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A. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

1. The need for more efficient, renewable and pollution-free sources of energy has long been felt since the global warming concern was aired. Unless concrete and immediate measures are taken to reduce drastically the greenhouse gas emission, unprecedented disasters will visit planet earth as a result of global warming. A timeframe for the dismantling of coal-fired power plants and their substitution by renewal energy sources should be laid down. The Government must give priority to this program since these coal-fired energy are the biggest producer of the greenhouse effect.

There is need to rationalize the government's policy on sanitary landfills and waste to energy plants. Most of the advance countries in the world today have built waste-to-energy or thermal plants for the proper and efficient disposal of waste materials. In most of these countries, sanitary landfills are already banned.

Since there are no viable alternatives to sanitary landfills and waste-to-energy technology, the Philippines should construct sanitary landfills to forestall a serious garbage crisis. The amount of pollution that a waste-to-energy plant produces is less than the poisonous gasses produced by motor vehicles in a single day. These plants have met the most rigid environmental and safety standards that one of them presently stands in the center of Vienna, Austria and another was built near the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

2. There is no quarrel over the need for renewal sources of energy and getting ourselves free from dependence on fossil fuels. What is at issue is whether or not we can generate enough power through renewal energy sources to meet the entire demands of all the various sectors of our economy.
3. I will sponsor or support any measure which will provide more incentives, including longer tax holidays, for investments in power plants employing renewal sources of energy. The annual budget should set aside substantial appropriations for the development of renewal sources of energy. Or the government should be allowed to borrow funds from international funding institutions specifically for the construction of power plants using renewable sources of energy.

B. WATER

1. Of all the major infrastructure projects, sewerage treatment and flood control projects have not received adequate attention and concern. I will gladly introduce an amendment in our budget that will allocate a definite portion of the Countryside Development Funds for these projects.

2. There should be stiffer penalties for those who throw garbage and toxic waste materials into our rivers, creeks and streams which are sources of clean water. But these penalties will not discourage these practices unless actual arrests, prosecution and prison terms are dealt against those who violate these laws. There are not enough policemen roaming around looking for possible culprits. What should perhaps be done is for the municipal, city, and provincial government units to deputize barangay officials to arrest and bring to court anyone who deliberately throw waste and toxic materials into empty spaces, rivers, creeks and streams.

The cleanliness of the surroundings, including the streams and creeks within a barangay should be made a primary responsibility of the barangay officials and its citizens.

We should undertake concrete measures to conserve and recycle water to avoid a serious water shortage.

The business of water supply for home and industrial consumption is heavily invested with public interest. It should be highly competitive to ensure safer, cheaper, and cleaner supply of water for all citizens.

C. SOLID WASTE

1. The National Ecological Solid Waste Management Commission, created under Republic Act 9003, is mandated to address the collection and disposal of municipal solid waste in the country, particularly in urban centers like Metro Manila.

Most of the existing dumpsites have breached their capacities and should have been permanently closed as of last year. The still existing controlled dumpsites like that in Montalban, Rizal, at Pier 8 in Manila, and Payatas in Quezon City are also nearing closure since they are not only environmentally unsafe but can no longer accommodate waste materials.

Only the immediate construction of a modern and fully-engineered sanitary landfill will prevent Metro Manila from experiencing another garbage crisis within a year or two at the most.

Sanitary landfills are still the cheapest and viable solution to the garbage problem. Properly managed, these facilities, including materials recovery facilities, can efficiently handle the municipal solid waste output of urban centers like Metro Manila. Remediation and post-closure procedures are observed to make these facilities still available for economically useful purpose.

Sanitary landfills call for investments in millions. Yet those who get the contract to build and operate these facilities need not displace those who are earning a living out of segregating, recycling, and composting waste materials. The materials recovery

facilities, in fact, will help the waste pickers and segregators earn more since waste materials will be segregated and treated efficiently in these facilities. The landfill facility operator would still allow the local government units to manage the collection at source of waste materials which can no longer be recycled or composted are brought to the sanitary landfill to be properly treated and deposited.

The food and drug administration, the department of health, and the department of trade and industry should be empowered to implement laws which prohibit the use of toxic and non-biodegradable materials in commercial products. Local government units should be directed by the national government to pass ordinances requiring firms selling products contained in plastic or non-biodegradable packages to institute a system of recollecting and the proper handling of such containers.

A law which will ban the use of certain packaging materials for health and environmental reasons is long overdue.

D. TOXIC WASTE TRADE AND (JPEPA)

1. The Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement or JPEPA will no doubt promote between Japan and our country. Being one of the top trading partners of the Philippines, it is important that an agreement which will govern bilateral trade between the two countries.

