

Climate Disinformation in the Philippines Legitimising Attacks on Indigenous Peoples



Climate Disinformation in the Philippines: Legitimising Attacks on Indigenous Peoples

Asia Centre

2026

Copyright © 2026 Asia Centre. All rights reserved.

Permission Statement: No part of this report in printed or electronic form may be reproduced, transmitted or utilised in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the written permission of the Asia Centre.

Copyright belongs to Asia Centre unless otherwise stated.

Civil society organisations and educational institutions may use this report without requesting permission on the strict condition that such use is not for commercial purposes.

When using or quoting this report, every reasonable attempt must be made to identify the copyright owners.

Errors or omissions will be corrected in subsequent editions.

Requests for permission should include the following information:

- The title of the document for which permission to copy material is desired.
- A description of the material for which permission to copy is desired.
- The purpose for which the copied material will be used and the manner in which it will be used.
- Your name, title, company or organisation name, telephone number, e-mail address and mailing address.

Please send all requests for permission to:

Asia Centre

65/168, Chamnan Phenjati Business Center Building,
20th Floor, Rama 9 Road,
Huai Kwang, Huai Kwang,
Bangkok, 10310, Thailand

contact@asiacentre.org

PREFACE

Asia Centre is pleased to present the report ***Climate Disinformation in the Philippines: Legitimising Attacks on Indigenous Peoples***, produced in partnership with International Media Support (IMS). This publication is part of a broader series assessing the impact of climate disinformation on Indigenous Peoples (IPs) in Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. The series comprises one baseline study for each country and a regional report.

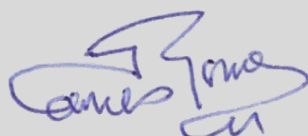
This report examines how information disorder leads to specific forms of climate disinformation, which in turn impacts IPs' ability to preserve their cultural identity. It offers focused recommendations for a variety of groups, including international bodies, INGOs, governments, and media and technology companies.

As an increasingly pressing issue in the Asia-Pacific, climate disinformation emerges from a broader rise of disinformation both online and offline. This form of information disorder uses various channels to spread false environmental narratives. Its intent is to deceive the public and distort climate discourse, which ultimately contributes to the marginalisation of IPs and the negation of their identity by excluding them from climate decision-making. Disinformation, climate change and IPs' rights have each been individually studied at national and international levels, however the impact of climate disinformation on IPs' ability to safeguard self-determination and cultural continuity remains under-researched. This project seeks to address that gap.

The spread of climate disinformation is especially alarming for IPs, who often live in the forested areas most vulnerable to climate and environmental crises. As a result, they face a disproportionate level of environmental, social and political threats. This report series directly addresses this issue by examining how disinformation circulates both online (through mass and social media) and offline (through community-level interactions). It looks at the direct consequences, such as exclusion from decision-making, criminalisation under conservation laws, forced evictions and physical violence, as well as the broader factors that allow these outcomes to occur. In doing so, the series helps us better understand how climate disinformation strips IP communities of their self-determination and cultural survival.

Asia Centre hopes that this report – and the other in the series – will use the lens of climate disinformation to provide international, national and local stakeholders with new understanding for protecting the environment and, in doing so, for securing the rights and identity of IP communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Gomez', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Dr James Gomez
Regional Director
Asia Centre

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Executive Summary</i>	<i>VI</i>
<i>Abbreviations</i>	<i>IV</i>
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Methodology	1
1.2. Background.....	2
1.3. Philippines’ Digitalisation and the Rise of Disinformation.....	8
2. Forms of Climate Disinformation	15
2.1. Fabricating IP Consent.....	15
2.2. Greenwashing.....	18
2.3. False Climate Solutions.....	21
2.4. Deflecting Accountability.....	24
3. The Impacts on Indigenous Peoples	29
3.1. Intimidation.....	29
3.2. Forced Evictions & Displacement.....	31
3.3. Red-tagging.....	34
3.4. Physical Violence.....	38
4. Recommendations	43
5. Conclusion	47
Bibliography	49
Annexe I: List of Respondents	61
Annexe II: List of Participants of Focus Group Discussion	62

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Philippines is Asia's deadliest country for environmental activists, with Indigenous land defenders accounting for one-third of the 298 victims killed between 2012 and 2023 ([Global Witness, 2024](#)). This high casualty rate reflects the state's militarised approach in enforcing extractive land use. Such unsustainable policies persist despite the country being one of the world's most climate-vulnerable nations, ranking first in natural hazard risk on the World Risk Index due to its geographical location ([Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft, 2025](#)).

Both state militarisation and climate change disproportionately affect Indigenous Peoples (IPs), who constitute 15% (17 million) of the Philippines' population and reside in natural environments. This dual threat is further obscured by the proliferation of climate disinformation, which falsely label state initiatives as "green" while baselessly accusing IPs as "communists" or "terrorists". Such narratives justify Indigenous land grabbing and effectively reframes their land defense as a national security threat. Therefore, climate disinformation rationalises systemic violence against IPs, foregrounded through their targeting under the "Whole-of-Nation" counter-insurgency approach.

This report examines how climate disinformation legitimises deadly attacks on IPs, subordinating their land rights to state-driven land control and industrial expansion. It provides three main contributions: identifying key forms of climate disinformation, analysing their specific impacts on IPs and proposing actionable recommendations for international, national and local stakeholders.

Key forms of climate disinformation identified in the Philippines include:

- Fabricating IP consent, where state and corporate actors publicise selective consultations and staged photo-op sessions as evidence of approval for environmentally destructive projects on ancestral lands.
- Greenwashing, where media outlets legitimise corporate entities through misleading sustainability claims, presenting them as environmentally conscious. This practice diverts attention away from the corporations' actual harmful practices.
- False Climate Solutions, narratives that manipulate reforestation data, creating an illusion of progress through schemes like REDD+, the National Greening Programme and LNG by omitting their detrimental environmental and social impacts.
- Deflecting Accountability, using "climate doublespeak" to retract environmental commitments and conspiracy narratives that recast IPs as national security threats to necessitate initiatives that cause environmental destruction.

Key impacts of climate disinformation on IPs in the Philippines include:

- Intimidation: using climate disinformation to distort the unjust military presence and coercion of IPs into consenting to development projects.
- Forced Evictions & Displacement: The use of "green" branding and climate conspiracy narratives to justify the non-consensual removal of IPs from ancestral domains for extractive projects.

- Red-tagging: using climate conspiracy narratives to criminalise environmental IP defenders as “terrorists” or “communist fronts”, stripping them of legal protections and justify arbitrary arrests and financial freezing.
- Physical Violence: climate conspiracy narratives frame escalation of severe human rights violations as counter-insurgency operations, justifying disappearances and extra-judicial killings as necessary for “national safety”.

Recommendations for key stakeholders to address climate disinformation and its impacts on IPs in the Philippines:

- United Nations bodies and international human rights mechanisms should integrate climate disinformation into Special Rapporteur mandates, Universal Periodic Reviews and treaty monitoring, with focused attention on the Philippines’ counter-insurgency framework and its impact on IPs.
- Philippine government departments must actively counter climate disinformation, strictly enforce FPIC without military involvement, review coercively-approved projects and institutionalise transparent, rights-based decision-making with independent oversight.
- International NGOs (INGOs) should collaborate with local civil society organisations (CSOs) and IP communities to map and document climate disinformation, while providing coordinated legal, digital security and international advocacy support.
- Media outlets must raise editorial standards to avoid amplifying climate disinformation, increase IP representation, fund investigative journalism on extractive projects and share content in IP languages and accessible formats.
- Technology companies should enforce stronger policies against climate disinformation, ensure algorithms do not amplify harmful narratives, and support IPs through digital safety tools, media literacy and improved rural connectivity.
- Local civil society organisations should report climate disinformation and rights violations, offer legal and psychosocial support, conduct culturally relevant awareness campaigns and back IP-led media and monitoring.
- IP communities should strengthen community decision-making, document FPIC processes, safely engage digital platforms to counter disinformation and assert IP knowledge, land rights and self-determination in climate governance.

Together, these recommendations promote a more inclusive and evidence-based approach to climate governance. They emphasise the urgent need for multi-stakeholder engagement to practice a rights-based approach that centres Indigenous self-determination, secure land tenure, demilitarisation of ancestral domains and plural knowledge systems. Thoroughly adopting a rights-based approach entails dismantling the legal, economic, and media structures that enable climate disinformation, allowing the country to move toward climate action that is not only effective, but also just, inclusive and ecologically sustainable.

ABBREVIATIONS

ATL	Anti-Terrorism Law (2020)
CADT	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title
CPA	Cordillera People's Alliance
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPIC	Free Prior Informed Consent
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IPRA	Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (1997)
KII	Key Informant Interview
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NPA	New People's Army
NTF-LCAC	National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SR	Special Rapporteur
UN	United Nations
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1. Introduction

In the Philippines, climate disinformation is on the rise, increasingly driven by political and capitalist forces that rationalise the militarisation of Indigenous lands. This report investigates how the forces behind climate disinformation affect Indigenous Peoples (IPs) in the country, specifically examining the underexplored convergence of climate change, disinformation and the ostracisation of these communities. The chapter first outlines the situation of IPs, risks they face from climate change, the digitalisation of media and how it fuels disinformation in the country.

1.1. Methodology

The research for this report consisted of three phases: desk research, field research and review. First, desk research was conducted between September 2025 and February 2026 to examine the state of IPs, climate change, media landscape and climate disinformation in the Philippines. The research helped define the study's scope and identify knowledge gaps. It drew on a range of primary and secondary sources in English and Filipino, including international and national legal frameworks, several national development strategy plans, reports by international non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations (CSOs) and media reports in both languages.

Second, during the field research phase, the Asia Centre team conducted 12 online key informant interviews (KIs) between December and February 2026 to address knowledge gaps identified in the first phase. All respondents¹ were Filipino speakers and included representatives from Indigenous communities and Indigenous CSOs as well as professionals from the media and academic sectors (see Annex I for respondent profiles). An online focus group discussion (FGD), also with Filipino speakers, was also held on 27 February 2026 with organisations and individuals working alongside IPs (profile of respondents in Annex 2) to validate preliminary findings and inform policy recommendations.

Third, following desk research and interviews, the Asia Centre team sent the initial draft to IMS for review on 27 February 2026. Asia Centre received feedback on 18 March 2026, which was followed by a national convening on 24 March 2026, to present and validate the key findings. Asia Centre then incorporated both the feedback from the convening and IMS's comments into the revised draft for finalisation and publication.

Key Terms

False information can be understood through three interrelated concepts: **Disinformation**, **Misinformation**, and **Malinformation**. The key difference between them lies in the **intent** to deceive.

Disinformation refers to false information that is intentionally created and spread to mislead or manipulate audiences ([United Nations Development Programme, 2022](#)).

Malinformation, while based on real information, is shared with harmful intent, often by distorting context, exposing private data, or weaponising facts to undermine individuals or groups ([Ibid.](#)).

Misinformation, in contrast, involves the sharing of false or misleading content without the intent to deceive; those sharing it may genuinely believe the information to be true ([Ibid.](#)).

¹ The identities of the respondents have been anonymised due to safety and security reasons.

Climate disinformation is deliberately false content spread to mislead people about climate change and deforestation for political, financial, or ideological gain by those with vested interests in denying its reality or impacts (United Nations Development Programme, 2025).

1.2. Background

This section examines two key elements that shape the impact of climate disinformation on IPs in the Philippines. First, it provides an overview of IP communities in the country, including their geographical concentration, livelihoods and the violent land disputes affecting their ancestral territories. Second, it highlights how climate change and deforestation threaten their livelihoods, given IPs inhabit the country's most forested and ecologically vulnerable regions.

1.2.1. Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines

As of 2024, the Philippines has a total population of approximately 115.8 million, with IPs constituting about 15% of that total, equating to around 17 million people (United Nations Office for Project Services, n.d.; Climate Change Commission, 2024).² The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) (1997) formally recognises seven ethnographic regions where IPs predominantly reside. These regions are split between the southern and northern parts of the Philippines.

In Luzon of the north, the three ethnographic regions include: Region I and the Cordilleras; Region II; and Region III and the rest of Luzon. The four southern and island regions encompass Mindanao and the surrounding island groups, specifically: Southern and Eastern Mindanao, Northern and Western Mindanao, Central Mindanao and the Island Groups, comprising Mindoro, Palawan, Romblon, Panay and Visayas (NCIP, 2018).

The three major groups of IPs in the Philippines, characterised each by the presence of numerous communities with their own distinct cultures and languages, are: *Igorot*, *Lumad* and *Mangyan* (Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, 2010). *Igorot* groups, comprising the *Bontoc*, *Kankanaey*, *Ifugao*, *Kalinga* and other communities, make up around 1% of the population (approximately 1.2 million people) and reside in the Cordillera mountain range in Northern Luzon (Santiago, 2021), as indicated by their name, which originates from the colonial term *Ygollotes* (peoples of the mountains) (Quitason, n.d). Despite the distinct culture of each group, they share strong traditions of highland farming, rice terracing and animist beliefs. *Lumad* groups make up around 1.1% of the population (approximately 1.3 million people) and reside in Mindanao (Bañez, 2019), numbering more than 30 tribal-peoples, identified based on their position and relation with rivers and different bodies of water (KII06). *Lumad* tribes – non-Christian and non-Muslim – typically practice animist belief systems and their traditional livelihoods remain closely tied to sustainable land practices and cultural rituals (KII06; Macusi et al., 2023). *Mangyan* communities are significantly fewer in number, typically residing in Mindoro and Sibuyan island, they also practice animist beliefs and include several groups of hunter-gatherers in transition (Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, 2010; IWGIA, 2025).

The rights and livelihoods of IP communities in the Philippines are enshrined in a number of international and national legal frameworks. The Philippines has ratified key international treaties supporting IP rights, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) (ratified in 1986), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) (ratified in 1974), the

² Official statistics on Indigenous population and ethnic groups are relatively lower than the figures in other literature (KII06) due to varying levels of ethnographic inclusivity, as well as the presence of gaps, inconsistencies and lack of coordination that hinder the proper recognition of IPs and ethnic minorities in the Philippines.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) (ratified in 1967), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) (ratified in 1981) and has endorsed the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). However, the Philippines has yet to ratify the International Labour Organisation Convention (ILO) No 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (1989).

Despite these commitments, persistent concerns raised across all four Universal Periodic Review cycles highlight the systemic circumvention of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), the militarisation of ancestral domains and the forced displacement of Indigenous communities, linked to infrastructure and extractive projects (Human Rights Council, 2008; 2012; 2017; 2022). The UN Special Rapporteur on climate change and human rights has documented serious violations, including mass relocations and the criminalisation of environmental defenders through the Anti-Terrorism Law (ATL) (2020) and red-tagging (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2024).

Nationally, Article 3 of the Constitution guarantees equal protection of every person in front of the law (1987). While IPs are not explicitly mentioned in Article 3, Article 2.22 formally recognises Indigenous and Cultural Communities' rights within the framework of national unity and development. Earlier laws, such as Presidential Decree No. 410 (1974) and Republic Act No. 3872 (1964), helped establish legal recognition for land claims and titles.

The most comprehensive legal instrument for the protection of ancestral domains in the Philippines is IPRA (1997). Influenced by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No 169 (1989), the IPRA acts on IP rights affirming IP entitlement to ancestral domains, self-determination and FPIC (Doyle, 2020).

Despite the complementarity between the IPRA and the ILO Convention No 169, and the repeated calls from UN human rights mechanisms, the Philippines has yet to ratify the Convention (Doyle, 2020). During the 2018 High-level Meeting on the Ratification of the ILO Convention, Khalid Hassan, Director of the Philippines Country Office, highlighted how IPRA already incorporates the minimum standards of the ILO Convention 169 and UNDRIP (Hassan, 2018), thus making the ratification of the ILO Convention not a priority for the Philippines government. However, ratifying the Convention would enhance the protection of IP rights domestically and internationally.

Despite the robust domestic legal framework intended to protect IP rights, successive Philippine governments have consistently failed to fully implement IPRA's principles, taking advantage of legal loopholes to favour state and corporate interests (KII04, 05, 07, 09). Major weaknesses that hinder on the ground protection of Indigenous land rights include (1) tokenistic FPIC processes performed by companies to fabricate compliance with legal requirements (see Chapter 2.1) (Kusniati, 2024), (2) the inaccessibility of Certificate of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADT), which enable the "reclamation" of unclassified Indigenous lands by the State (Transformative Pathways, 2024), and (3) the overtly bureaucratic role and questionable moral integrity of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) (Global Witness, 2024b).

These loopholes persist due to the enduring Regalian Doctrine consisting of a colonial legacy that asserts state ownership over all public domain lands, including forests, minerals and parks (Loja, 2024). This doctrine creates a direct contradiction with IPRA, particularly Republic Act No. 8731, which recognises the pre-conquest ownership of ancestral lands held by IPs as "native title" (Agranzamendez, 2013). The doctrine remains a core tenet of Philippine law despite being incompatible with modern constitutionalism (Loja, 2024). This is due to Section 5, Article XII mandating the extensive presumption of State ownership over "unclassified" lands, a stance that lacks firm legal grounding and perpetuates inequities in land distribution for IPs (Ibid.). As a result, IPs communities continue to face displacement

and legal hurdles, often challenging government-issued permits and pursuing, or defending against litigation in the Supreme Court (See Chapter 3.2).

