



RE RENEWABLE ENERGY Congress & Exhibit

“RE calibrate, make Renewable Energy right”

12-13 December 2024 | AIM Conference Center, Makati City

Background:

Five years into 2030, year to realize the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to beat climate change, yet almost all countries including the Philippines are far from achieving the goals. The Philippines and several others in Southeast Asia are among the countries in the world that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, thus some climate mitigation and adaptation actions have started even before the SDGs came into force. Among the decarbonization efforts in the Philippines are in the transport and energy sector where the transition to renewable energy is a central action.

When the Renewable Energy Act in the Philippines was enacted on 16 December 2008, the renewable energy share in the power generation mix that year already stood at 34%. In 2011, the Philippines government set a 35% RE target in the power generation mix in its National Renewable Energy Program (NREP). Since then, and until the recently released Philippine Energy Plan, the RE target has remained at 35%, with an aspirational target of 50% by year 2040, and more than 50% RE share by 2050. Note that as of December 2023, the installed capacity in the Philippines is 28, 291 MW, where 43.9% is still based on coal resources followed by 29.7% RE.¹ Since 2020, there has been a 10% increase or an additional 800 MW of installed capacity for RE plants, however, this has only translated to an increase of 0.7% RE share in the power generation mix. It is clear that achieving this target will require expanding efforts beyond the current dominant players, engaging a wider range of stakeholders, and employing fiscal and non-fiscal tools to facilitate their participation.

Many policies to ramp up RE deployment and utilization not only in the power sector, but also in the transportation and agricultural sectors, are already in place, and there are also those undergoing review and finalization for adoption. However, no significant increase in RE share nor improved access to clean and sustainable energy is apparent in the country. There have been challenges in implementation and provisions of the existing policies that complicate the processes, making RE less accessible to or difficult to avail of for interested participants, especially the smaller ones. At present, significant improvement nor serious consideration is almost nil in the policies and programs v.v. alleviating the general living condition through increased access to clean energy as well as reliable and affordable electricity, and participation of vulnerable groups like women, farmers, workers, and the members of indigenous peoples and energy project host communities. Addressing the barriers and potential social and ecological risks is crucial to ensuring that renewable energy can be effectively integrated and become a transformative tool for all sectors, and that the 35% target, at least, is met by 2030. During the Renewable Energy Congress and Mindanao Clean Energy Forum held in Davao City in 2024, the Mindanao Development Authority presented that at least 50% RE share is achievable in Mindanao. Even the intergovernmental study “Greening the Grid” has also indicated that a 50% RE target is achievable, even with variable solar and wind accounting for most of the RE share.²

¹ Department of Energy. (2024). 2023 Power Statistics.
https://doe.gov.ph/sites/default/files/pdf/energy_statistics/02_Installed%20and%20Dependable%20Capacity_2023.pdf

² <https://greeningthegrid.org/where-we-work/greening-the-grid-philippines>

The overarching goal for the existing policies and actions is energy sufficiency and climate resilience in a low-carbon economy, with avowed aims to addresses energy security, economic recovery, and climate change.

However, with the slow pace of RE deployment and seeming disregard of the ecological and social aspects, there is urgency to reflect on and recalibrate our policies, programs, and actions including the financing and the RE or energy technologies applied or adopted at various levels – at the household, communities especially remote or off-grid, small and medium scale enterprises, and the utility-scale. We must not lose sight of the critical social and ecological factors in achieving our targets – track the numbers or percentages of energized households and RE share in the power generation mix, as well as the quality of lives or well-being of people who are affected in the energy transition process.

Beyond RE developers, other stakeholders especially homeowners, local government units, electric cooperatives, small and medium scale entrepreneurs, youth, women and workers are increasingly interested in renewable energy adoption. This, as the high cost of electricity in the country continues to hurt people’s pockets, while the insufficiency and unreliability of electricity supply have disrupted or affected the businesses, education, and delivery of services especially in times of disasters.

With the above as a backdrop, the RE Congress this year shall look into the development of and application of RE in the energy, transportation, and agricultural sectors in the countries in Southeast Asia, with particular attention on enhancing finance, and local and regional policies, as well as regional and sectoral knowledge exchange.

