

Chavit Singson

A. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

1. **Reduction of the Greenhouse Effects.** It is the duty of every citizen of earth to help reduce the so-called greenhouse effects, and a great moral obligation of a political leader to lead, not only in legislating the corresponding measures, implementing them but also monitoring that the goals are achieved. It's a job for everyone, without exception.
2. **Renewable Energy.** More so in the Philippines that has limited fossil based natural resources, we need to pursue a more aggressive approach to harnessing clean renewable energy, from such abundant local resources such as the wind, the seas, steam from our many volcanic vents, and possibly, deuterium for hydrogen power from the Philippine Deep in Surigao, as soon as such technology becomes feasible, and affordable. We have to reduce our dependence on imported fossil based energy sources to locally available renewable energy, for the sake of our economic and political stability, but more important, to help prevent reducing the earth into a lifeless planet in the not so distant age to come.
3. **Legislative Measures.** On the demand side, we have to legislate measures that encourage our consumers to be energy efficient in their day to day lives - a good balance between the need for development, economic survival, or desire for convenience with the need to maintain environmental integrity. On market incentives, legislation is needed to encourage and reward, first and foremost, home grown initiatives for efficient energy related products and services. Then on the larger scale, provide fiscal incentives to the corporate providers of energy that will make them shift to cleaner products, and make this available to consumers at a price that encourage their adoption by consumers. There has to be a long term strategic energy policy that looks beyond the horizon and that can be done with a legislative framework.

B. WATER

1. **Countryside Development Fund.** For universal availability of clean water and development of septage and sewerage go hand in hand to ensure the wellness of our people. That lists high in my priorities for countryside development, a very basic need of our people.
2. **Clean Water.** Sources must be protected including the means by which they are processed, stored and transmitted to the consumers. But first, these sources must be identified, that's where the need to inventory our natural water resources is most important. Then the regulatory arm of the government must be strengthened to ensure quality, quantity and safety. Our clean water sources are vulnerable to terror threats that can have unimaginable effects on our people. But we must look also at the threats from careless industrial and residential users who pollute our water sources.
3. **Water Monopolies** as exemplified by privatization of water and sewerage services, for example in Metro Manila, have their inherent pros and cons but as of now, their advantages far outweigh their negatives, and so until such time as we can find a better alternative for managing the gigantic supply and demand requirement, privatization of water monopolies is an interim step in the right direction. Salt

water conversion technologies, when they become feasible and affordable, is a direction that's on the horizon. The Philippines being an archipelagic country with coastlines of more than 10,000 kilometers, and populations located along its shorelines have easy access to sea water sources, if can be converted to potable water at an economically affordable rates.

C. SOLID WASTE

1. **Solid Waste Management Act (R.A. 9003)** - I agree with you that the 4% adoption 1,723 out of 41,956 barangays for Materials Recovery Facilities (MRF) after six (6) years, is a poor performance. In order to accelerate that, we need the active participation of local government leaders from the Provincial Governors, City Mayors down to the Barangay Chairmen. Likewise, the continued existence of open and uncontrolled dumps (1,000+) pose a threat to the health of our people. The problem begs a holistic solution in the form of a legislative policy, and I support that with all my energy and dedication. On the micro scale, we must find way and means to drive the LGU leaders to increase the number of MRF's in their barangays. And on the macro level, large scale solid waste facilities must address not only the economics, but embrace environmentally friendly technologies as they become available. The solid waste industry is tempted to employ shortcuts to fatten corporate profits, and to prevent that, we need to legislate more efficient enforcement, faster judicial processes and administrative adjudication then impose stiffer penalties for violators without fear or favor.
2. **Our unfortunate brothers and sisters** who must survive from working in the garbage environment - bins, dumps such as Smokey Mountain have to be included in the social and health components in R.A. 9003, until such time as their activities become unnecessary. One way to do this is to provide them with social health coverage, make available to them basic sanitary items such as masks, but these are only palliatives, necessary at the moment, but must eventually give way to a more systematic elimination of their need to work in such hazardous environment to survive, and for the government, to strictly monitor and enforce regulations that will ban minors who are most vulnerable to diseases contacted from working in such bins and dumps.
3. **Toxic Substances in Products** - This can be addressed at the source initially by strengthening the regulatory, enforcement and support services capabilities of agencies in the DTI such as the PSA and DOH such as the BFAD. Manufacturers, traders and dealers of products must disclose the toxic contents of their products as part of their application for permits to manufacture, trade and sell such products. In addition, consumer protection mechanisms such as product warranties both written and assumed must be strictly enforced, and the government agencies concerned will have to be provided with ample technological capabilities to regulate and enforce. While the cost of full techno support is coming, it would be advisable to adapt publicized and circulated health measures from advanced countries and international organizations so our local agencies cannot hide behind the subterfuge of lack of resources. Yes, I strongly support legislative measures to this objective.
4. **Harmful Plastics and Disposables**. I remember the time when most of our packages used materials from wood and pulp which are biodegradable, but then, we have to conserve our forests, and worldwide use of synthetic based wrappings become

dominant due to its low cost and availability and we substituted them. Applying a “Sin Tax” is eventually shouldered by the consumers, there must be another way to do this. I will support alternative legislations to support the shift from this harmful practice, and the cost of its continued use must be distributed fairly among makers and users.