This legal tension manifests in three key regulatory limitations that enshrine the power imbalance between the state and IPs. Firstly, IPRA grants IPs “priority rights” in resource utilisation subject to state regulation, rather than absolute ownership (Ablola, 2000). Secondly, the state retains ultimate ownership (*dominium*) over natural resources, allowing for the assertion of state interests over IP claims (*Ibid.*). Thirdly, ancestral domains are classified as communal and non-transferable, often making customary laws subordinate to state land interests (*Ibid.*). Consequently, IP communities are forced to obtain CADT to legally establish land ownership. This critical process, however, is widely recognised as expensive, slow and overly bureaucratic (World Bank, 2007; ADB, 2009; Doyle, 2020; KII07).

The state’s negligence in upholding IPs’ rights is further evident in the NCIP, the government agency responsible for protecting IP rights. The agency’s questioned integrity stem from allegations of the NCIP collaborating with the military and private entities in coercing IPs to consent to extractive projects (Global Witness, 2024b; KII01, 02, 06, 07, 08, 11). These institutional ties were solidified under the leadership of retired Army Colonel Allen Capuyan (Dumlao, 2019). Consequently, the NCIP’s revised FPIC Rules (2024), which took effect on 14 January 2025, has faced serious criticism. Advocates argue that the draft undermines, rather than protects, IPs’ decision-making power by only marginally involving them in the proposal’s consultation process (Indigenous Peoples Rights International, 2024). The revised draft strongly favours business interests over IPs’ rights by exempting activities such as mining exploitation and large-scale tourism, among others, from FPIC requirements.

This policy shift highlights the agency’s deep institutional alignment with the state’s security apparatus. NCIP’s military ties reflect the state’s increasing militarisation, dating back to the 1970s under the Martial Law of Ferdinand Marcos, which was a response to the armed conflict involving the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its military wing, the New People’s Army (NPA) (Columbia University, n.d.). Under the current security paradigm, CPP and NPA are officially designated as terrorist organisations by Duterte administration’s Proclamation No. 374 (2017), a classification backed by both the United States and the European Union (Bureau of Counterterrorism, n.d.; Official Journal of the European Union, 2025).

This institutional militarisation translates into the physical occupation of Indigenous territories under the counter-insurgency framework (Cariño, 2022). This rhetoric relies on the CPP-NPA’s strategy that leveraged the historical marginalisation of rural communities to build the base of its revolutionary armed force (Buenaventura, 2023). Since then, the state has systematically conflated IPs and rural communities with rebels’ support bases, hence legitimising attacks on IPs (Cariño, 2022). However, this narrative ignores the distinct political identities of Indigenous communities, most of whom maintain independent traditional governance structures and are not affiliated with communist ideologies. Still, this constitutes the official justification for the military’s continued presence on ancestral territories, particularly in Western Visayas and Northern Mindanao (Buenaventura, 2023). Environmental conflicts in ancestral domains in the Philippines led to a 62% increase in human rights violations between 2022 and 2023 alone, including killings, arrests, harassment and red-tagging (Dialogue Earth, 2024).

The contemporary repression of IP communities is institutionalised through the “Whole-of-Nation” approach (Executive Order No. 70 (2018),) and spear-headed by the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) since 2018. When combined with the Anti-Terrorism Law (ATL) (2020), the approach constitutes the most aggressive and comprehensive operation apparatus that conflates land defense with insurgency (Cariño, 2022). This convergence legitimises attacks on IP communities in three ways.

Firstly, ideological conflation through “red-tagging” labels IP activists, journalists and lawyers as “terrorists” or “communist fronts” ([Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, 2023](#)). Any opposition to state-sanctioned mining or dam projects is reframed not as a legal land dispute, but as a threat to national security ([United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 2020](#)). Secondly, the Regalian Doctrine provides the “legal” justification for the state to reclaim land, while the ATL provides the “security” justification to remove its inhabitants ([IWIGIA, 2023](#)). This creates a loop where defending ancestral domain becomes *prima facie* evidence of “obstructing” the state or “supporting” terrorism. Thirdly, violence is decentralised and normalised because the “Whole-of-Nation” strategy requires government agencies, local government units, the private sector and civil society to coordinate their efforts to repress perceived threats ([KII02; 07; 08; National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict, n.d.](#)). Ultimately, this framework legitimises attacks on IPs because it criminalises IP land defenders, transforming ancestral domains into contested zones where state-led development is prioritised over the safety and legal protections of IP communities.

“It’s not only a question of mainstream media, but it’s also the state. The state is responsible for this disinformation and terrorist tagging and labeling. They use the entire state apparatus: the police, the military, and the resources they have to reinforce and legitimise these narratives (KII02).”

While a landmark May 2024 Supreme Court ruling condemned red-tagging as a threat to the right to life, liberty and security of the person ([Human Rights Watch, 2024](#)), this ruling fails to dismantle the institutionalised “Whole-of-Nation” machinery that enables the instrumentalisation of red-tagging against IPs. This highlights the underlying paradox of the Philippines’ framework for the protection of IP rights, which ultimately facilitates attacks on IP communities.

Despite its seemingly progressive appearance, the legal frameworks designed to protect the rights of IPs in the Philippines are fundamentally weak, inconsistent and incomplete. Because the needs of IPs frequently clash with the interests of the state and corporations ([Sinaunang Panahon, 2025](#)), their efforts to assert these rights are dangerously reframed as a national security threat. This recasting effectively legitimises attacks against them. Already compromised by systemic state violence, the IPs’ resilience is further aggravated by the escalating climate threats in the Philippines, as explored in the following section.

1.2.2. Climate Change in the Philippines

The Philippines is among the most climate-vulnerable nations in the world due to its archipelagic geography, widespread coastal settlements and dependence on climate-sensitive resources ([Climate Impacts Tracker Asia, 2024](#)).

Rising temperatures emerge as an increasing threat in the Philippines, with 2024 being the warmest year since the beginning of records in 1951 ([Johnstone, 2025](#)). This inclination has inextricable correlations with heat-related health risks, which are expected to affect up to 74 million Filipinos by 2050 ([Ibid.](#)).

Additionally, shifting rainfall patterns and increasingly frequent extreme weather events have been observed since the early 2000s. In the National Capital Region, average rainfall increased by 78

millimetres per decade since 1901, while cyclone-induced rainfall rose by up to 19.3% per decade since 2000. Between 2012 and 2020, the frequency of Christmas typhoons surged by 480% ([Climate Tracker Asia, 2024](#)). Sea levels in the Philippines have also been rising faster than the global average, at a rate of 7-10 millimetres annually since 2015 ([Subingsubing, 2023](#)).

Altogether, these weather patterns place the Philippines first in natural hazard risk according to the World Risk Index ([Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft, 2025](#)) and fifth in climate change risk according to German Watch ([Eckstein et al., 2019](#)).

Climate change impacts are exacerbated by deforestation, as demonstrated in Table 1, largely due to forest encroachment.

Table 1: Tree Cover Loss in the Philippines Between 2002 and 2024³

Year	Primary Forest Extent Remaining	Tree Cover Loss in Kha (% of total tree cover)	Tree Cover Loss Due to Deforestation (Kha)
2002	99.9%	32 (0.17%)	5.35
2005	99.5%	50 (0.27%)	8.15
2010	98.7%	100 (0.55%)	15.47
2015	97.8%	66 (0.35%)	16.06
2020	96.7%	64 (0.34%)	13.29
2022	95.9%	85 (0.45%)	10445
2024	95.7%	59 (0.32%)	N/A

Source: [Global Forest Watch, 2023](#)

Deforestation is a significant driver of climate change in the Philippines, primarily caused by agricultural expansion, urbanisation, mining and logging. Data from Table 1 shows that between 2002 and 2023, the country lost 1.47 million hectares of tree cover, including 190,000 hectares of primary humid forest, representing a 4.1% decline in primary forest cover ([Global Forest Watch, 2023](#)). Mining, which spans a fifth of the nation's land, has contributed to over 230,000 hectares of tree cover loss since 2010 ([Global Witness, 2024b](#)). The loss of forests diminishes biodiversity, weakens natural protection against disasters and displaces IPs, threatening their livelihoods and cultural heritage ([Rebadulla, 2023](#)). In 2023, 1.3 million hectares of ancestral land were at risk from state-backed mining, energy and infrastructure projects ([International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2024](#)). Much of this loss stems from commodity-driven deforestation rather than natural causes and disproportionately undermines IPs economic survival and cultural practices.

Firstly, IPs have limited access to infrastructure, including roads, electricity, clean water and healthcare, that may shield them from the worst impacts of climate change ([ILO, 2017](#); [Hyolo, 2024](#)). Due to poorer socio-economic conditions, climate-related hazards threaten lives, property and livelihoods, while also potentially jeopardising its ambition to achieve middle-income status by 2040 ([International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2013](#); [United Nations Development Programme, 2023](#)). Secondly, IPs are more susceptible to the impacts of climate change, particularly typhoons, landslides, deforestation and biodiversity loss, due to their reliance on the land for livelihood and traditional practices. KII03 elaborates on the heightened vulnerability of IPs and lower socio-economic groups to climate risks:

³ Data for all three indices is available from 2002, the earliest common year, to 2024, the most recent year.

“[Climate change] leads to compounded risks: health emergencies, affected livelihoods, and interrupted education. These impacts push many Filipino families further into poverty because their income sources are stuck. For Indigenous Peoples, their rights to ancestral lands are challenged, they are treated as second-class citizens and even red-tagged as terrorists. (KII03)”

Climate change and climate risks particularly impact Indigenous communities' food security and self-sufficiency, as they increasingly have to rely on local governments for assistance (Ramos, 2023). Firstly, the increase in temperature and precipitation creates a favourable breeding ground for pests and disease that put at risk crops, farmers' and consumers' health (Ibid.). Secondly, many ancestral lands host critical watersheds, resulting in frequent encounters with prolonged droughts, destructive flooding and erosion that lead to crops destruction (UN News, 2023). In 2022, the Pulangi River widened by 50 metres due to riverbank erosion causing the displacement and food insecurity of nearby communities due to loss of agricultural land (Ibid.).

In response to climate change impacts, the Philippines has signed up to a number of key international climate agreements and adopted a range of national policies, but faces uneven compliance and significant implementation challenges. The Philippines is a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (1992), the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the Paris Agreement (2015) as a Non-Annex I country.⁴ The Philippine's 2021 Nationally Determined Contribution emphasises the Philippines' heightened vulnerability to climate change, pledging to a greenhouse gas emissions' reduction and avoidance of 75% by 2030 for the sectors of agriculture, wastes, industry, transport and energy (UNFCCC, 2021). The first Biennial Transparency Report, submitted in 2025, identified a variety of priority sectors for adaptation, including food security, biodiversity, cultural heritage, population displacement and migration (UNFCCC, 2025). However, the Philippines' adaptation commitments face capacity and funding shortfalls, particularly in community-based adaptation, which could potentially undermine the country's efforts (Climate Impacts Tracker Asia, 2024).

At the national level, the main legislative framework regulating climate change adaptation in the Philippines consists of the Republic Act No. 9729 (2009), or Climate Change Act, which establishes a Climate Change Commission tasked with drafting a National Framework Strategy on Climate Change for 2010-2022 (2010) and a National Climate Change Action Plan for 2011-2028 (2011), targeting key areas such as food security, water sufficiency, and sustainable energy. Additionally, the Philippines has implemented The National Adaptation Plan for 2023-2050 (2023), outlining strategies to address temperature rise, sea level rise, extreme precipitation, and tropical cyclones.

As for tackling deforestation, Presidential Decree No. 705 (1975) (Revised Forestry Code) is the primary law governing forestlands and resources. It regulates proper classification, management, and sustainable utilisation of forest lands. It also enforces forest protection and establishes penalties for illegal logging. The Revised Forestry Code has been complemented by the National Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) Strategy, aimed at promoting forest-based mitigation under the Paris Agreement framework to provide financial incentives to developing countries for forest preservation (UNCCC, n.d.).

⁴ Under the Paris Agreement, Non-Annex I countries are obligated primarily to submit Nationally Determined Contributions, rather than adhere to legally binding mitigation commitments.

Alongside REDD+, the Philippines also implemented major reforestation initiatives, such as the National Greening Programme (2011) and the Forests for Life Campaign, aimed at establishing at least 5 million trees nationwide by 2028 (DENR, 2025). However, implementation remains hampered by weak institutional coordination, limited technical capacity, insufficient local funding, and gaps in monitoring and evaluation (World Bank, 2022). In particular, REDD+ is facing governance challenges, land tenure disputes and inadequate monitoring systems (United Nations Environment Programme, 2011).

Climate change is a mounting issue in the Philippines, disproportionately affecting IPs, coastal residents, and the rural poor. While the country has demonstrated its commitment to global climate frameworks and developed national adaptation and mitigation strategies, progress is constrained by capacity limitations, funding shortfalls, and governance weaknesses.

1.3. Philippines' Digitalisation and the Rise of Disinformation

This section explores the key drivers behind the emergence of climate disinformation in the Philippines. First, it examines the country's digital transformation, which has led to the digitalisation of the media landscape and fostered conditions that enable the spread of disinformation. Second, it investigates the underlying causes that further disseminate the disinformation in the Philippines, ultimately contributing to the circulation of climate disinformation that negatively impacts IP communities in the country.

1.3.1. The Digitalisation of the Media Sector

The widespread accessibility of the internet since the mid-2010s has fundamentally transformed the Philippines' media landscape. This has led to the rapid digitalisation of traditional media outlets, accompanied by the rapid rise of social media platforms and instant messaging applications, as dominant arenas for public discourse.

Languages in Media Landscape

The media in the country is largely the two official languages, namely Filipino and English, despite the presence of 130 to 195 languages in the country (Garrido et al., 2024). This preference is due to their widespread comprehension, with approximately 96% understanding Filipino while 80% communicate in English (Cervantes, 2023).

Media (such as TV broadcasts) largely use Filipino, while English is used in Government newspapers and publications. In social media, English is the dominant language with 52.5% followed by Filipino at 35.3% of the overall online conversations in the Philippines (Talk Walker, 2019).

Table 2: Major Media Outlets and Their Primary Publishing Languages

Philippine Star	Published in Filipino and English
The Daily Tribune	Published in English
Philippine Daily Inquirer	Published in Filipino and English
Malaya Business Insight	Published in English
Manila Bulletin	Published in Filipino and English
Manila Times	Published in English
Business World	Published in English

ABS-CBN	Published mainly in Filipino and English, including dialects per region
GMA Network	Published mainly in Filipino and English, including dialects per region
News 5	Published mainly in Filipino and English, including dialects per region
People's Television	Published in English
Radio Mindanao Network	Published in Filipino
Philippine Broadcasting Service	Published mainly in Filipino and English, but also in dialects per region.
Philippine news agency	Published in English

Source: [BBC, 2023](#)

One KII highlighted differences in reporting styles among English, Tagalog, and local language media. While English-language media often reports on the Philippine environment with a sensationalized, “third world” or “underdeveloped” framing, it generally maintains a more objective and detached tone. Conversely, Philippine media tends to be more “inflammatory” and heavily influenced by local power dynamics due to its ties to the events being covered (KII08).

The Philippines has one of the highest media penetration rates in Southeast Asia, with over 96% of households owning both a television and a mobile phone ([Howe, 2025](#)). While traditional media like television and radio have historically influenced public opinion, their importance is decreasing as the news sector becomes increasingly digitised. By 2024, online news consumption was significantly higher than traditional sources, with 82% of respondents accessing news online and 63% using social media, according to a 2024 survey. In contrast, only 46% reported using television for news, and only 13% identified print media as their primary source ([Cervantes, 2024](#)). This shift is reflected in the market, where digital platforms accounted for 42% of the nation’s USD 6.5 billion media revenue by 2024 ([VERO, 2023](#)).

Internet use has similarly surged: as of January 2025, 83.8% of Filipinos (97.5 million) were online ([Kemp, 2025](#)). Filipinos also remain among the world’s most active internet users, clocking nearly nine hours online daily, well above the global average of 6 hours and 38 minutes ([Malasig, 2025](#)).

Table 3: Internet Penetration Index in the Philippines from 2000 to 2023⁵

2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
1%	2%	8%	15%	43%	55.3%

Source: [World Bank, 2023](#)

Social media plays a powerful role in the transformation. By early 2025, 78% of Filipinos (90.8 million), were active on social media ([Kemp, 2025](#)). Filipinos are among the most digitally engaged audiences globally, spending a daily average of three hours and 46 minutes on social media, one more hour per day than the global average ([Malasig, 2025](#)). The Philippines was nominated as the “social media capital of the world” in 2015 ([Estella & Löffelholz, n.d.](#)), a title that the country maintains to this day. As per instant messaging applications, Messenger was used by 92.6% of internet users, followed by WhatsApp and Viber with 36.6% and 31.4% each ([Kemp, 2025](#)).

⁵ Data for 2023 is the most recent one from the World Bank.

Table 4: Social Media Penetration in the Philippines from 2015 to 2025

Year	Social Media	Facebook	Instagram	TikTok	X	Youtube
2015	47%	21%	9%	N/A	13%	N/A
2017	62.04%	57%	34%	N/A	35%	56%
2020	67%	96%	64%	29%	56%	95%
2023	73.1%	95.7%	71.9%	77.2%	56.7%	49.5%
2025	78%	94.7%	71%	81.6%	44.4%	63.5%

Source: [Kemp, 2015; 2017; 2020; 2023; 2025](#)

Filipinos also rely on the internet for the spread and consumption of news, with 82% of respondents to a 2024 Reuters survey identifying social media as their primary news sources – against only 13% for print media ([Newman et al., 2024](#)). Among these platforms, Facebook (61%) is the most widely used for sharing news, followed by YouTube (45%), Messenger (26%), TikTok (23%), Instagram (12%) and lastly X (9%) ([Ibid.](#)).