The Senate should exercise its authority to ratify treaties and agreements with other countries with due diligence and care. No provisions in such treaties or agreements should be included which will work adversely against the interests of our nation or diminish the integrity of the Philippine Republic.

2. I will work for the repeal of Republic Act 6969 which will allow toxic and hazardous wastes to be shipped to the Philippines for any reason. We cannot allow our country to be a depository of the waste materials of affluent countries even if it means substantial financial returns. The Philippines must adhere faithfully to the provisions of the Basel Convention.
3. The Philippine Government must be deeply concerned about the exportation of toxic waste materials from rich nations to the third world or poor countries. Through international agencies directly concerned with this problem, the Philippines should register strong objections to any international covenant or multinational agreements which will make underdeveloped countries the dumping ground of products which have outlived their shelf-life and which contain toxic elements hazardous to the health problems to their people.

E. GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOs)

1. Congress should be able to grasp fully the serious implications of radical developments in biotechnology which seem to defy conventional wisdom and even spiritual values. Scientists on biological studies are coming out with revolutionary theories on genetics and reproductive systems. The success in the production of genetically modified organisms may be the answer to the world's worsening food-shortage problem. It could be the answer to hunger which is stalking millions of people in Africa and in densely-populated and third world countries.

But there have been adverse and unwelcome effects from genetically modified organisms. There should be need for further research and development in these critical areas of genetic engineering.

2. Again, there should be further studies and monitoring of the sale of genetically-modified organisms. There should be need for further research and development in these critical areas of genetic engineering.

F. SUSTAINABLE ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

1. More than enough proofs have been shown that pesticides and synthetic farm inputs have not been as effective in increasing production but have, on the other hand, even contributed to the deterioration of the fertility of farmlands. It is imperative that the government cuts all subsidies for the manufacture and sale of synthetic chemicals. The Government must encourage the production and use of organic fertilizers by giving subsidies which used to be earmarked for synthetic farm inputs.

Certainly, a paradigm shift in agricultural policies is urgent if we are to make agriculture in our country a primary and lucrative artery of the national economy.

G. LOGGING

1. Long before the colonization of the Philippines by Spain, the villages in the over 7,100 islands of our country enjoy common or communal ownership of forest lands and fishing grounds. It is regrettable that the Government has not instituted concrete measures to stop illegal logging and...We should have a law which will expand the areas to be considered forest reserves. We should turn them to local government units which have jurisdiction over these areas to be treated as communal forests or parks which they should properly administer, protect and preserve. Logging or cutting of trees and other forest products should not be allowed without the approval of the local government authorities with the concurrent of the forest rangers assigned to these places.

2. We should not only declare a moratorium on logging operations and timber cutting. We should launch a nation-wide tree-planting movement. If every adult citizen of this country, perhaps even including elementary and high school students, will plant a tree during a given year, our country will be green again and lush with timber cover in no time at all.

H. MINING

1. Mining operations should be made to observe rigid and strict laws and regulations pertaining to safety and environmental requirements. The mining law should be amended to ensure that these concerns are fully and effectively addressed.
2. Mining operations are capital-intensive, even if it is highly profitable for those who invest in this industry. Community-based operations will not be feasible since it will not be viable enough even to maintain overhead expenses.

I. AIR POLLUTION

1. ... Banning the importation of second-hand diesel engines is not enough. We should encourage the installation of gadgets and use of alternative fuels which greatly reduce carbon monoxide emissions. The Clean Air Act should be reviewed and perhaps amended to keep in step with recent efforts to preserve and prolong our planet's life support systems.
2. We should provide subsidies to those who manufacture products which induces cleaner and more efficient consumption of fuel and effectively reduces air pollution.

J. YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL TRACK RECORD

1. I have been struck with the gravity of our country's environmental and ecological concerns which I came across in a number of movies where I starred in. The *Muro Ami* film which graphically portrayed the exploitation of young kids by big fishing operators and the unconscionable depletion of our marine resources due to illegal and destructive fishing methods and systems brought home to me a deep concern for our environment and our natural resources.

As senator, I will sponsor laws which will strengthen our efforts to preserve and protect our marine resources; laws which will impose heavy penalties on those who rob future generations of their just share of our national patrimony.

If we are to make our country a tourism haven, we must restore the pristine beauty of our forests and the richness of our natural resources both in land and in the seas.

I have been, on my own modest means as a citizen and artist, an environmentalist and a passionate lover of beautiful landscapes and vistas so abundantly gifted by God on our country, the Philippines.