Government, private sector, and other stakeholders including civil society, need to recalibrate the actions and make renewable energy right in order to realize the target RE share without leaving anyone behind. Revisit the strategies and direction of initiatives – particularly with regard to policies, knowledge exchange, and stakeholder participation and empowerment of stakeholders particularly the LGUs, women, workers, and medium and small entrepreneurs. Most importantly, the just energy transition framework needs to be embedded in all these. There is a notion that as renewable energy is green, and green is considered clean, thus good, therefore all RE is good. But even in RE, potential social and ecological risks in the construction and operations may be experienced. We need to be conscious of these, and adopt necessary measures or practices to reap the most of benefits with lesser or zero negative impacts especially on the communities or sectors that may be affected.

As a conclusion, we need “ambition and urgency” in order to keep the 1.5⁰C limit within reach without sacrificing anyone as COP28 President-Designate Dr. Sultan Al Jaber highlighted in his message in the synthesis report of the technical dialogues for the global stock take in September 2023: For the COP28 Presidency to “put forward an ambitious action agenda centered around fast- tracking a just and well managed energy transition that leaves no one behind, fixing climate finance, focusing on people lives and livelihoods, and underpinning everything with full inclusivity.”³

Objectives:

- Develop a multi-stakeholder just energy transition **roadmap** to meet the climate commitments, especially the needed RE share in the power generation mix by 2030.
- Examine RE deployment or application in the transportation and agricultural sectors in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia, with particular attention on enhancing finance and local and regional policies, regional and sectoral knowledge exchange, and inclusion of women and workers
- Provide venue **for knowledge exchange and capacity building on climate and energy resiliency and just transition initiatives among stakeholders**, especially between and among CSOs, academe, parliamentarians, RE developers including electric cooperatives, financial institutions and local government units.

³ <https://unfccc.int/news/implementation-must-accelerate-to-increase-ambition-across-all-fronts-taking-an-all-of-society>

- **Engage policy and decision-makers** and other key actors in enhancing and realizing RE policies towards an inclusive and sustainable climate action, and a just energy transformation.
- Provide venue to **forge collaboration and partnerships** among stakeholders towards broader RE adoption especially by vulnerable and marginalized groups.

The key activities for this project include knowledge sharing, policy dialogues and discussions, and production of policy and advocacy materials.

The two-day Renewable Energy Congress and Exhibit (RE Congress and Exhibit) to be held in Metro Manila shall engage about 300 stakeholders that play critical roles in RE acceleration and other related climate mitigation and adaptation actions. These are the policy and decision makers - national agencies, local government units – RE developers, financing institutions, civil society organizations, academe, electric cooperatives, youth, women, indigenous peoples and host communities, and workers.

More than knowing the progress or state of play in the RE industry, this year's event shall put more emphasis or delve into the solutions or recommendations and their implementation to achieving just transition or just energy transformation, embedding in the policies and actions the following: inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups in the entire process, gender equity and responsiveness, energy access and affordability, and ecologically safe and socially just deployment of RE especially the utility scale RE technologies.

There will be plenary sessions, deep dives or workshops, as well as exhibit to highlight or showcase inclusive, affordable, sustainable, resilient, and gender-responsive practices or solutions.

In particular, the following activities will be conducted during the RE Congress:

- **Plenary sessions** – discussion/dialogues on trends, recommendations, and alternatives in the Philippines and Region v.v. increasing RE share, access to financing, and participation of marginalized and other stakeholders aside from utility-scale RE players
- **Deep Dive sessions/Workshops** – development or deployment of resilient, responsible, and affordable RE system – in terms of technology, financing, policies, participation or role of sectors (i.e. workers, IPs/host communities, women)
- **Knowledge/skills sharing or “Teach-In”** – lectures on developing RE projects and financing them, energy efficiency/management systems, solar power installations
- **GreenPitch (Elevator Pitch) session** – speed (quick) project presentations by groups or startups, to potential investors, and or technology, funding, and implementation partners
- **Collaboration/networking activities** through activities such as world café, office (consultation) hour, poster presentations, and breaks
- **Symbolic adoption of the multistakeholder Roadmap as culminating activity of the RE Congress.** The Roadmap shall contain the key recommendations or actions of participants/stakeholders in order to reach higher RE target – factoring in the effects on and participation of sectors like workers, women, host communities/IPs – based on discussions from the sessions and pre-RE Congress discussions. Participants will be asked to sign on the big board containing key elements or actions in the roadmap. This shall also serve as advocacy agenda or call to decision-makers or actors.