This has led most media companies to digitalise their production. Still, despite this shift Filipinos continue to consume legacy media, whose digital platforms dominate traffic and rankings. First figures GMA News (26.7%), followed by ABS CBN News (22.74%), The Philippine STAR (13.8%) and Inquirer.net (13.04%) ([Vera Files, 2023](#)).

In the Philippines, the digital transition of legacy outlets has been accompanied by strong credibility ratings ([Cervantes, 2024](#)). Overall, trust towards established news outlets has increased by 10% between 2020 and 2024, stabilising from 2022 onwards at 37% during the beginning of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. 's administration ([Ibid.](#)). The GMA Network tops the list with a brand trust rating of 72%, followed by TV5 (67%), the Philippine Daily Inquirer (66%) and Manila Bulletin, Super Radyo dzBB, and the Philippine Star all with a score of 65% ([Ibid.](#)). Despite their wide reach, mainstream media coverage of IPs remains limited, as well as largely sensationalist and victimising in tone, failing to capture the systemic nature of IPs' struggles and their role in environmental protection (KII01; 02; 06; 08; 10).

As alternatives to portrayals of IPs and climate issues in legacy outlets, the increasing digitalisation of the Philippines's media landscape has opened powerful avenues for civic and environmental advocates to spread their perspectives ([O'Donovan, 2025](#)). Hashtags like #UprootTheSystem and #LetTheEarthBreathe have mobilised young Filipinos for climate justice ([YACAP, 2021](#)). Civil society organisations (CSOs) such as Kalikasan PNE and the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice use social media to expose harmful logging, mining, and fossil fuel projects that threaten IP communities. Despite the dominant presence of legacy outlets in the Philippine media landscape, alternative and progressive Philippine voices were also able to emerge.

For instance, in 2010, Radyo Sagada 104.7 FM was established as the first and only IPs' community radio station in the Philippines, utilising participatory approaches to amplify Indigenous voices ([UPLB, 2024](#)). In 2014, Altermidya, short for People's Alternative Media Network, emerged as a network of independent and progressive media outlets, institutions and individuals ([International Association of Women in Radio and Television-Philippine Chapter, 2018](#)). Radio Lumad and social media-driven outlets such as Katribu Kalipunan ng Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas, Tebtebba and Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) also contributed to the amplification of Indigenous voices and perspectives.

However, these advances can be negated by structural disparities, with IPs often residing in remote areas experiencing the greatest barriers to digital participation. Many rely on traditional media like radio for news, public warnings, and daily communication (UNDP, 2025). The Department of Information and Communications Technology's 2019 National Information and Communications Technology Household Survey confirms that radio remains the most accessible medium for marginalised and geographically isolated communities (BIMP-EAGA, 2024).

Moreover, the same connectivity that amplifies these voices also exposes them to new vulnerabilities including climate disinformation, digital harassment and coordinated online attacks have become acute threats, particularly for Indigenous and environmental defenders (Global Witness, 2025). This will be discussed in the following section.

1.3.2. The Rise of Disinformation

Digitalisation in the Philippines has simultaneously catalysed the resurgence and spread of disinformation. A staggering nine in ten Filipinos report encountering false or misleading content, being the highest self-reported exposure among 46 media markets globally (Khan & Chua, 2023). A 2025 survey revealed that 65% of respondents expressed difficulties in determining the reliability and truthfulness of the piece of news that they consume (Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2025).

Disinformation in the Philippines landscape is rooted in political rivalry and historical revisionism, aimed to support the current power structure by distorting democratic choices and masking corruption (Ibid.). Disinformation surges take place during election periods and major political events. For instance, the 2025 midterm elections saw the arrest and surrender of former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte to the International Criminal Court, as well as the impeachment of Vice President Sara Duterte (Chua, 2025).

In response, the Marcos Jr. administration has implemented several digital safety initiatives, characterised by multi-sector and multi-agency cooperation under the “Whole-of-Nation” approach. The 2023 Media and Information Literacy campaign, which aims to provide the public – mainly the youth – with instruments to “discern truth from falsehood” (Presidential Communications Office, 2023), was launched by the Presidential Communications Office, involving the Departments of Education, Interior and Local Government, Social Welfare and Development and the Commission on Higher Education, as well as private sector participants, namely Meta, Google, TikTok and X (Gonzales & Pulta, 2023). The Media and Information Literacy campaign programmes focus on enhancing media literacy, integrating relevant topics into school curricula and launching community outreach programs (Flores, 2023).

These efforts are complemented by the authorities actively monitoring and removing online disinformation, while reviewing cybercrime laws to discourage those who spread fake news (Ibid.). In particular, the Deepfake Accountability and Transparency Act (2024), currently under deliberation, acknowledges the gap in legislation to protect citizens from deceptive Artificial Intelligence (AI)-generated videos circulated online. Despite these efforts, a formal, state-run fact-checking agency has not been established.

The limitations of government-led initiatives are further compounded by the actions of both the Duterte and Marcos administrations, which have been accused of weaponising disinformation to achieve power (Rappler, 2022). Consequently, the East Asia Forum describes the Philippine government's ongoing fight against disinformation as a “digital paradox of democracy” (2025).

For instance, Marcos Jr. 's campaign allegedly employed coordinated troll networks to rewrite historical memory, portraying his father's era as a “golden age” (Chua, 2025). Political influencers, often hired as “mercenaries”, within pro-Duterte and pro-Marco camps spread disinformation and political propaganda through vlogs, getting paid millions to manipulate public opinion and attack critics (Beltran, 2025). Similar concerns arose during the 2025 midterm elections, with 67% of the population citing disinformation as a major issue. Investigations confirmed these fears, showing that fake accounts drove 45% of election-related discussions (*Ibid.*) and that nearly a third of distorted content consisted of AI-generated deepfake videos impersonating public figures (Chua, 2025b; Al Jazeera, 2025).

To compensate for the limitations of government-led initiatives, independent organisations have stepped in. Groups such as Fact Check Philippines, FactRakers, ABS-CBN Fact Check and Tsek/Eks operate across institutional partners to debunk misinformation, especially during elections. Nevertheless, independent monitoring mechanisms face constraints, such as limited funding and reach outside urban areas, volunteer-based operations and political polarisation that reduces public trust in corrections (Rappler, 2022; KII12). Additionally, the rollback in content moderation by tech platforms has directly affected fact-checking and the regulation of political disinformation campaigns (Wright, 2025).

The fight against disinformation in the Philippines is further constrained by a restrictive legal and media environment. Despite the country's ranking improving in the 2025 World Press Freedom Index (rising from 134th to 116th), journalists and activists continue to face systemic hurdles (RSF, 2025). This precariousness is rooted in a legal framework that penalises dissent, including Batas Pambansa 880 (restricting public assembly) (1985), the Cybercrime Law (2012) and the ATL (2020). Furthermore, criminal defamation remains a potent tool for harassment. Under the Revised Penal Code (1930), libel carries a four-year prison sentence, while the penalties involving cyber libel under the Cybercrime Law are even more severe (The Supreme Court of the Philippines, 2023).

A clear example of the chilling effect on Philippine media was the 2020 shutdown of ABS-CBN, the country's largest television network, under the Duterte administration (Alindogan, 2020). This was reportedly due to the network's failure to air the administration's paid political advertisements and perceived bias against the former president (*Ibid.*). Such environments would fundamentally hamper the capacity of civil society and human rights defenders to mobilise support or spread counter-narratives to apparent state-sponsored disinformation.

The state has increasingly weaponised disinformation across traditional media – via press releases and television programs – as well as social media platforms, particularly Facebook (Human Rights Foundation, 2023). Central to this strategy is “red-tagging”: the practice of falsely labeling activists and journalists as communists or terrorists to strip them of legal and social protections (Amnesty International, 2024). This creates a culture of digital hostility – legitimising cyber and physical attacks against IPs and activists – as demonstrated by the 2025 Global Witness survey that found 90% of Filipino land and environmental defenders experiencing online abuse linked to their political affiliations (Global Witness, 2025). Despite the severity of these attacks, platforms like Meta have been denounced for failing to moderate red-tagging content that incites violence (Amnesty International, 2024).

The proliferation of state-sponsored disinformation that scapegoats political opponents as “communists” or “terrorists” is not limited to the online sphere, but it is also propagated offline during campus tours, awareness seminars or symposia held by police and military personnel in schools and universities (KII07; 09). In September 2025 two of these such events were held in high schools in Cataingan, where Philippine soldiers lectured students on “CPP-NPA Deceptive Recruitment,” (Magtoto, 2025) violating the Declaration of Schools as Zones of Peace (2005). The coordinated and deliberate nature of red-tagging campaigns is highlighted by KII09:

“[Red-tagging] happens both ways. Online attacks are used to destroy your reputation, while physical posters in the real world are meant to prompt action. When you see your face on a poster in your own town, labelled an “enemy of the state,” it is an invitation for harassment or worse. In a crisis, the government should be there for you, but instead, they become the perpetrators—the very symbol of fear (KII09)”.

These online and offline disinformation practices intimidate the public, creating a fertile ground that justifies and precedes real-world, lethal physical violence (KII08; 09). The practice of red-tagging generates the “political pressure” necessary to justify abductions, arbitrary detentions and extra-judicial killings (Conde, 2024). This creates an environment with staggering human cost. In 2023 alone, 17 of the 196 global killings and forced disappearances of environmental defenders⁶ occurred in the Philippines (Ibid.). With 298 defenders murdered between 2012 and 2023, the Philippines maintains the highest mortality rate for environmental advocates in Asia and the fifth highest globally, underscoring the fatal consequences of a state-led disinformation apparatus (Global Witness, 2024).

Climate conspiracy theories that scapegoat IPs for countering disinformation that protects environmentally harmful projects tend to fill in narrative vacuums that are created by decontextualised climate and deflection of state and corporate accountability for it. This indicates that dynamics of information disorder in the Philippines also extend to environmental and climate-related issues, in which findings on the state’s exploitative land use and its contribution to climate change is distorted or concealed to maintain its power structure. This distortion persists in spite of Filipinos’ general high awareness (85%) of environmental destruction (KII03; Harvard Humanitarian Initiative Resilient Communities, 2024), primarily due to the country’s ranking as one of the most disaster-prone globally (Climate Impacts Tracker Asia, 2024). Still, Filipinos’ stance and awareness of climate change vary across generations (KII03; 12), with 36% of Filipinos between the ages of 18 and 35 undertaking personal actions against climate change, against 28% of those aged 56 and above (Harvard Humanitarian Initiative Resilient Communities, 2024). However, climate change is predominantly viewed through a technical perspective, suggesting a limited awareness of its impacts as a human rights issue.

To note, only 22% of Filipinos declare to be satisfied with the government’s efforts to address climate change (Ibid.). This perception is shaped by the Philippines’ fragmented information ecosystem, which spectacularises climate disasters while omitting their systemic causes (KII01; 02; 06; 08; 10; 12), rather focusing on citizens’ individual responsibilities (Sumicad 2025). The language used by climate broadcasting is deliberately employed to portray climate disasters as isolated, immediately actionable events, highlighting precautionary advice over contextualising the phenomena (Ibid.).

Within this context, climate disinformation exacerbates threats faced by IPs and rights defenders in the Philippines, fuelling red- and terrorist-tagging narratives. Moreover, areas with limited connectivity may distort the IP communities’ understanding of how resource grabs by external actors are legitimised by

⁶ While the exact number of IPs among the killed environmental defenders is not specified, the source emphasises that many of these victims in the Philippines are Indigenous leaders protecting their ancestral lands from environmentally damaging projects.

the public. These dynamics create an enabling environment in which climate disinformation disproportionately affects IP. The following chapters examine these forms and impacts in greater detail. Chapter 1 has shed light on the legitimisation of attacks on IPs, which further exacerbates their plights as a result of climate change and deforestation in the Philippines. Additionally, it explores how the digitalisation of media and the spread of disinformation have made disinformation on climate change a growing concern in the country. Chapter 2 will define key forms of climate disinformation in the Philippines' media landscape, which will form the basis for the impact analysis presented in Chapter 3.

2. Forms of Climate Disinformation

This chapter identifies four major forms of climate disinformation in the Philippines: fabrication of IP consent, greenwashing, false climate solutions and deflecting accountability, which comprises the retraction of environmental commitments and employing and climate conspiracy narratives. The first three forms identified falls under delayism⁷, while the last one is a form of denialism⁸.

All three forms of information disorder – mis- dis- and malinformation – are relevant to the Philippines context. Disinformation and malinformation are actively used to shape narratives and overwhelm the information environment surrounding climate change with distortions and selective truths. Misinformation, on the other hand, is benign in its intention to deceive and its impact on climate narratives is negligible compared to the dissemination of disinformation and malinformation. In this context, the report, in Chapter 2, focuses on disinformation and malinformation – both of which are deliberately crafted to mislead or harm their intended audience. Their defining feature lies in their deceptive intent, which not only distorts facts but also undermines public trust, disrupts informed decision-making and can incite social or political harm.

2.1. Fabricating IP Consent

The first form of climate disinformation, fabrication of IP consent, falls under the delayism approach. In the Philippines, state and corporate aligned sources emphasise their inclusion of IPs in decision making processes on their ancestral lands, which is often contradicted by the perspectives of IPs. This indicates that state and corporate actors use tokenistic narratives that fabricate the approval of IPs for destructive environmental projects to operate on their ancestral domains ([MacInnes et al., 2017](#)). This tactic creates the appearance of upholding IPs' rights to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) rights, thereby conveying a superficial or symbolic inclusion of IPs (KII01; 02; 04; 07; 11; [Daytec-Yañgot, 2021](#)). First, this section explores a 2011 case of disinformation, where FPIC evidence is completely fabricated. Then, it moves onto more recent cases of malinformation, when out-of-context information is presented to create the appearance of consent.

Narratives that fabricate IP consent are designed to legitimise violent land grabs from companies, which is often supported by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) (KII01; 02; 06; 07; 08; 11). This compromises the NCIP's integrity, with claims that the agency supports the military and private companies in coercing communities to accept harmful environmental projects ([Global Witness, 2024](#)). Measures by the military entail intimidation and harassing IP community members ([Cordillera Peoples Alliance, 2023](#)), (further explored in Chapter 3.1). As such, fabricating IP consent authorises mining operations in Indigenous territories, particularly in Cordillera and Mindanao, despite widespread opposition from affected communities ([Flores, 2025](#)). KII06 elaborates on how, despite its duty to facilitate CADT and FPIC processes, the NCIP contributes to tokenistic consultations, prioritising businesses interests over IP rights:

⁷ Climate denialism is the rejection of information concerning the existence of climate change and deforestation (Sethi, 2024).

⁸ Climate delayism refers to information that misleads the public and hinders effective climate action (Lamb et al., 2020).

“It is ironic that an agency established for the protection of Indigenous rights is simply another mechanism to [subvert decision-making]. In many cases involving mining, dams, or windmills, people say the NCIP does not express community sentiments. [The Commission leadership] always claims there is “consent,” but if there is consent, why are there protests? The NCIP is just an instrument to legalise the destruction of Indigenous lands (KII01)

[At the same time,] the rank and file of the NCIP behave like mere office employees, not as advocates for IPs’ rights. Like other government bodies, the [Office for Southern Cultural Communities] — and now the NCIP — are not exceptions when it comes to corruption. They profit from services provided to [Indigenous] communities, including the FPIC process (KII06)”.

First, fabricating IP consent in the Philippines has been a consistent disinformation strategy, relied upon to greenlight environmentally-harmful projects. A dated yet significant example is the 2011 coordinated disinformation campaign by MacroAsia Corporation regarding nickel mining operations in Brooke’s Point, *Pala’wan*⁹ ancestral territories. The Philippines is the world’s second-largest producer of nickel, in which 60% of reserves are located in Indigenous lands leading to clashes over FPIC rights ([Mason et al., 2025](#)). However, MacroAsia used newspaper articles and paid advertisements to falsely claim that “Tribal Chieftains”¹⁰ supported by 80% of the Indigenous community members,¹¹ had consented to the project ([Balana, 2011](#) ; [Schertow, 2011](#)). It was later revealed that the Indigenous representatives had, in fact, been hired by MacroAsia to forge the community’s consent to the project, and that the term “Tribal Chieftains” is a derogatory term with colonial origins that is not used by IP communities, but by the media who exoticise IPs ([Rainforest Rescue, 2011](#)).

While environmental and human rights concerns managed to stall the project for more than a decade, in 2023, MacroAsia received a Certificate of Precondition from the NCIP, certifying consent to the nickel mining project from the Palawan municipality ([Mason et al., 2025](#)). This occurred despite repeated allegations that MacroAsia had failed to meet FPIC requirements by withholding information from community members and securing “support” through bribery while limiting the participation of those who agreed to the project ([Amnesty International, 2025](#)). The narrative surrounding the project’s revival is often presented positively, focusing on the mine’s production potential in articles such as “Lucio Tan’s MacroAsia edges closer to mining operations with Infanta Nickel Project in Palawan” ([InsiderPH, 2024](#)).

