GHG emission reduction/avoidance targets and integrate community pledges;
2. Establish a platform (i.e., Pasig EcoPledge Platform) to collect pledges from key stakeholders including businesses and households;
3. Initiate implementation of the City Promise through two pilot demonstration projects (i.e., small-scale infrastructure project integrating green building solutions and behavioral change intervention through capacity building program and module development for the youth):
  - a. Infrastructure: Pasig REcharge! Pilot implementation of the Local Green Building Ordinance of Pasig City
  - b. Behavior Change Intervention: The #PromiseoftheYouth: Building the Capacities of Youth Advocates towards Peer-Inspired Local Climate Action
4. Sharing the City of Pasig Forest Park, an example of an urban green space (UGS).

One of the climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies identified for Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCs) is the establishment of urban green spaces (UGS). This will help address the urban heat island effect, which occurs when cities replace natural land cover with dense concentrations of pavement, buildings, and other surfaces that absorb and retain heat. This effect, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), increases energy costs (e.g., for air conditioning), air pollution levels, and heat-related illness and mortality. For that reason, included in this project is the development of a framework of action for the Philippines’ HUCs.

### Objectives:

- To share the outputs, methodologies and processes, experiences, and lessons learned from the implementation of the ACP Project to selected highly urbanized cities (HUC) in the Philippines
- To help selected HUCs develop their “City Promises” particularly on employing a participative and inclusive process in setting an ambitious GHG emission reduction or avoidance targets of the locality.
- To develop an Urban Green Spaces (UGS) framework action plan for 2022-2030. Focusing on major urban areas to address the urban heat effect, climate health impact, among others (ref. DENR Operational Planning Guidelines (OPG) FY 2022 7.2.3.2)

### Activities to be undertaken

No.	Activities	Medium/Date	Responsible
1.	Provide copy of the Ambitious City Promises (ACP) Project Completion report to the DENR Regional Offices and Bureaus	Memorandum-December 2021	DENR CCS
2.	DENR Regional Offices to identify and nominate from the list of Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCs) model city for replicating the ACP Project design (at least one per region)	Memorandum December 2021	DENR Regional Offices to CCS
3.	Consolidate the list of Cities	Matrix October 2021	DENR CCS <i>Initial list attached as Annex A</i>
4.	Initial Meeting/ Discussion with ICLEI – Local Government for Sustainability	Zoom   October 13, 2021	DENR CCS
5.	Preparation of Work and Financial Plan (WFP) for 2022	November 2021	DENR CCS
6.	Training and Orientation on Green House Gas (GHG) Emission Inventory (by batch target: 46 Cities listed in Annex A)	January to Feb 2022	DENR CCS
7.	Every after training, request “Letter of Intent” from the cities intending to replicate the ACP Project design	2022	DENR CCS
8.	Orientation/s	Zoom	DENR CCS
9.	Develop Work Plan of each HUCs for the Development of City Promises replicating the above methodologies Implement the Work Plan	2022 – 2023 hybrid  2023-2025	DENR CCS DENR Regional Offices [EMB, FMB, BMB] Cities
10	Develop an Urban Green Spaces (UGS) framework action plan for 2022-2030. Focussing on major urban areas to address the urban heat effect, climate health impact, among others (ref. Operational Planning Guidelines (OPG) FY 2022 7.2.3.2)		
11	Help cities Implement the ACP and UGS work plan	2023-2025	

## **Annex A – List of Cities**