D. TOXIC WASTE TRADE & JPEPA

1. I will seriously study the ramifications of JPEPA to our people, when elected to the Senate, but rest assured, I will not pawn the safety and welfare of our people for any consideration.
2. As with JPEPA, I will study the Basel Convention, consult our people specially those in the position to give the correct advice, before affixing my signature, for or against the ratification of the Treaty, and, without farther delay.
3. **End of Life Disposal of Products with Toxic Elements** - It’s unkind, to say the least, to dump one’s toxic waste to his neighbor, and that holds true with developed, developing or backward countries. As with worldwide judicial decisions on the harmful effects of toxic substances exemplified by large punitive awards, I will support holding the irresponsible users of products with toxic elements to be legally liable for the harmful effects of their actions.

E. GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMO)

1. Genetics is a science that is still in its infancy, and risks are inherent in technologies that have not reached maturity in research and actual application. We cannot deny that various applications of genetics have also helped in making food widely available to address the pangs of hunger in many countries, a problem still prevalent and threatening million of humans in the African continent. In the decades that the IRRI in UPLB existed, Filipino scientists and their foreign counterparts have been credited with alleviating the imbalance between supply and demand in rice and other foodstuff, and one of their key technologies is based on the science of genetics. Science will always be subject to social, moral and legal limitations. And in that sense, I will support legislations to provide a framework of legislative guidance and regulation on the use of GMO’s. Science unbridled is like opening Pandora’s box, or letting a loose Frankenstein on humans.
2. **GM Rice in the Philippines** - We’ll have to rely on institutions such as IRRI in Los Baños and PHILRICE in Cabanatuan to provide us with scientific guidance on how to proceed with a policy in dealing with GM Rice. Until such times as the worldwide scientific community has provided incontrovertible proof against GM rice, we Filipinos cannot do away with rice, and no rice on the table is a worst care scenario I dare not contemplate. We will support the continued production of Philippine rice using organic fertilizers and natural means of pest control. I myself prefer our upland rice, even if more expensive. Please be assured that I am 100% behind any legislation that will support our Filipino farmers, and if made to choose, between imported and local rice, my position is clear, I am for the Filipino rice farmer never with the importers.
3. **GM Labelling** - As part of our consumer protection drive, full disclosure includes GM labeling.

F. SUSTAINABLE ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

1. I will support giving incentives and subsidies for the widespread use of organic substances in fertilizers and pest control. It's not only healthy but in the long run, will wean us from our dependence on imported synthetic farm products.
2. Executive Order 481 for the Promotion of Organic Agriculture is a step in the right direction, and need to be farther strengthened and made more effective by a legislative measure that I would be happy to sponsor and support.

G. LOGGING

1. The Singsons in Ilocos Sur have been traditional tobacco farmers for generations, and I learned from my folks and our fellow farmers, the importance of forests and trees in our livelihood, the protection they provide against floods and droughts, and sorry, I don't have enough words to describe the pleasure I get from looking at forests and trees.
2. A 5-Year Moratorium is NOT enough to regenerate our denuded forests all over the country.

H. MINING

1. Corporate Responsibility, that's the key phrase in holding mining companies accountable for the health and environmental impact of their activities. So, it is not only enough to base approvals for mining permits on the technical and financial capabilities of mining companies, but equally important is their commitment to discharge their corporate responsibility to the people and the land.
2. Small Scale Environmentally Friendly Mining Legislation will get my support, but I would add, technical and financial efficiencies to ensure their continued, viable and profitable operation over a medium or long term perspective.
3. IPRA and NIPAS have to be reconciled that's for sure, in the new Mining Act. If it's a Zero Sum situation, then the Government will have to set up its priorities. Otherwise, a parallel development will be the ideal set up.

H. AIR POLLUTION

1. Ban on Dirty Second hand Diesel Engines. Current technologies using fossil fuel combustion will always be dirty. Current scientific developments point to "Zero Emission" standard as the goal not only to preserve the environment but to shield non-oil producing countries like the Philippines from the political instabilities in the main sources of oil in the Middle East and Africa and the resultant financial havoc they wreck on an international scale. The ban is an interim remedy but not the ultimate solution. Before any ban has to be imposed, a legislator like me, if elected to the Senate, will study the economic impact of replacing close to 1.5 million (28%) diesel fueled motor vehicles plus 2.0 million (42%) mixed fuel 2 stroke motorcycles out of 5.059 million, using 2005 LTO data.

2. Legislative Measures in Aid of Mobile Clean Air Initiative. i) Incentives for producers and distributors including users of clean fuels will be a first step and ii) motor efficiency resulting in reduced fuel consumption will have to be based initially on mandating the DOTC to proceed with the implementation of the NEDA approved Motor Vehicle Inspection System (MVIS) and the corollary Maintenance Program. The current PETC (Private Emission Testing Center) Program, though a step forward is short and suffering from deficiencies thus unable to achieve a true I/M (Inspection/Maintenance) Program. The goal is to have a safe, convenient and efficient land transportation system as a complement to the mass transit exemplified by the LRT Program.

MY ENVIRONMENTAL TRACK RECORD

The very existence of “Baluarte” which serves as a sanctuary for a variety of animals while doubling up as a favorite tourist destination for environmentalists and nature-lovers stands as the most significant proof of my enduring engagement as an advocate of environmental concerns.

Corollary to this, my platform includes and uncompromising resolve to zealously work for the passage of relevant ecology bills as well other legislations directly or indirectly impacting on Mother Earth.

One of the easiest areas to develop which promises vast income and provide high employment opportunities is in the area of tourism. Support and participation of the provinces is necessary to give more momentum in this sector of development.

Tourism is inevitably linked to environment in most aspects. Keeping the environment pristine, preservation of species, forest conservation, elimination of pollution, proper waste management and disposal, global warming, etcetera, are all issues that may find easier solution through national legislation and provincial or local level implementation and grassroots cooperation.