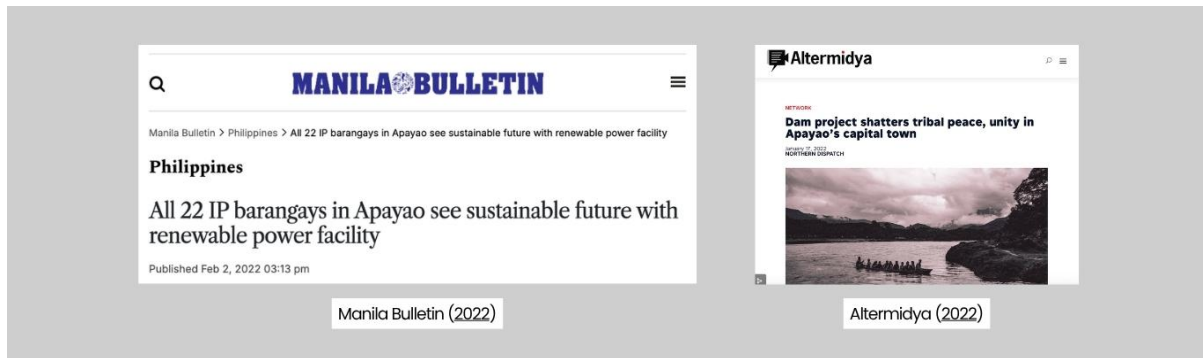
Despite being a dated example, the MacroAsia case remains highly relevant as it demonstrates how corporate actors use the misrepresentation of Indigenous consent to greenlight operations on Indigenous lands. While the 2011 campaign constitutes disinformation for blatant false representation (paid actors as “Tribal Chieftains”), more contemporary instances of allegations against MacroAsia

⁹ Pala’wan indicates the Indigenous ethnic group, while Palawan indicates the island and province.

¹⁰ The term “Tribal Chieftain” is often criticised as a colonial-era imposition that exoticises IPs. Many IP communities reject the term, as it does not accurately reflect their specific governance structures and cultural identities.

¹¹ The numbers vary with sources like *Inquirer* (2011) and *Rainforest Rescue* (2011) reporting 30 and sources like *IC* (2011) reporting 50.

constitute malinformation. In these cases, companies leverage the consent of a small, selectively chosen group as misleading evidence of full community approval.



A case that illustrates the use of malinformation consists of the Pan Pacific dam on the Apayao river. From 2017 to 2022, Pan Pacific systematically undermined the FPIC process for the construction of two dams on the Apayao River, ultimately creating a false impression of consent from the *Isnag* community (Lapniten, 2022). The company achieved this through tokenistic tactics, including the selective engagement of supportive community members, repeatedly changing procedural schedules and utilising ambiguous contractual language (MacInnes et al., 2017).

A critical instance involved a secret consensus session where selected members were given only 15 minutes to respond, yielding a consensus of “Yes for negotiations only” (Lapniten, 2022; Cariño, 2022). Mass media outlets, however, publicised this as full support: “All 22 IP barangays¹² in Apayao see a sustainable future with renewable power facility” (Manila Bulletin, 2022). Furthermore, articles like “*Isnag* receive benefit from 150mw Gened-1 hydro” (Herald Express, 2022) highlighted Pan Pacific’s promises of climate benefits, development, and free electricity, despite a current lack of concrete plans to deliver on these claims (LiCAS, 2024). The consequential legal battle between Pan Pacific and the *Isnag* community ultimately showcases how fabricating IP consent serves as a strategy to comply with FPIC standards on paper and fast-track environmentally damaging projects.

Similarly, the Makilala Mining Company Copper Gold Project in Basel exemplifies how deceptive practices, such as selective consultations and out-of-context images, are used to simulate the FPIC process. For instance, in September 2024, the company claimed on its website that the “MCB Project Receives Certification for Compliance with FPIC Process,” stating extensive engagement with the *Balatoc* community (2024). This narrative was reinforced by several media articles, including “Celsius Hits Regulatory Milestone at Philippine Copper-Gold Project, Plans Next Steps” (De La Crux, 2025), “MCB Project Mining Permit Granted by Philippine Government” (Philippine Resources, 2024) and “Celsius Resources Has a Copper Giant in a Country Where Mining Is Set to Boom” (Philippine Mining Club, 2025).

Moreover, Makilala Corporation’s disinformation tactics extended to circulating a photograph of Governor James Edduba signing a document during the *Balatoc*-Makilala Mining consultation. The company falsely presented this as the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement, when he was merely signing as a witness (Calayan, 2025).

Nonetheless, these narratives were disputed by community members. Reports indicate that Makilala Mining failed to secure the consensus of all *Balatoc* members and neglected to consult with neighboring communities that will also suffer the environmental impacts of the project (Altermidya, 2025).

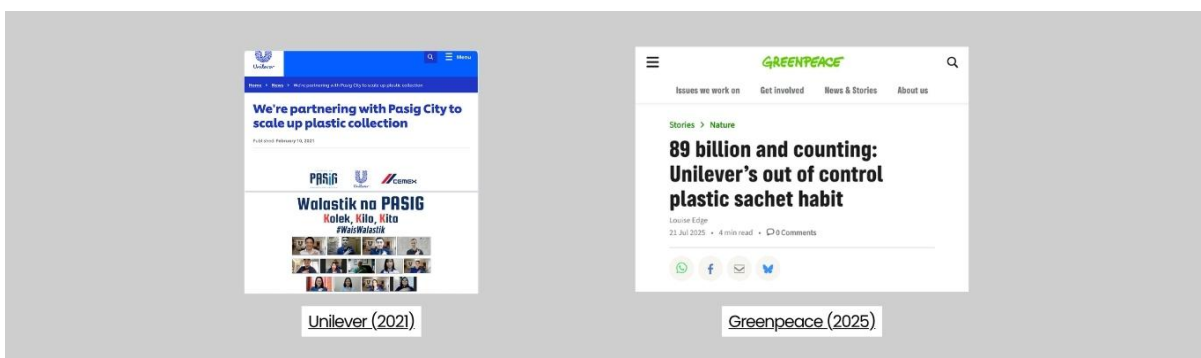
¹² Barangays are the Philippines’ smallest unit of government.



These examples reveal how tokenistic narratives serve as a dual strategy of disinformation and malinformation. By signalling performative compliance with FPIC standards, they present a favorable corporate image while simultaneously concealing the genuine lack of “consent”. This purported approval actually stems from corporations using procedural manipulation or intimidation to deceive IPs into accepting development projects and greenlighting them.

2.2. Greenwashing

The second form of climate disinformation within the delayism approach is greenwashing, a narrative that deliberately portrays corporate entities as environmentally conscious with misleading sustainability claims, thereby delaying concrete climate action (UN, n.d.). This section examines the outcome of greenwashing as a form of malinformation. This is due to mainstream sources in the Philippines emphasising corporate “green” initiatives while omitting data about their unsustainable practices. First, companies employ greenwashing tactics to divert the public’s attention from harmful practices to green efforts (KII01; 02; 03; 04; 05; 06; 07; 10; 11). Second, companies manipulate information to paint their unsustainable practices as environmentally friendly. Both forms of corporate greenwashing in the Philippines are legitimised through celebrity endorsements, branded campaigns and hashtags (Cabañes and Santiago, 2022; KII12).

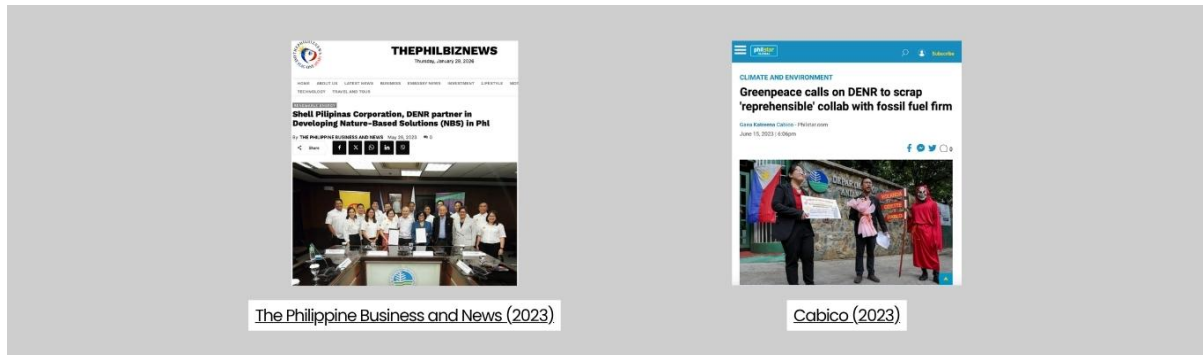


Firstly, corporations utilise sustainability campaigns to divert scrutiny from their environmentally destructive practices, as demonstrated by Unilever Philippines' “Misis Walastik” sachet recovery program. Launched in 2012, this is the company’s longest-running environmental sustainability programme, which continues through partnerships with Philippine cities and barangays (Unilever, 2021). The initiative, structured around “Kolek (collect), Kilo (weigh), and Kita (pay/earn)”, incentivises households with cash for every kilo of plastic collected (Ibid.).

However, this initiative contrasts sharply with the company's broader activities. In 2023 Greenpeace exposed Unilever to be the world’s biggest corporate seller of plastic sachets, selling 1,700 plastic

sachets per second ([Greenpeace, 2025](#)). Furthermore, close sources indicated that the company had actively lobbied against proposed sachet bans in both India and the Philippines ([Brock & Geddie, 2022](#)).

Unilever’s Philippines demonstrates how greenwashing effectively shifts the burden of climate responsibility onto the consumer, minimising the company’s own significant environmental role and deflecting accountability ([Park, 2022](#)). By positioning itself as an environmentally conscious entity that urges the public to take action, Unilever’s “Misis Walastik” programme successfully draws attention away from its status as a major plastic polluter.



Another case that exemplifies how corporations employ greenwashing to divert attention from their unsustainable practices involves Shell Pilipinas Corporation. In 2023, the company signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ([Shell, 2023](#)). This agreement focuses on identifying and developing Nature-Based Solutions opportunities in the Philippines ([Ibid.](#)). The collaboration’s goals are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, safeguard natural ecosystems and provide benefits to local communities ([Ibid.](#)).

On its official website, Shell publicises the initiative by quoting President and CEO Lorelie Quiambao-Osial, claiming that the company and the DENR are “coming together to make a positive difference” ([Ibid.](#)). Manila Bulletin ([2023](#)) also promotes the initiative in its article “Shell to expand nature-based solutions offer to customers for carbon offset”. The Philippine Business and News ([2023](#)) echoes this message through the article “Shell Pilipinas Corporation, DENR partner in developing [nature-based solutions] in [the Philippines]”.

However, numerous Filipinos have called this initiative out for greenwashing, claiming that the DENR should demand that Shell pays reparations for the environmental degradation and human rights abuses that it has caused in the Philippines ([Cabico, 2023](#)). Shell’s programme is accused of being a short-term fix for the company’s carbon footprint, aimed at diverting the attention from its continued oil and gas extractions and the lack of true long-term decarbonisation efforts ([Greenpeace, 2023](#)). The company has also dealt with similar greenwashing allegations abroad for promoting fossil gas as “carbon-neutral” by purchasing carbon offset rather than reducing emissions ([Gelmini, 2021](#)).

Moreover, Shell’s Fuel Rewards Programme, one of the initiatives under its Nature-Based Solutions, gives customers the opportunity to pay an additional fee to offset carbon emissions when fuelling up their vehicles ([Shell, n.d.](#)). Part of Shell’s communication strategy for its Rewards programme involved paid partnerships with popular Filipino influencers ([Dimitriadis et al., 2023](#)). A post by an influencer known as “our Filipino grandma”, known for sharing videos about the love for her family and fans, promoted Shell’s programme with the post “The moment you realise that the Fuel Rewards Programme at Shell is low key lit...” ([Ourfilipinograndma, 2022](#)).

This highlights how Shell leveraged the caring and wholesome nature of the influencer to convince her followers to partake in the campaign. This, just like Unilever’s campaign, shifts the burden of climate fight onto customers, enabling companies to deflect accountability for the large-scale environmental destruction they cause. This is especially concerning given that Royal Dutch Shell figures seventh out of the twenty companies that have contributed the most to carbon emissions since 1965 ([Taylor and Watts, 2019](#)). Despite this, Shell Pilipinas is able to present an environmentally conscious facade through high-profile environmental projects, while making no real efforts to decrease its oil and gas operations, thereby failing to effectively decrease its carbon footprint in the long-term.

Secondly, companies employ greenwashing to conceal the environmental damage caused by the very projects they promote as sustainable (KII01; 02; 03; 04; 05; 06; 07; 10; 11). KII01 elaborates on this dynamic, describing how corporations systematically manipulate information through public relations campaigns designed to project an image of environmental and social responsibility:

“There is massive manipulation of the truth going on. Companies launch information campaigns to make it look like they are “good” and “responsible.” Many people are misinformed and believe the lies. [While they do this,] IPs protecting their rights are portrayed as “anti-development,” “troublemakers,” or “terrorists.” Many are slapped with legal cases or “disappeared” with impunity ... Corporations, government, and military are all in this together (KII01)”.

This is exemplified by San Miguel Corporation’s Biodiversity Offset Programme, which aimed to restore wetlands and mangroves in Bulacan as means of countering the habitat loss brought out by their construction projects of their New Manila International Airport ([Global Witness, 2025](#)). In January 2026, the launch of this programme was attended by DENR members to associate the construction of the new airport with a “green” image ([San Miguel Corporation, 2024](#)). Additionally, on its official website, San Miguel Corporation celebrates the company’s recognition as one of Asia-Pacific’s 25 Steward Leadership Excellence awardees for its Dampalit’s Biodiversity project, part of the company’s broader Biodiversity Offset Programme ([San Miguel Corporation, 2024b](#)). Media outlets advertise this programme as “SMC Launches Philippines’ First Biodiversity Offset Site” ([Loyola, 2024](#)) and “Manila’s New Airport: Opportunity to Build with Nature” ([Madgwick, 2021](#)).

While San Miguel’s nature-based solutions for environmental preservation, local livelihood enhancement and flooding mitigation do constitute true “green” efforts, they are far from offsetting the ecological and socioeconomic harm caused by the airport construction as advertised ([Chavez & Agbayani, 2020](#)). For instance, 600 mangroves have been cleared in what residents suspect was preparatory work for the project, exacerbated by the company’s refusal to take accountability ([Global Witness, 2025](#)). Moreover, the company’s mangrove reforestation efforts were described by environmental experts as irresponsible, unscientific and as a superficial fix for an irreversible problem ([Ibid.](#)). As such, San Miguel Corporation exemplifies the use of greenwashing to promote environmentally detrimental projects as sustainable, since its Biodiversity Offset Programme restores only a small portion of the environmental harm caused by the New Manila International Airport construction ([Global Witness, 2025](#) ; [Chavez & Agbayani, 2020](#)).

The patterns of greenwashing illustrated show how companies create an environmentally conscious image through “green” projects that represent short-term fixes and fail to tackle the root causes of climate change (KII07; 09). This misrepresentation props up a facade of accountability, thereby curbing pressures for companies to continue engaging with environmentally destructive practices. While the profit margins of companies are maintained, greenwashing delays efforts to mitigate climate change and counter the socioeconomic harms it brings.

2.3. False Climate Solutions

The third form of climate disinformation within the delayism approach involves promoting false climate solutions. These narratives promote climate initiatives driven by the state and corporations, which tend to prioritise commercial interests over genuine mitigation by failing to account for IPs’ perspectives ([Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, 2023](#)). Nonetheless, these narratives merely create an illusion of progress, letting policymakers avoid accountability and delay genuine climate action (KII01; 02; 03; 04; 05; 06; 07). In the context of the Philippines, weak environmental governance allows such initiatives to spread rapidly online, gaining legitimacy through media and institutional support ([United Nations Environment Programme & United Nations Climate Technology Centre & Network, 2011](#)).

These narratives advance false climate solutions in two ways. First, the promotion of reforestation initiatives as a false climate solution omits its contribution to the decline of forest cover, thereby manifesting as disinformation. Second, it focuses on how information on fossil fuels, like Liquified Natural Gas (LNG), is taken out-of-context to create a misleading impression of its sustainability, thereby constituting as malinformation.

Firstly, the promotion of reforestation initiatives in the Philippines often manifests as disinformation by fabricating data to demonstrate progress in mitigating climate change. This is exemplified by the DENR’s National Greening Programme, an ongoing scheme institutionalised under Executive Order No. 26 ([2011](#)) and later expanded under Executive Order No. 193 ([2015](#)). In 2025, the programme renewed the target to reforesting 7.1 million hectares by 2028, an extension of their initial goal to plant 1.5 billion trees across 1.5 million hectares within six years ([Lozano et al., 2025](#)).



Furthermore, the initiative was further valorised by the government affiliated media. Articles such as “DENR Logs 85% Tree Survival in Nat'l Greening Program in Bicol” by the Philippine News Agency ([2025](#)) highlight the programme’s success in planting 1,413,330 seedlings across 2,112 hectares across six provinces in Bicol. Similarly, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, a government-owned corporation, promotes the programmes as “The National Greening Program: Hope for our Balding Forests” ([2025](#)).

However, despite being promoted as an initiative for rainforest preservation and aid sustainable agriculture, outcomes in both areas ultimately worsened (Lighthouse Reports, 2025). Aerial imagery indicates that at least one in every 25 hectares allocated to reforestation under the National Greening Programme has actually experienced at least one major deforestation event (Ibid.). This is largely due to the flawed implementation of the initiative, which was called out by Marlo Mendoza, the original designer of the Greening Programme. He highlights the programme’s failure to meaningfully involve local communities in the process, as they are only granted short-term access to the land and required to grow single crop plantations to cater to mass-production needs (Bonzo et al., 2025). These conditions significantly deviate from many of the provisions of his original design, while underscoring the socio-economic consequences of this project (Lighthouse Reports, 2025).

Furthermore, the genuine purpose of the reforestation project is undermined by false climate solution narratives that omit its business interests. For instance, both satellite imagery analyses and eyewitness accounts confirm that native forests are often cleared prior to “reforestation” efforts to make space for single-cash-crop plantations (Bonzo et al., 2025). Single-crop plantations, or monocultures, are particularly damaging for the ecosystem (KII06), leading to biodiversity loss by hampering wild pollination as well as accelerating pest infestation and soil exhaustion (Coutinho, 2023). While enabling an immediate increase in food production, monocultures hinder soil fertility, leading to food insecurity and environmental degradation in the long run (Ibid.). The clearing of forest areas to re-plant invasive exotic species highlights how the National Greening Programme instrumentalises “sustainable” narratives to pursue rapid, yet unsustainable, economic growth at the expense of the environment and local livelihoods (Lighthouse Reports, 2025).

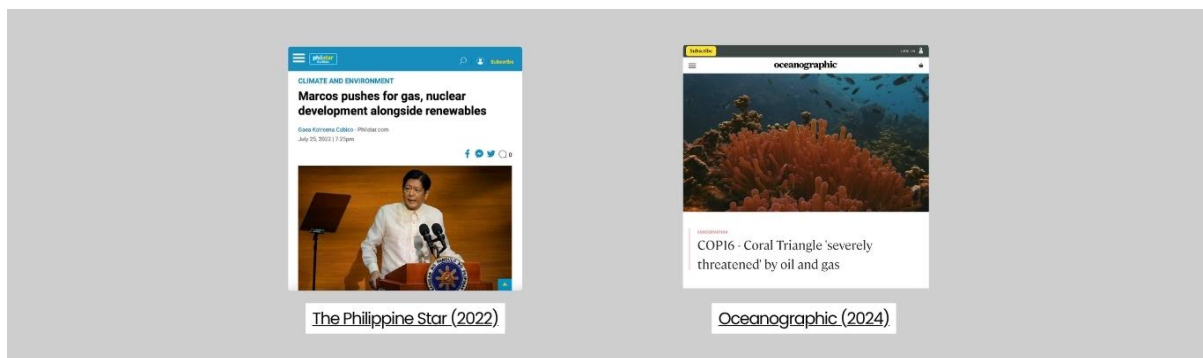
Similarly, the REDD+ programme has generated environmental and socioeconomic harm in practice. This carbon credit scheme was developed under the (2007) UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties to provide financial incentives to developing countries for forest preservation (UNCCC, n.d.). In the Philippines, REDD+ was institutionalised under the 2010 National Framework Strategy on Climate Change and the 2011-2028 National Climate Change Action Plan, forming a key pillar of the country’s carbon reduction targets under its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (DENR-FMB, 2017). Promoted by the DENR and backed by international partners, REDD+ is advertised as a pathway to conserve biodiversity, boost forest resilience and generate income for the rural population (GIZ, n.d.). On its official website, the DENR promotes the project as “DENR pushes for nationwide forest conservation to reduce climate change impacts” (n.d.), highlighting the project’s conservation goals. Even scientific and academic reports like “Strengthening community voices in REDD-plus policy” (2012) by the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, champion REDD+ projects in General Nakar and Palawan, praising “ecological” capacity building initiatives that have deterred IPs from engaging in “illegal activities” in the forests, namely, slash-and-burn and illegal poaching. KII06 elaborates on the stigmatisation of traditional practices, which are juxtaposed to “modern” climate solutions:

“The fast deforestation of our territories by logging, mining and plantations are blamed on [IPs] because according to them, we are the ones cutting the trees for kaingin (slash-and-burn) or swidden farming.

What they fail to [acknowledge] are the chainsaw machines that can fell down a big tree in a matter of minutes, compared to IPs' wasay (axe) which cannot even cut a small tree as quickly. [They ignore the heavy] machinery like bulldozers, graders or logging wreckers that can level hills in a matter of hours (KII06)”.

Despite its official positive framing, REDD+ has been increasingly criticised as a false solution to climate change. Numerous studies and advocacy groups argue that REDD+, in practice, reinforces the very system it claims to dismantle (Friend of the Earth, 2014) by marginalising IPs from meaningful participation in decision-making and failing to secure genuine FPIC (Manahan, 2018). The case of General Nakar in Quezon Province illustrates these failures vividly. Although positioned as a REDD+ success story, the area saw forest cover declining dramatically from 72.18% in 2016 to 57.52% in 2022 (Israel et al., 2023). In 2024 alone, 35 hectares of forest were lost, resulting in nearly 20 kilotonnes of CO2 emissions (Global Forest Watch, 2024).

Secondly, the promotion of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as a “clean alternative energy” manifests as malinformation for deliberately omitting its detrimental impacts as a fossil fuel. This narrative is reinforced by high-level government rhetoric. For example, during his 2025 State of the Nation Address, President Marcos Jr. emphasised renewable energy, pledging to raise its share in the power mix to 35% by 2030 and 50% by 2040 (The Climate Reality Project, 2025). However, he also signed the Philippine Natural Gas Industry Development Act (2025), claiming LNG is a clean alternative to coal and vital for energy security (Context, 2024). This stance is echoed by trusted news outlets like GMA Network in their article, “Marcos Signs Into Law Bill Promoting Development of PH Natural Gas Industry” (2025) (see Chapter 1.3.1).



Despite being branded as an indispensable “bridge fuel” for the transition, LNG is still a fossil fuel with significant climate risks. Although it emits less carbon dioxide than coal or oil, its extraction, transport, and processing can release methane, a greenhouse gas over 10 times more potent than CO2 over a 20-year period (Cabico, 2025). Furthermore, unburned LNG leaks are more than 80 times more harmful to the climate than CO2, threatening to undermine global emission reduction efforts (Davey, 2024). Relying on LNG also risks locking the Philippines into decades of fossil fuel dependence, which will ultimately delay the widespread adoption of true renewable energy solutions (Cabico, 2025).

The continued support of LNG – despite the country’s “green” energy commitments – are largely attributed to a conflict of interests caused by business ties between a number of politicians and the fossil fuel industry (KII03; 10; 11; 12). For instance, in 2024, Hermilando Mandanas, then-governor of Batangas was exposed as being the largest shareholder of AbaCore Capital Holdings Inc., a real estate firm whose value appreciated exponentially due to the province’s LNG boom that Mandanas had aggressively fast-tracked (The Associated Press, 2024). KII03 elaborates on this conflict of interest, which enables the prioritisation of business interests over environmental concerns and human rights impacts:

“Climate information is shared by various sources, including the government. But there are politicians in the government who have personal interests in the fossil fuel industry. This conflict of interest enables practices that frame fossil fuels as best sources of energy. When we talk about Indigenous territories and rights, we’re going up against [these] powerful interests, and stories [from Indigenous perspectives] rarely make it into the media (KI103)”

As an extension to climate concerns, LNG projects pose severe threats to local communities and marine health. Since 2022, several new LNG power plants have been established near the Verde Island Passage ([Energy Tracker Asia, 2023](#)). The area is a globally vital biodiversity hotspot within the Coral Triangle, containing the highest concentration of marine species on the planet. However, the establishment of such plans resulted in the deteriorating health of neighbouring communities. For instance, residents of Santa Clara residing near an LNG import terminal, have reported a sharp increase in respiratory illnesses linked to the operations ([Ramos, 2024](#)). Moreover, oil spills and the discharge of hot water damage coral reefs, facilitating the spread of invasive species that create challenges for coastal communities ([Davey, 2024](#)).

Ultimately, The NGP, REDD+ and LNG power plants are promoted as climate solutions, which rely on fabricated claims on progress and decontextualised information to generate the impression of sustainable climate action. This entails omitting or minimising the resulting environmental and human rights impacts, thereby diverting attention from systemic ecological problems and legitimising “development aggression” in the form of attacks against IPs.

2.4. Deflecting Accountability

The fourth form of climate disinformation is the deflection of accountability, which is categorised under the denialist approach. This communication strategy combines dis- and malinformation, as it uses both truthful and fabricated information to create confusion on environmental topics, allowing the government to evade accountability for promoting environmentally destructive practices and failing to deliver substantive climate action. Independent sources indicate that state- and corporate-aligned media deflect accountability for climate action in two ways. First, the Filipino government employs doublespeaking to maintain an image of public credibility while falling short of its environmental commitments and pledges. Second, environmental activism is deliberately conflated with terrorism to distort the defenders’ causes and shift the attention away from the environmental degradation.

2.4.1. Retracting Environmental Commitments

In the Philippines, the ongoing deflection of accountability for failed climate commitments intends to maintain a favourable ecological image by confusing the general public with vague and hard-to-measure concepts ([Moilanen and Østbye, 2021](#)). Greenpeace identifies this practice as climate double-speak, which is the deliberate use of vague terminology and the continuous reversal of climate pledges ([Greenpeace, 2022](#)). This sows confusion and doubt among the Filipino population, eventually resulting in low public trust not only towards the government, but also towards the scientific community ([Ibid.](#)).

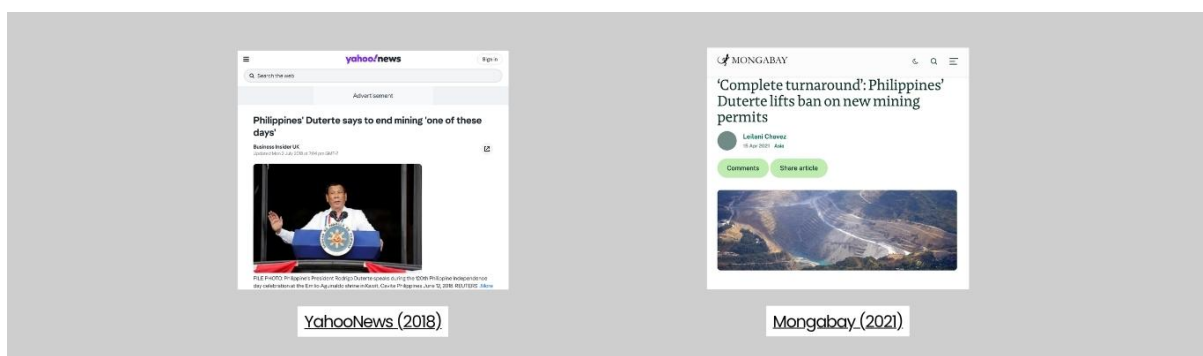
KII10 explains on how climate double-speak affects climate and human rights discussions in the Philippines:

“There is no information integrity, no shared reality among society, among the people, among the public, about what is true and what is not. This erosion of truth fuels deeper existential crises, including urgent issues such as climate change and human rights (KII10)”.

Former President Rodrigo Duterte made significant use of climate doublespeak during his term by backtracking on previous climate claims and using contradictory language. In 2016, he dismissed international carbon emission limits under the Paris Agreement as “nonsense”, ([The Guardian, 2016](#)), but ultimately signed the Agreement in 2017 ([The Philippine Star, 2017](#)). The former President’s initial rejection undermined the country’s climate credibility internationally and raised concerns about the reliability of its climate action and commitments ([Rappler, 2016](#)).

Additionally, this communication strategy was used to justify Duterte’s mining policies. During his 2016 and 2017 State of the Nation Addresses, Duterte initially condemned destructive mining, calling for sustainable development ([YahooNews, 2018](#)). Duterte’s stance against intense mining was welcomed by civil society and celebrated by domestic and international outlets through articles such as “Duterte to Big Miners: ‘You Have to Stop’; Small Miners: ‘We Will Support You’” ([Minda News, 2016](#)), “Philippines’ Duterte Says Nation Can Survive Without Mining Companies” ([Serapio & Dela Cruz, 2016](#)), and “Philippines’ Duterte Threatens Mining Companies to Behave or Suffer ‘Eventual Ruin’” ([The Wall Street Journal, 2017](#)).

However, in 2020, he reversed course by lifting the nine-year moratorium on new mining permits, greenlighting 291 pending applications and opening vast areas of ancestral lands to extractive projects ([Chavez, 2021](#)). The news about the administration’s trajectory change was strategically reframed by GMA News, which published the article “Duterte Lifts Nine-Year Ban on New Mining Deals” ([2021](#)) to highlight mining’s potential in economic growth. This reversal, portrayed as an economic recovery strategy, highlights the use of doublespeak to legitimise destructive industries and deflect accountability for environmental deterioration.



Although this pattern continues under the current administration of Marcos Jr., civil society groups have highlighted the stark contradictions between his pro-renewable rhetoric and the government’s aggressive promotion of fossil gas and nuclear energy. Greenpeace Philippines called this “climate

hypocrisy”, noting how, in practice, it is the continuous investment in fossil gas that ultimately trumps commitments to renewable energy expansion ([Greenpeace, 2022](#)).

The discrepancies between ecological commitments and implementation are also evident in the Manila Bay reclamation projects, an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot. In August 2023, through the article “DENR to Conduct Thorough Review of Manila Bay Reclamation Projects Following PBBM’s [President Marcos Jr] Suspension on All Projects” ([Presidential Communications Office, 2023](#)), the suspension of all projects in Manila Bay to conduct a cumulative impact assessment and determine their environmental and human rights impacts on the surrounding area and communities was announced ([Center for Environmental Concerns, 2024](#)).

Despite this initial declaration, which was welcomed by environmental defenders internationally, the Philippine Reclamation Authority and DENR proceeded to authorise a total of six projects between 2023 and 2025 ([Ibid.](#)). The approval of individual restoration projects defies the government’s stated goal of assessing the collective damage in Manila Bay, as reclamation projects have overlapping and interrelated impacts, and a thorough assessment requires the suspension of all operations ([Global Witness, 2023](#)). This case, once again, demonstrates the Filipino government’s retracting of environmental commitments, exploiting gaps in public awareness and transparency to maintain an environmentally conscious facade that obscures ongoing ecological destruction.

Similarly, Marcos Jr. pledged a just, affordable transition to renewable energy and carbon neutrality during his fourth State of the Nation Address in July 2025 ([Eco-business, 2022](#)). However, this speech was also characterised by vague language, empty climate commitments and outright false information aimed at promoting a sustainable image while failing to deliver tangible climate action. Climate activists claim that the speech was marked by deliberate omissions, as it failed to recognise current environmental issues or mention any specific commitment toward sustainable development, putting forward only vague promises ([Bulatlat, 2025](#)). During his speech, the president also employed doublespeak to present a facade interested in strengthening local agricultural production, while simultaneously advancing policies aimed at increasing foreign investments in the sector and failing to include community-driven policy solutions ([MASIPAG, 2025](#)).

The Philippine government strategically employs “climate doublespeak” to balance conflicting stakeholder interests and maintain its autonomy in policy formulation. This rhetorical approach, ultimately, allows the government to appear compliant with international environmental standards while pursuing domestic development goals. Crucially, this flexibility in language obscures policy inconsistencies, deliberately confusing the public and shielding the government from accountability for its failure to develop a unified, long-term climate strategy.

2.4.2. Climate Conspiracy Narratives

The second denialist tactic is climate conspiracy narratives, which is adopted by the Philippine government and its corporate allies to evade responsibility for environmental destruction. This strategy is centred on deliberately recasting environmental defenders as anti-development (KII01; 02; 06; 11) and/or national security threats (KII01; 02; 03; 07; 08; 09; 10; 11), thereby legitimising attacks directed at them and IPs. This successful manipulation of public discourse allows the state to defend its economic interests in ecologically damaging projects, while justifying the use of extraordinary measures to suppress the alleged threat of IPs and environmental defenders. By falsely alleging the affiliation of environmental defenders to the CPP-NPA, a recognised terrorist organisation, the state manages to discredit opposition to natural resource extraction ([Global Witness, 2025](#)). KII11 elaborates on this dynamic:

“When [activists] speak against projects falsely presented as “climate-friendly” or “green development”, [we are] portrayed as obstacles to national progress and enemies of the state. This delegitimises our environmental advocacy in the eyes of the people ... [it] deters people from joining our campaign and creates fear (KII11)”.

Online disinformation campaigns legitimise violence against IPs by conflating environmental activism with terrorism, often involving forced “surrender” ceremonies. During these events, IPs and environmental advocates are coerced into falsely confessing to being NPA fighters ([Buenaventura, 2023](#)). For instance, a 2021 fact-checking operation by peasant movements and civil society organisations, including Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and Tanggol Magsasaka, documented over 70 forced, fake NPA confessions across five regions ([Bulatlat, 2021](#)).

Social media platforms are also used to spread disinformation about environmental activists. For instance, The NTF-ELCAC Facebook page frequently publishes posts that accuse environmental activists of being NPA members ([Human Rights Foundation, 2023](#)). The organisation publishes posts with headlines such as “12 former rebels, converted due to ‘Whole-of-Nation’ approach” ([2026](#)) and “5 NPA leaders in Bukidnon surrender” ([2026](#)), many of which link to articles from the Philippine News Agency or GMA Network to reinforce the narrative. However, the subjects of these posts are not always actual NPA combatants but include environmental activists whose legitimate advocacy is being falsely equated with terrorism ([Bulatlat, 2021](#)). These posts are often tagged with the hashtag #PeaceForProgress, which is used by Philippine government agencies to promote initiatives related to peace, community development and the reintegration of former combatants.

“Killings of Indigenous communities are often tagged as legitimate operations because they are “communists.” This is dangerous because issues like [freedom of expression and] the right to protest are [automatically] dismissed if you are labeled as part of the “reds.” It’s an excuse to stop talking about it and a suggestion [to the people of the Philippines] that if they were part of the Communist Party, they deserved [what’s coming]. (KII07)”

A case that exemplifies this misrepresentation is the forced confession of environmental and peasant rights advocate, Fhobie Matias. The activist was targeted for her opposition against the reconversion of peasant lands for “ecotourism” in Laguna, Southern Tagalog ([Sigales, 2024](#)). This prompted her abduction on 28 October 2024, until weeks after she “voluntarily surrendered” and confessed to being an NPA member ([Amnesty International, 2025](#)).

While domestic and international media outlets saw through the deceptive nature of this news, the Philippine Armed Forces reiterated Fhobie's alleged links to the NPA, dismissing alternative accounts as "fake news" and accusing human rights groups of a coordinated disinformation scheme. This is demonstrated in Mindoro Today's article, "Military Refutes Abduction Claims of Former NPA Rebel in Mindoro" (2024). The outlet emphasised that Fhobie's confession was spontaneous and prompted by her disillusionment with the NPA, and that "leftist outlets" are spreading disinformation.

This rhetoric is also echoed in the NTF-ELCAC's article "[Armed Forces of the Philippines] Condemns "Fake News" and "Abduct-Surface-Donate" Scheme in Matias Case" (2024), also shared in a press release on their Facebook page (2024). Similarly, this rhetoric was echoed in the NTF-ELCAC's article, "[Armed Forces of the Philippines] Condemns "Fake News" and "Abduct-Surface-Donate" Scheme in Matias Case" (2024). The "Abduct-Surface-Donate" Scheme frames the abduction of activists as fake, accusing civil society actors of conducting it as a disinformation scheme for fundraising purposes (Nepomuceno, 2023). This dynamic illustrates how, instead of stabilising the volatile media environment, the state actively exploits information uncertainty to strengthen its control over the narrative. It achieves this by labelling activists not just as threats to national security but also as fraudulent actors spreading "fake news" (KII12). This tactic effectively undermines the public trust in environmental advocacy and strips legitimate civil society efforts of the protection they need.

Ultimately, this case demonstrates how climate conspiracy theories that deliberately conflate environmental advocacy with terrorism in the Philippines are used by the government to deflect accountability for environmental and human rights violations by diverting the public's attention from the encroachment on peasants' lands for "ecotourism". By framing Fhobie's case through a national security lens, state actors aimed to discredit her environmental advocacy, by conflating it with terrorism.

These four forms of climate disinformation, namely: fabricating IP consent, greenwashing, false climate solutions and deflecting accountability, illustrate how climate narratives in the Philippines are often shaped by deliberately selective information that favours state and corporate interests. The impacts of these communication strategies for IPs are examined in greater detail in Chapter 3.

3. The Impacts on Indigenous Peoples

Based on the key forms of climate disinformation identified in Chapter 2, this chapter examines the interconnected impacts of climate disinformation on IPs in the Philippines: intimidation, forced evictions, red-tagging and extra-judicial violence. The use of climate disinformation ultimately legitimises attacks on IPs in the country, transforming the aggression of IPs and environmental defenders into a perceived necessity for initiatives that are framed as national security but instead protect environmentally destructive operations.

3.1. Intimidation

The first impact of climate disinformation is rationalising the intimidation of IP communities. This intimidation occurs during consultations aimed at securing consent for projects that harm the environment. Instead of ensuring IP involvement in crucial decisions about their ancestral lands, coercion for their approval is authorised through the convergence of two disinformation tactics: (a) “greenwashing” and false climate solution narratives that conceal the extractive nature of industries and (b) climate conspiracy narratives that falsely label IP land defenders as national security threats. These narratives collectively justify intimidatory methods of coercion used to gain IP consent. This section will, first, analyse how these narratives collectively lead to the militarisation of Indigenous territories. This process supports the exclusion of IPs from decision-making by violating FPIC. Second, it will address the long-term detrimental effects on the quality of life for IPs.

Firstly, climate disinformation in the Philippines serves as a tool to justify the military occupation of IPs’ ancestral lands, particularly areas earmarked for national development ([Social Watch, 2015](#); [Cariño, 2022](#)). This military presence coerces IPs into consenting to extractive projects, including dams and mining, which are presented by the Marcos Jr. administration as vital for sustainable development and energy transition through greenwashing narratives and false climate solutions (KII01; 02; 03; 04; 05; 06; [Eco, 2025](#)). Simultaneously, climate conspiracy theories that falsely tag IPs as terrorists further legitimise the use of intimidatory tactics on IPs by reframing the suppression of their land rights as a matter of national security. This narrative landscape, ultimately, legitimises attacks against IPs as means of extracting their approval for environmentally destructive projects, stripping them of their fundamental right to FPIC by excluding communities from the governance of their own territories ([Global Witness, 2024](#)).

The securitisation of Indigenous lands allows the military and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to intimidate and harass communities in support of corporate interests (KII01; 02; 06; 07; 08; 11). Tactics include the forgery of signatures, bribery, raids of private residence and the recruitment of civilians for the surveillance of Indigenous leaders ([Cariño, 2022](#)). This practice has been described as the “militarisation of green energy infrastructure” by Greenpeace ([2024](#)) and “development aggression” by Altermidya ([2025](#)). As a result, these disinformation strategies have cumulatively resulted in over 25% of transition mineral zones in the Philippines encroaching on Indigenous lands, with special military and paramilitary units guarding the sites ([LICAS.news, 2024](#)). This expansion occurs at the cost of creating an atmosphere of fear that suppresses the IPs’ right to self-determination and marginalises them from critical decision-making processes ([Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, 2023b](#)). KII02 recounts their personal experience surrounding militarisation and “development aggression”:

“The government says the armed movement has shrunk to just a few hundred people. If that is the case, why are communities still militarised? [The military continues to] camp in village halls or public school buildings for counter-insurgency [operations].

[However,] we have documented that the increase of militarisation is seen largely in areas where there are going to be mines, dams, or plantations – [the military therefore] functions as an investment defence force.

[Worse,] militarisation brings human rights violations, especially against women and children, including cases of sexual harassment and rape by military personnel (KII02)”.

A clear example of using intimidation to force IPs’ consent to destructive “green” projects is the Jalaur River Multi-Purpose Project Stage II in Central Panay ([Panay News, 2025](#)). This mega dam project, largely financed by the South Korean Export-Import Bank, is promoted as a false climate solution by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), emphasising on goals like improving irrigation, water supply, hydroelectric power, and eco-tourism ([National Irrigation Administration, 2025](#)). However, Since 2011, local Tumandok communities opposing the construction of the Mega dam have denounced the use of bribery, intimidation and force by the National Police, the National Irrigation Administration and the NCIP to secure FPIC for the project ([International Congress and Convention Association, 2025](#)).

In 2020, the state’s weaponisation of “counterinsurgency” or climate conspiracy narratives consisted of disinformation aiming to intimidate IP communities opposing large-scale development projects ([Mongabay, 2024](#)). This repression of dissent escalated when a joint military-police operation resulted in the killing of nine IPs and the arrest of 16 ([Panay News, 2025](#); [Panay Today, 2025](#)). As such, this enabled the encroachment of the mega dam on ancestral lands, expecting to affect at least 16 villages and displace over 17,000 IPs, severely impacting their ancestral environment, community life and livelihoods ([Alenciaga, 2016](#)). Altogether, the heavy militarisation of the Tumandok communities’ territories highlights the intimidatory nature of FPIC processes held in such conditions, where IPs are not safe to express their views ([Altermidya, 2025](#)).

Second, the securitisation of ancestral lands inflicts profound collective emotional distress and long-term trauma upon Indigenous communities ([LRC, 2023](#)). Since 2022, military operations – including bombings – have escalated in IP territories opposing renewable energy and mining projects (KII02; KII11). This has notably occurred in the Cordillera region, which has been described as the “last bastion” of the communist insurgency in the Philippines ([Beltran, 2024](#)). Although these strikes are justified through climate conspiracy narratives that portray opposition to “green” development as “terrorism”, data reveals that only 17.4% of military actions actually hit rebel targets; the vast majority instead devastate and terrorise local civilian populations ([Altermidya, 2024](#)). This operational reality demonstrates how climate disinformation serves as a strategic veil for state intimidation targeting IPs, reframing the destruction of community life as a necessary counter-insurgency effort.

The military occupation of these lands exposes communities to a spectrum of physical, legal and psychological violence (Ninomiya et al., 2023; Beltran, 2024). In particular, Indigenous girls and women face increased risks of sexual harassment and abuse by forces encamped in their communities – violations that persist under a climate of state-sanctioned impunity (KII02; World Rainforest Movement, 2013; Cariño, 2022; Global Witness, 2024). Beyond immediate physical threats, illegal arrests and extra-judicial killings cause deep social fragmentation, separating families and eroding community pride (Cariño, 2022). As a result, this sustained intimidatory tactics alienates IPs from their native environment, fostering a sense of being treated as “foreigners” within their own ancestral domains (KII02; 06), a process that potentially results in cultural ethnocide (Alenciaga, 2016).

The 2023 bombings of the areas surrounding Barangay Gawaan and Poswoy in Balbalan, Kalinga by the Philippine’s Armed Forces provide a stark illustration of this trauma. (Bulatlat, 2023). Despite widespread Indigenous opposition to four planned dams by Australian-owned JBD Water Power Inc., the government utilised climate disinformation to frame military strikes as operations against NPA rebels allegedly obstructing “green” progress (Beltran, 2024). However, the operations were extremely close to the civilian population, who reported houses shaking, smoke and explosion sounds (Bulatlat, 2023). Adult community members who went to check on the situation reported being held and ordered to keep still by the military, despite having no involvement with the events (Ibid.). The proximity of these attacks to civilian centres caused intense distress, with adult residents being detained by the military while children developed post-traumatic stress symptoms, such as debilitating fear at the sound of aircraft (Ibid.; Asia Democracy Chronicles, 2023). Impacting approximately 2,700 residents, these operations highlight the severe psychological toll of weaponised security narratives (CHR, 2024).

The long-term presence of military forces further destabilises freedom of movement through the imposition of curfews, checkpoints and restrictions on traditional livelihoods (KII01; 02; 06; 11). In Balban, farmers and hunters were forced to seek explicit permission from the military to access their fields (Bulatlat, 2023; Cariño, 2022). These restrictions have seriously undermined local livelihoods and fuelled economic crisis and food insecurity, which is compounded by the bombing of their surrounding environment relied on for subsistence (Asia Democracy Chronicles, 2023). The fear and displacement resulting from state intimidation toward IPs in Balbalan results in the undermining of local livelihoods, children’s education (further explored in Chapter 3.2) and collective well-being (Bulatlat, 2023).

Altogether, the state’s strategic use of intimidation works hand-in-hand with climate disinformation giving leeway to destructive projects and the use of militarised force against IPs opposing large-scale extractive development. This tactic permits the state to use extreme measures without fear of legal or moral accountability, instead shifting the “terrorist” label onto the rightful owners of ancestral lands. Ultimately, this legitimisation of attacks signals a move toward aggressive development. The state’s economic agenda now depends on the violent, systematic dismantling of Indigenous participation through manufactured consent, while simultaneously jeopardising their livelihoods, mental health and community identity.

3.2. Forced Evictions & Displacement

The second impact of climate disinformation is the eviction of IPs from their ancestral territories. This attack on IPs is legitimised by legally asserting state control over land for the establishment of extractive projects, supported by the conflation of IPs with terrorists as a justification to drive them out of their land. This is facilitated by two forms of climate disinformation. First, the weaponisation of climate conspiracy theories to discredit IP resistance. Second, the cases of New Clark City and the New Manila International Airport show how “green” branding and tokenistic consent processes facilitate displacement. Together, these mechanisms reveal how the state exploits legal gaps and security narratives to seize ancestral domains.

According to the UN SR on the right to adequate housing, forced evictions are defined as the non-consensual removal of individuals or communities from their homes without legal safeguards or alternative protection (OHCHR, n.d.). Within the context of IPs, these evictions function as a core component of land grabbing, aimed at the appropriation of community-owned land for resource extraction and state-led development (Farha, 2019). In the Philippines, this practice persists despite the state's endorsement of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which mandates mechanisms to prevent the dispossession of IP lands and resources (2007).

In the Philippines, forced evictions and land grabs are part of a wider pattern of violence, including militarisation and “red-tagging” (Indigenous Peoples Rights International et al., 2024; Bulatlat, 2025). Additionally, the displacement of IPs is an extended dynamic of the military's presence on their ancestral lands, which, as discussed in Chapter 3.1, is a tactic used to coerce IPs into approving large-scale development projects (Global Witness, 2024). This issue is further exacerbated by the difficulties numerous Indigenous territories face in acquiring a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT), due its lengthy, tedious and expensive process (KII07; Dialogue Earth, 2024). Without this title, these lands are not recognised as community property. Instead, they fall under the public domain owned by the state, as asserted by the Regalian Doctrine (see Chapter 1.2.1) (Loja, 2024). This legal vacuum creates a context where supreme court litigation frequently revolves around the conflict between state-approved development projects and the IPRA, an act intended to balance development aggression with the protection of IPs' ancestral domains. Nonetheless, climate disinformation enables the government and corporations to forcibly evict IPs from their lands for destructive industries, like mines and hydroelectric dams, to take place (Social Watch, 2015).

Firstly, climate conspiracy narratives are being weaponised to legitimise attacks on IPs in the Philippines, particularly those resisting mining on their ancestral lands. As highlighted by the SR on the rights of IPs and internally displaced persons, these narratives often falsely accuse IP defenders of having ties to military groups (Chandran, 2018). The militarisation in Mindanao serves as a clear example of how such climate conspiracy theories are employed to justify forced evictions (KII04; 05). This is also done by framing extractive industry operations – which are often false climate solutions – as sustainable development projects (KII01; 02; 03; 04; 05; 06; 07). For instance, the 2018 deployment of military battalions in Madaum forced Lumad communities to choose between fleeing their homes or facing state violence (Reuters, 2018). In the same year, the Andap Valley faced intense militarisation for coal extraction, forcing the evacuation of 204 families, disrupting livelihoods and access to education (Population and Security, 2023).

A critical impact of displacement is the exacerbation of pre-existing inequalities. For instance, Lumad communities, among the poorest and most neglected in the country (KII06), have limited access to social services, including state education and healthcare (Reuters, 2018). KII11, a representative from an IP organisation, shares their personal experience providing humanitarian responses to displaced communities:

“Recently, in 2024, we recorded four aerial bombings within a community that is very vocal in opposition to this “development aggression”. The residents were displaced, and had to ask for humanitarian support... We responded to their call, but it took quite a while to enter because [state authorities] claimed that our humanitarian efforts [were intended] to support the armed group. But no, we were just responding to the community’s call for assistance, as they lack food and access to basic services (KII11)”.

Showing IP resilience, Lumad communities established Bakwit schools – alternative educational institutions that promote Indigenous cultural heritage – to allow displaced Lumad youth to continue their education amid the militarisation (Philippinenbüro e.V. & Ökumenewerk der Nordkirche, 2025). However, the state has utilised “counter-insurgency” rhetoric to justify the closure of Bakwit schools, claiming they serve as training grounds for rebels (Cariño, 2022). This is not an isolated case, with 215 Lumad schools shut down in 2019 alone, depriving 5,500 children of their right to education (Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, 2023). This systematic displacement has widened the educational gap, with statistics revealing that 11% of Mindanao’s IPs have no formal education while Indigenous students complete an average of 3.8 fewer years of schooling than their non-Indigenous counterparts (Beltran, 2024).

“[“Counter-insurgency” is] a convenient excuse for the military to red-tag people and say an area is “infested” with the “reds”. Often, the casualties are Indigenous groups. Children are massacred and schools are bombed.

The armed forces always claim it is a “legitimate military operation” and that [IPs] were bearing arms, but these [operations] don’t undergo due process or court trials. When Indigenous groups are removed through these “legitimate operations,” it clears the way for mining companies, deforestation, and plantations (KII07)”.

Second, climate disinformation further legitimises evictions through “greenwashing”, where projects are presented as essential for the energy transition, as well as narratives that fabricate IP consent. The SR on the rights of IPs has highlighted how the “green transition economy” is increasingly used to facilitate IP displacement (Barume, 2025). In Mindanao, the acceleration of evictions in 2015 – which saw a 127% increase in conflict-related displacements from the previous year – was driven by the demand for transition minerals like copper and nickel, yet these aims were concealed behind narratives of “sustainable development” (UNHCR, 2015); Chandran, 2018).

An emblematic example is New Clark City, which is part of Duterte’s “Build! Build! Build!” infrastructure development programme. Promoted as the Philippines’ first “smart and green” administrative capital, a false climate solution narrative, the project is set to become the Philippines’ new administrative capital by 2030, a green project which will be achieved through technological innovation and construction-induced economic growth ([Antipode, 2024](#)). However, in order to begin the construction of the New Clark International Airport on 9,500 hectares of Aeta ancestral land ([Democratic Erosion Consortium, 2019](#)), a seven-day eviction notice was issued to 500 Aeta families, ordering them to vacate what the state labelled “government-owned land” ([The Diplomat, 2020](#); [Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2019](#)). Ultimately, over 18,000 IPs risk eviction, yet the development corporation denies these claims by exploiting the community’s lack of a formal CADT (KII07; [Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2019](#)).

Similarly, the construction of the New Manila International Airport has been promoted through greenwashing strategies (see Chapter 2.2). This project, greenlit in 2019, has already led to the forced eviction of 700 local families in Manila Bay, half of which reported not receiving any kind of compensation ([Global Witness, 2023](#)). Tokenistic consultations were employed to project a façade of compliance with FPIC and environmental standards, but local communities report receiving partial information about the project and being coerced by the military into agreeing ([Ibid.](#)).

Forced evictions disproportionately impact IPs by severing the ties between their cultural identity and their ancestral environment. Beyond the loss of land, displacement causes “cultural trauma”, manifesting as a collective loss of meaning and belonging ([Jones, 2019](#)). The uncertainty of constant relocation – exemplified by the short-term internal displacements of Lumad communities into civic structures – severely undermines mental health and community cohesion ([Alvarez, 2023](#)). Ultimately, these state-led evictions do not just seize territory, they also erode traditional knowledge and self-determination, leaving Indigenous communities marginalised within their own native lands ([OHCHR, n.d.](#); [IWGIA, 2010](#); [Ninomiya et al., 2023](#)).

This pattern of displacement reveals a systematic effort to legitimise attacks on IPs by prioritising state-centric legal frameworks over ancestral rights. By weaponising “green” narratives, the state transforms land theft into a perceived public good, while the use of anti-terror rhetoric strips IP communities of their political agency. Ultimately, these mechanisms create a legal and social environment where the erasure of IPs’ presence is treated as a necessary requirement for national progress. This suggests that IPs’ land rights will remain subordinated to state-driven industrial expansion as long as the government can conceal its extractive aims behind the rhetoric of climate action and security threats.

3.3. Red-tagging

The third impact of climate disinformation is the criminalisation of IPs through red-tagging. In the Philippines, climate conspiracy narratives bolster the incriminating association of IP environmental defenders with communist supporters or fighters via online harassment or smear campaigns ([Human Rights Watch, 2023](#); [Asia Centre, 2025](#)). This practice of red-tagging, or terrorist-labelling, legitimises attacks on IPs by giving way for authorities to re-interpret vague definitions of terrorism found within the Anti-Terrorism Law (ATL) (2020) and criminalise dissenters ([Amnesty International, 2020](#); [Global Witness, 2023](#)). Consequently, reframing the land defense of IPs as “national security threats” undermines the credibility of their advocacy efforts while legitimising extractive projects ([Human Rights Watch, 2023](#)). This section will explore how red-tagging opposition to state- and corporate-led development projects comes into play in two ways. First, red-tagging and terrorist-labelling enable the judicial harassment of rights activists, sowing a climate of fear and self-censorship. Second, the labelling of CSOs as terrorist organisations strains them financially, impacting both workers and beneficiaries, undermining workers’ ability to sustain projects, thus harming beneficiaries as a consequence.

3.3.1. Judicial Harassment

Disinformation campaigns frequently leverage “red-tagging” and “terrorist-labelling” to reframe and systematically undermine the advocacy efforts of activists in the Philippines. Consequently, these climate conspiracy narratives rationalise attacks through arbitrary arrests of IPs and activists, often based on fabricated charges, libel suits and the misuse of the vague definitions within the ATL. KII10 highlights the contradiction of labelling organisations engaged in social development initiatives as enemies of the state:

“The passage of the ATL [expanded and] legitimised how much power the government and the councils have to label or tag [people and] organisations as “national security threats”. [Ironically,] these social development organisations [actually] advocate for national interests and uphold Filipino identity, they are in no way terrorist organisations, but they can easily be labeled as such even without even a full judicial process. (KII10).”

Additionally, the Philippine Government's red-tagging campaigns have extended their targets to prominent global defenders. For instance, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz – the UN SR on the rights of IPs from 2014 to 2020 – and Joan Carling, Focal Person for the IP Major Group for Sustainable Development – were both labelled as terrorists ([Solheim, n.d.](#)). This occurred after they publicly opposed large-scale mining, militarisation, and “green” development projects impacting Indigenous lands ([IWIGA, 2018](#); [UNEP, n.d.](#); [Right Livelihood, 2024](#)). As such, disinformation campaigns are a strategic attempt to discredit activists by falsely equating resistance to environmental destruction with threats to national security.

The 2020 case of Kalinga leader and activist Beatrice (Betty) Belen illustrates the pattern of legal harassment. Betty has been a prominent figure in the Uma community's protests against Chevron Energy Company's geothermal project since 2012. The project was falsely presented as a source of clean energy and greenlit through manipulated FPIC processes ([Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, 2022](#)). Additionally, Betty's advocacy efforts were recognised in 2018, when she was awarded the Gawad Bayani ng Kalikasan (Environmental Hero Award) for her resistance against environmental degradation on her ancestral land ([Cordillera Peoples Alliance, 2020](#)).

However, in October 2020, Betty was jailed for four months on fabricated charges for the possession of firearms and explosives. This occurrence followed an unannounced, middle-of-the-night search by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police ([Cordillera Peoples Alliance, 2020](#)). During the search, Betty's family was forced to leave the house, likely enabling the agents to plant evidence ([Umil, 2020](#)).

Although the case was dismissed in February 2021 due to the inability to prove her ownership of the weapons, Betty remains a target ([Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, 2022](#)). She has been persistently red-tagged with climate conspiracy narratives, falsely accusing her of using the women empowerment organisation Innabuyog-Gabriela as a front for the Communist Party of the Philippines ([QuitasoI, 2021](#)). As such, the dangers of red-tagging extend beyond arbitrary arrests by solidifying long-term attacks to liberty and security, thereby imposing devastating impacts on defenders' mental health ([the Philippine Star, 2020](#)).

Similarly, the repeated and coordinated targeting of members of the Cordillera People’s Alliance (CPA), which defends ancestral lands and Indigenous self-determination, further demonstrates the mechanics of climate conspiracy narratives ([Northern Dispatch, 2020](#)). For instance, Beverly Longid, former CPA chair and member of Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (National Alliance of Indigenous Peoples’ Organisations) has been a victim of both online and offline disinformation (see Section 1.3.2). Recurring red-tagging efforts include a 2020 news conference organised by the local police and livestreamed on Facebook, where Beverly was accused by a police informant of being a recruiter for the NPA ([Human Rights Watch, 2023](#)). These unfounded allegations were substantiated by the Police Regional Office Cordillera Regional Public Information Office, circulated through a press release and video clip portraying a NPA surrounded claiming to be recruited by Beverly ([Catajan, 2020](#)).

In another instance, CPA Secretary General Sarah Dekdeken was convicted of cyber libel ([Human Rights Watch, 2023](#); [Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination & Liberation, n.d.](#)). As an Igorot youth activist, Sarah has faced escalating red-tagging, terrorist-labelling and defamation campaigns since the beginning of her advocacy efforts in 1998 ([Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination & Liberation, n.d.](#)). This included a coordinated Facebook campaign in 2020, when her picture was posted over the caption “Look at these terrorists” ([Ibid.](#)). The cumulation of these narratives naturally legitimised the eventual attack on her in 2022, where Police Regional Office Cordillera Director Brigadier General Rwin Pagkalinawanshe filed a cyber libel suit on Sarah for exposing a police officer who had ordered the removal of historical monuments symbolising Indigenous resistance to destructive energy projects ([De Vera, 2022](#)).

Overall, these cases demonstrate red-tagging, as coordinated disinformation campaigns, continuously and exponentially escalate the threat of legal attacks against IPs. By fabricating connections between land defenders and armed groups, these campaigns validate the narrative that environmental advocacy is a form of “insurgency”. This rationalisation, in turn, empowers state and corporate actors to utilise judicial harassment as a “counter-attack” to enforce their interests over the ancestral lands of IPs.

3.3.2. Financial Straining

As of March 2025, over 100 development workers, labour and social movement activists were facing “terrorism financing” charges, often based on unsubstantiated allegations that were spread through coordinated disinformation efforts ([Center for Trade Union and Human Rights, 2025](#)). The use of climate conspiracy narratives to label environmental and Indigenous rights defenders as “terrorists” serves to restrict their access to financial resources (KII02; 08; 11). This narrative legitimises attacks on IPs by cutting off essential funding for both frontline workers and intended beneficiaries. It provides a justification for employing counter-insurgency tactics against established CSOs that deliver crucial assistance in remote regions often neglected by government services. Ultimately, this tactic effectively isolates IP communities by eliminating their primary source of support, relief and advocacy ([Amnesty International, 2025](#)).

A central mechanism of this strategy is the use of the ATL to freeze the liquid assets of organisations based on little more than online smear campaigns. For instance, in 2023, the Anti-Terrorism Council (ATC) issued Resolution 41, which designated four leaders of the CPA – Sarah Alikes, Jennifer Awingan, Windel Bolinget and Stephen Tauli – as terrorist suspects ([Global Witness, 2023](#)). This designation was the direct result of coordinated online disinformation portraying them as threats to national security, and it immediately enabled the state to freeze CPA’s corporate assets and intensify surveillance ([Global Witness, 2023](#); [Beltran, 2024](#)). Moreover, the activists’ appeal for reconsideration was dismissed by the Anti-Terrorism Council without a hearing ([Beltran, 2024](#)).

The financial paralysis of the CPA is not an isolated incident but rather a template for targeting other groups focused on climate resilience. Currently, the assets of the Citizens Disaster Response Centre and the Leyte Centre for Development remain frozen under similar suspicions, demonstrating how administrative labels are used to disrupt humanitarian work (Aspinwall, 2024; Campbell, 2025). Beyond the freezing of institutional funds, the state applies further pressure by imposing extreme personal financial burdens on individual activists through prohibitively high bail amounts.

The shift from institutional asset freezes to financially straining activists was evident in the 2025 arrests of staff members from the Paghidaet sa Kauswagan Development Group (PKDG) – an organisation advocating environmental protection in Negros Occidental. These arrests not only resulted in the freezing of PKDG's assets, leaving their beneficiary communities without necessary support, but also subjected the arrested staff to significant personal financial pressure due to exceptionally high bail requirements (Amnesty International, 2025). The two staff members of PKDG, Perla Pavillar and Federico Salvilla, were charged with “terrorism financing” and required to post a combined bail of PhP 1 million (USD 17,000) (Ibid.). Also targeted was Dharyll Albañez, the Executive Director of KMALIG (Kristiyanong Katilingban Lubos Itib Ong Sang Grupo, Inc.), who was erroneously identified by authorities as PKDG staff and required to post PhP 400,000 (USD 6,800) in bail (Ibid.). Furthermore, the state issued arrest warrants for former PKDG Executive Director Clarisa Ramos, the widow of murdered human rights lawyer Benjamin Ramos. While the charges against her follow the same pattern of financial restriction, she currently remains outside the country, having sought asylum in Europe to continue her advocacy safely (IBON International, 2024). These exorbitant legal costs and the threat of incarceration force small organisations to divert their entire operating budgets toward legal defense rather than community service.

The timing of these legal and financial attacks often reveals an underlying motive to protect large-scale corporate interests from local resistance. In the case of PKDG, the arrests occurred as the group led an opposition against a PhP 2 billion (USD 34 million) palm oil plantation in Negros Occidental (Titong, 2023). The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and mainstream media promoted the project as a “carbon credit” and “reforestation” effort, while providing opportunities to generate over 3,000 jobs (Ibid.). In practice, however, the project actually threatened environmental degradation and the displacement of IP communities from 4,000 hectares of ancestral land due to its conversion of approximately 6,652 hectares of forest land in Barangays Gatuslao, Agboy and Payauan (Judilla, 2024).

By labelling CPA and PKDG activists as terrorists, the state employs climate conspiracy to reframe legitimate environmental protection as security threats. This tactic rationalises the suppression of dissent while shielding corporate-led development from public scrutiny, thereby perpetuating existing power imbalances. Crucially, this targeting of activists and CSOs also deprives beneficiaries, including IPs, the rural poor and victims of natural disasters, of vital support, operations, and programmes (Ngayon, 2024). KII02 highlights how the ATL is deliberately used to target activists with terrorism-financing charges, hindering their advocacy work and also sabotaging their personal lives beyond their activism:

“Now, because of ATL, [we] are vilified as terrorists. Most states have zero tolerance for “terrorism”, so this becomes a direct attack. CSO workers are facing charges simply for supporting IPs [and] this is enough to make them suspects for “terrorist financing”. This narrative has to be exposed. Protecting IPs means protecting the environment and addressing climate change, not supporting terrorism. (KII02)”

The cumulative effect of these actions is a prevailing atmosphere of fear and self-censorship. Organisations such as the Community Empowerment, the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines and the Amihan Federation of Women Peasants now operate under the constant threat of having their bank accounts frozen by the Anti-Money Laundering Council ([Human Rights Watch, 2025](#); [Amnesty International, 2025](#)). By financially strangling these organizations, climate disinformation legitimises systematic attacks on IPs, ensuring that the most vulnerable populations lose their strongest advocates as climate instability intensifies.

Altogether, IPs are subjected to judicial harassment and financial strain due to the strategic employment of “red-tagging” and “terrorist-labelling”. As a result, these climate conspiracy narratives legitimise attacks on IPs by effectively undermining advocacy efforts as threats to national security. Such legitimisation fosters a climate of fear amongst IP communities, which in turn encourages self-censorship and systematically dismantles the vital support networks IPs rely on to defend their rights. Beyond legal and financial burdens, red-tagging and terrorist-labelling can escalate to severe human rights violations, including unlawful arrests, enforced disappearance, and extra-judicial killings ([Asia Centre, 2025](#)). The following section will further detail these grave consequences.

3.4. Physical Violence

The fourth and final impact of climate disinformation is the escalation of physical violence against IPs. The militarisation of Indigenous territories is justified by climate conspiracy narratives that conflate activism with terrorism, thereby creating an environment in which state forces are legitimised to attack IPs with impunity for the sake of “state security” ([Global Witness, 2024](#); [Social Watch, 2015](#); KII01; 02; 03; 07; 08; 09; 10; 11). Climate disinformation facilitates structural violence against IPs in two ways. First, climate disinformation supports the phenomenon of *desaparecidos*,¹³ enabling state security forces to avoid accountability for enforced disappearances of environmental and rights defenders. Second, the same dynamic creates an environment in which their extra-judicial killing is condoned and necessitated as national security.

KII08 highlights the annihilating nature of red-tagging, emphasising how it impacts all aspects of the victims’ lives:

¹³ “Desaparecidos” – or “disappeared” – consists of the abduction and enforced disappearance of activists at the hands of state forces. Although this practice became notorious during Ferdinand Marcos’ regime, it is still prevalent and largely unpunished today (De Vera, 2024), despite the passage of the Anti-Enforced Disappearance Act (2012).

“[Red-tagging] is about destroying your mental capacity and your fortitude to continue your work. It just destroys your soul. In a democratic society, people should be allowed to have debates. But using false information and personal attacks shuts that space down. It leads to real-world action: criminal charges, harassments, forced disappearances, even assassinations (KII08)”.

3.4.1. Enforced Disappearances

The pressing issue of *desaparecidos* in the Philippines originated during Marcos Sr. 's presidency. With over 1,900 enforced disappearances, many of which have yet to receive justice till today ([Ocampo, 2022](#)). This troubling pattern persists during the current administration of Marcos Jr.. As of March 2025, at least 27 enforced disappearances by state security forces had been recorded, also with no justice in sight ([Center for Environmental Concerns, 2025](#)). As a result, the Philippines is considered as the Southeast Asian country with the highest number of enforced disappearances ([Ocampo, 2022](#)). Climate disinformation plays a key enabling role in legitimising the violence against activists or “terrorists” by portraying it as necessary, enabling the perpetrators to evade accountability and operate with impunity (KII01; 02; 03; 07; 08; 09; 10; 11).

The instrumentalisation of climate conspiracy narratives to justify disappearances is exemplified by the seizure of Francisco Dangla III and Joxelle Tiong, orchestrated by two unidentified men in March 2024. With both activists part of international environmental defence networks, Dangla and Tiong have been actively fighting against black sand mining in the Lingayen Gulf, waste-to-energy incinerators and nuclear energy projects in Labrador ([Frontline Defenders, 2024](#)). Despite having been classified as an Environmentally Critical Project, the operations were portrayed by Iron Ore, Gold and Vanadium Resources (Phils.) Inc. as an opportunity for job creation that would contribute to local and national development ([DENR, 2021](#)). Consequences of black sand mining especially include depletion of fisheries, soil erosion and flooding in coastal communities ([Lalu, 2025](#)). The environmental concerns associated with these operations have led to the filing of an Anti-Black Sand Mining Act during the 20th Congress of the Philippines, which currently shows no concrete progress ([Manila Standard, 2025](#)).

Prior to their abduction in 2024, Dangla and Tiong were targets of deliberate terrorist-tagging campaigns. These efforts falsely linked their advocacy to the NPA and CPP through fabricated accusations ([Perez, 2024](#)). The attacks specifically aimed to delegitimise their outspoken concerns, with the Regional Peace and Order Council of Dangla’s local government even labelling him a “regional threat” ([Gutoman, 2025](#)). Before they were finally released, Dangla and Tiong’s three-day captivity involved physical and psychological abuse with the intention of forcing a confession on NPA affiliations ([Center for Environmental Concerns, 2025](#)).

The enforced disappearance of two activists, which marks the 22nd and 23rd case under the Marcos Jr. administration ([Perez, 2024](#)), illustrates how the calculated spread of climate conspiracy narratives serves to legitimise the physical abuse and abduction of activists. Similar to the numerous victims of “desaparecidos” during the Marcos Sr. regime who never received justice ([Ocampo, 2022](#)), Dangla and Tiong are still seeking accountability over a year after their seizure ([Center for Environmental Concerns,](#)

2025). Dangla filed a petition with the Court of Appeals to accuse the police of misdirecting their efforts (Gutoman, 2025). Instead of actively pursuing the perpetrators – against whom there is compelling evidence, including red-tagging and phone records pointing to security forces – the police have harassed and interrogated Dangla's family (*Ibid.*).

The enforced disappearance of Dangla and Tiong highlights the intended effects of the “abduct-surface-surrender” scheme, commonly used by Philippine authorities to validate the disinformation that portrays activists as “terrorists”. This scheme was denounced by youth environmental defenders Jonila Castro and Jhed Tamano in 2023, who were abducted by the military as a consequence of their activism against land “reclamation” projects in Manila Bay (Aspinwall, 2023). The two activists were resurfaced on September 12 after security forces falsely claimed to the public that the activists had surrendered as community rebels. Although they were instructed to confess their involvement with the NPA during a news conference on September 19, activists instead chose to denounce the abuses endured at the hands of the military by calling out the “abduct-surface-surrender” scheme and the deliberate use of disinformation to justify attacks on environmental defenders (*Ibid.*). As a response, the state-owned Philippine News Agency (Nepomuceno, 2023), and other government-friendly outlets (Alfonso, n.d.) refute these accusations, claiming that the “abduct-surface-surrender” is a propaganda strategy employed by the NPA to misrepresent captured combatants as activists and collect donations (see Section 2.4.2), thereby undermining the credibility of claims of enforced disappearance and abuse.

The enforced disappearances of environmental and IP rights defenders, like Dangla and Tiong and Castro and Tamano, are not isolated incidents but rather part of a systemic pattern linked to state actors. This strategy involves the use of climate conspiracy narratives by the government and its corporate partners to evade responsibility for environmental damage. By fabricating terrorist charges and coercing confessions, these actors foster an environment where state security forces are authorised to attack IPs through enforced disappearances with impunity, thus deflecting accountability.

3.4.2. Extra-judicial Killings

The Philippines is an exceptionally lethal country for environmental and IP defenders. According to a Global Witness study, the country ranked as the third deadliest globally and the deadliest in Asia Between 2012 and 2023, with IPs making up one-third of the victims (2024). The military is the primary aggressor against Indigenous rights defenders in the country, responsible for 64 of the 117 killings recorded between 2012 and 2023 (Global Witness, 2024). Although the total number of extrajudicial killings has decreased under President Marcos Jr., the military's involvement has increased sharply. Global Witness data shows the military was responsible for a majority of defender killings in recent years: 8 out of 11 in 2022 and 15 out of 17 in 2023 (Global Witness, 2024).

Much of the lethal violence carried out by the military occurred during Rodrigo Duterte's presidency (2016-2021), a period characterised by the practice of “red-tagging”. This practice has been linked to over 126 extra-judicial killings of Indigenous leaders and community members (Human Rights Watch, 2023). By labelling IPs as terrorists, red-tagging functions as a form of climate conspiracy narrative. This designation legitimises attacks on IPs with impunity, fostering the belief that their elimination is necessary for public safety (KII01; 02; 03; 07; 08; 09; 10; 11). This systematic demonisation echoes former President Duterte's “war on drugs,” where he made statements excusing the murder of drug users (Columbia University, 2024).

A case that clearly exemplifies how climate conspiracy narratives create an environment that facilitates and condones the killing of IPs, is the December 2020 massacre of nine Tumandok leaders opposing the Jalaur Dam in Panay Island. As explored in Chapter 3.1, the Jalaur mega-dam project has been associated with numerous rights violations, including faulty FPIC processes due to the use of

intimidatory tactics, as well as the red-tagging of activists, physical harassment of local communities and extra-judicial killings (Indigenous Peoples Rights International, 2021).

According to the Philippine National Police's Regional Office for Western Visayas, the synchronised police and military operations in Calinog and Tapaz, was carried out to curb the proliferation of CPP-NPA explosives and firearms in Panay Island (Indigenous Peoples Rights International, 2021). This resulted in nine extra-judicial killings and 16 arrests among the Tumandok tribe (Kodao, 2020). To support this narrative and justify the massacre of the Tumandok barangays leaders, authorities allegedly planted weapons in the victims' homes, claiming that they were members of the NPA who violently resisted the inspection (Ibid.). This narrative contradicts the witness accounts of the victims' participants, who testify that the civilians did not resist the arrest and were not armed combatants (Ibid.).

The terrorist-tagging and consequent extra-judicial killing of Tumandok community members to crack down on their opposition to the Jalaur Dam has been consistent and unpunished. In February and March 2021, Tumandok village chief Julie Catamin and attorney Angelo Karlo Guillen, who had been arrested during the 2020 military and police operations, were killed by unidentified perpetrators (Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved Areas and Territories Consortium, 2021). Just like the victims of the 2020 Tumandok massacre, Julie and Angelo were relentlessly red-tagged prior to their assassination (Amnesty International, 2021). The former had accused the National Police of planting the evidence during the 2020 raid operation, while the latter was part of an organisation petitioning to nullify the Anti-Terrorism Act (Ibid.). In 2018, Angelo's photograph had been distributed in Iloilo city on posters falsely labeling him as an NPA member (Human Rights Foundation, 2023).

By framing Tumandok leaders and advocates as terrorists, state actors utilised climate conspiracy narratives to redirect public attention away from the Jalaur Dam issue – thus deflecting accountability for ecological destruction – toward a fabricated security threat. Conflating environmental defence with armed rebellion in the digital and public discourse enables the government to legitimise the killing of Tumandok leaders by framing it as a necessity for national safety.

A similar case exemplifying this dynamic consists of the February 2022 extra-judicial killing of Chad Booc, a volunteer teacher at the Alternative Learning Center for Agricultural and Livelihood Development, a Lumad school in Mindanao, and posthumous winner of the Environmental Hero Award by the Center for Environmental Concerns (Center for Environmental Concerns, 2022). Chad was actively involved in Lumad self-determination and ancestral lands mining opposition movements, but from the post-Covid period he started being targeted by numerous incidents of red-tagging – where Chad was accused of being an NPA member (Ibid. ; Alvarez, 2023). In 2021, Chad and six other teachers received trumped-up charges accusing them of training minors to become “terrorists”, which were subsequently dropped due to lack of evidence (Ibid.).

Teacher Chad was murdered together with four other environmental and Indigenous rights defenders, in what the military described as an “armed encounter” with the NPA (Kodao Productions, 2022). Despite the virality of the case, which started the social media movement #JusticeForChadBooc and #StopLumadKillings, the military personnel involved in the killing, has had no legal or criminal repercussions (Alvarez, 2023).

The case of Chad Booc illustrates how the institutionalisation of climate conspiracy narratives that conflate activism with terrorism enables state actors to portray the murder of defenders as a necessity for national security, effectively enabling them to avoid accountability for environmental destruction, human rights violations and extra-judicial killings.

The state's institutionalisation of these narratives transforms peaceful land defense into a criminal act, creating a social and legal environment where the murder of defenders is rebranded as a service to national security. By systematically conflating Indigenous resistance with armed insurgency, the government uses "climate conspiracy narratives" to ensure that state-sponsored violence remains shielded from judicial or public scrutiny. Ultimately, this strategic demonisation legitimises attacks on IPs by framing their physical elimination as a prerequisite for development, effectively granting the military and police a mandate to kill with total impunity.

In summary, climate disinformation systematically undermines the safety and wellbeing of IPs, manifesting in their exclusion from intimidation, forced evictions, red-tagging and exposure to violence. As climate change intensifies, documented cases illustrate how such misrepresentations of IPs as "terrorists" and extractive development as "sustainable" reinforces an 'us versus them' mentality that justifies the use of violence against IPs. In the long run, this enables land appropriation by state and corporate actors under the guise of sustainable development, thereby furthering the erasure of IPs' culture and well-being. Building on this analysis, Chapter 4 turns to strategies for safeguarding Indigenous identities as a mechanism to promote inclusive and effective climate action.

4. Recommendations

This chapter outlines a series of practical recommendations to tackle the increasing problem of climate disinformation and its particular legitimisation of attacks on IP communities in the Philippines. Based on the report's conclusions, these suggestions are designed to foster climate governance that is more inclusive and grounded in evidence. They target crucial stakeholders responsible for fighting disinformation, upholding IP rights, and guaranteeing the active and meaningful involvement of IPs in climate initiatives.

The United Nations and International Human Rights Mechanisms should:

- Expand the mandates of UN SRs, treaty bodies and Universal Periodic Review processes to systematically track the impacts of climate disinformation and red-tagging of Indigenous territories in the Philippines on the safety of environmental defenders, ensuring these are recognized as systemic human rights violations.
- Explicitly track the facilitation of counter-insurgency frameworks (including NTF-ELCAC, the Anti-Terrorism Law and “Whole-of-Nation” approaches) as in facilitating the criminalisation of environmental and Indigenous land defence.
- Increase visits to the Philippines by SRs on the rights of IPs and the situation of human rights, with explicit instructions to assess how climate disinformation and red-tagging enable violence, forced displacement and intimidation of IPs.
- Ensure IPs’ meaningful, safe and independent participation in international climate negotiations (including COP processes), particularly in discussions on REDD+, energy transition and climate finance.
- Facilitate or support independent international investigations into alleged human rights violations linked to climate disinformation, greenwashing and false climate solutions, including pathways for sanctions, public reporting, or formal recommendations.
- Provide technical assistance, funding, and training to Indigenous communities and organisations to document climate disinformation, FPIC manipulation and militarisation, including legal literacy, digital security and evidence preservation.

The Relevant Department of the Philippines Government should:

- Ratify the ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.
- Revise the IPRA to strengthen safeguards for Indigenous land rights by aligning with ILO Convention No. 169 and UNDRIP standards.
- Legally prohibit – following the landmark May 2024 Supreme Court ruling – the designation of civilians as “terrorists” or “communists” by state agents, when conducted without due judicial process.
- Refine the definition of “terrorism” in the ATL to ensure that it cannot be weaponised to target IPs or defenders who oppose large-scale development projects on ancestral lands.

- Explicitly enforce FPIC protections in REDD+, hydropower dams, mining, LNG infrastructure, protected areas, reclamation projects and large-scale tourism developments, including cumulative impact assessments.
- Establish strong independent, enforceable accountability mechanisms that follow international definition and frameworks of tackling climate disinformation, specifically ensuring climate pledges prevent climate doublespeak.
- Align national climate action plans, energy strategies and development policies with ancestral domain protection, Indigenous governance systems and traditional ecological knowledge, rather than treating IP lands as development frontiers.
- Establish stringent conflict-of-interest protocols that disqualify individuals with ties to the military and/or extractive industries from holding seats in the NCIP.
- Reimagine the Whole-of-Nation approach to end the abuse of security forces, NTF-ELCAC and military-linked bodies in civilian climate governance, consultation processes, and community engagement.
- Enhance capacity of climate litigation by thoroughly implementing environmental laws and accountability mechanisms that strengthen corporate liability. This requires firm transparency to review, suspend, or revoke approvals for climate, energy, mining and infrastructure projects where FPIC was obtained through fabricating IP consent or intimidation of IPs.
- Ensure transparency and accuracy in public communications on climate and development projects, and actively counter greenwashing and false climate solutions promoted by state agencies or corporate partners.
- During decision-making processes that concern ancestral lands, formally include Indigenous representatives from recognised Indigenous-led organisations in consultations, local government units, planning bodies and special committees to ensure their voices, priorities and community-driven solutions are reflected in local development plans.

INGOs should:

- Refrain from endorsing or partnering in projects labelled as “green” or “climate-smart” where FPIC, land rights or community safety are compromised.
- Advocate internationally against climate disinformation, FPIC manipulation, greenwashing, and red-tagging in the Philippines, ensuring Indigenous-led analyses and testimonies are centred in global advocacy spaces.
- Strengthen long-term collaboration with Philippine CSOs and Indigenous organisations to track climate disinformation campaigns, militarisation patterns and extractive or “green” projects, producing publicly accessible and evidence-based reports.
- Provide or facilitate pro bono legal, digital security, and protection support for IP communities and environmental defenders facing displacement, criminalisation, or online and offline attacks.

Civil Society Organisations should:

- Assist IP communities in challenging fraudulent FPIC processes, displacement, environmental harm, and red-tagging through courts, administrative bodies, and international mechanisms.
- Conduct sustained, culturally appropriate workshops and campaigns to raise awareness of climate disinformation, particularly in Indigenous and rural communities.
- Establish or strengthen local observatories and monitoring networks to track extractive, energy, and infrastructure projects, with early-warning indicators for FPIC manipulation and militarisation.
- Build coordinated national and regional alliances among CSOs, IP organisations, journalists, and international partners to respond rapidly to disinformation campaigns and attacks on Indigenous defenders.
- Build coordinated national and regional alliances among CSOs, IP organisations, journalists, and international partners to provide legal and financial support to those activists and those organisations who are being red-tagged or targeted by “terrorism financing” allegations.
- Involve local government units and relevant government special bodies in training and dialogue sessions to build a shared understanding of IP rights, environmental protection and inclusive decision-making.
- Design youth engagement programmes that encourage critical reflection climate narratives, equipping young people to consistently question the root causes and processes behind environmental injustices.
- Support psychosocial, legal, and protection mechanisms for communities experiencing long-term trauma linked to militarisation and climate-related violence.

The Media Sector should:

- Adopt and enforce editorial standards that identify, verify, and refuse to amplify climate disinformation, particularly claims of Indigenous consent, sustainability, or “green” development.
- Avoid reproducing military, NTF-ELCAC, or state narratives that conflate environmental advocacy with terrorism or insurgency.
- Prioritise coverage of IP-led conservation and climate adaptation initiatives, portraying communities as active agents rather than passive or obstructive actors.
- Invest in investigative journalism on FPIC processes, REDD+, LNG, hydropower, mining and reclamation projects, prioritising evidence over press releases.
- Partner up with IP organisations to translate and disseminate climate and environmental reporting in Indigenous languages and accessible formats, especially for forested and geographically isolated communities.

- Conduct in-person visits to Indigenous communities to directly observe the impacts of extractive projects and the alternative pathways proposed by IPs.
- Support and collaborate with Indigenous and/or community media, alternative media, and grassroots communication channels, recognising their central role in countering disinformation where digital access is limited.

Tech companies should:

- Enforce stricter and context-aware moderation policies against climate disinformation, red-tagging, coordinated harassment and state-linked propaganda targeting IPs and environmental defenders.
- Ensure algorithmic systems do not amplify misleading sustainability narratives, greenwashing campaigns, or coordinated attacks against IP communities.
- Increase transparency regarding cooperation with government entities, particularly in contexts involving national security narratives and counter-insurgency framing.
- Partner with Philippine IP organisations, CSOs, and independent fact-checkers to design culturally sensitive moderation standards, reporting mechanisms and early-warning systems.
- Provide local media with digital safety resources, rapid response channels and transparency around content takedowns related to state-linked disinformation and harassment campaigns.
- Support IP communities and local media with digital security training to protect against doxing, harassment, and surveillance.

Indigenous Communities should:

- Strengthen community-led protocols and collective decision-making structures to assess and respond to climate, energy and development projects without external coercion.
- Document records of FPIC processes, land rights violations, environmental impacts and disinformation, to file collective petitions or support legal claims and advocacy.
- Build community capacity for safe digital engagement, including identifying disinformation, protecting against surveillance and sharing Indigenous narratives on their own terms.
- Continue forming alliances with CSOs, journalists, researchers and international networks to amplify Indigenous-led climate solutions and rights-based approaches.
- Assert the centrality of traditional ecological knowledge, land stewardship and self-determination by documenting and amplifying these practices and principles on social media across local, national and international arenas.

5. Conclusion

On 1 January 2026, the state-sponsored attack on Barangay Cabacao, Occidental Mindoro, involved an aerial bombardment that killed five civilians, including Indigenous *Mangyan-Iraya* people and children (Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination & Liberation, 2026). While the Armed Forces of the Philippines labeled the incident as a “counter-insurgency” operation, such casualties are part of a pattern of securitisation of Indigenous land. This militarisation in the region was intended to crush community opposition that blocks the potential resumption of Agusan Petroleum and other mining operations on Indigenous ancestral domains (ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights, 2026).

In this context, extractive land use practices are sustained by deploying climate disinformation narratives that conflate IPs environmental advocacy with “communism” and “terrorism”. This conflation – which originated under President Ferdinand Marcos in the 1970s – is intensified today due to rapid digitalisation and the legislative framework, “Whole-of-Nation” approach, that is designed to curb terrorism in the name of national security.

This report has examined the legitimisation of attacks on IPs in the Philippines through the underexplored lens of climate disinformation. The dissemination of these narratives paralleled the rapid increase in digital media since the mid-2010s, deployed by social media, state agencies, corporations and allied media. These deceptive narratives mask the inconsistency between stated climate goals and actual practices, where aggressive development is falsely presented as climate action while erasing Indigenous land stewardship. Consequently, climate disinformation acts as a force multiplier within a governance system that already undermines Indigenous land rights, by re-framing resistance as criminal activity.

This study identified four interlocking forms of climate disinformation in the Philippines. First, IP consent is fabricated by publicising coerced or selective consultations as legitimate FPIC processes. Second, greenwashing endorses corporations’ environmentally destructive projects as sustainable or climate-resilient. Third, false climate solutions, such as flawed reforestation schemes, REDD+ and fossil gas framed as “alternative fuel”. Fourth, deflecting accountability through the retraction of climate commitments and conspiracy narratives portraying environmental defenders as security threats.

The impacts of climate disinformation on IPs in the Philippines are profound and interconnected. First, the military is authorised to intimidate IP communities into consenting land encroachment by distorting its purpose for greenlighting extractive development. These methods violate FPIC processes, thereby undermining IP self-determination. Second, forced evictions and displacement are legitimised as greenwashed or falsely framed climate projects are used to justify the removal of communities from their ancestral domains. Third, the criminalisation of Indigenous resistance through climate conspiracy narratives, resulting in patterns of judicial harassment and financial straining, justified by the misuse of counter-terrorism frameworks and the portrayal of land defence as a national security threat. Finally, the intimidation, harassment and violence against Indigenous leaders and environmental defenders are deemed necessary by climate conspiracy narratives, thereby enabling the impunity of authorities with little public scrutiny or accountability.

Beyond the Philippines, the findings of this report underscore broader regional and global patterns. First, climate disinformation is generally used to overload the information sphere, making it strategic, rather than incidental. This is achieved by framing state initiatives under an overwhelmingly positive light while simultaneously scapegoating IPs. In the Philippines, false depictions of IPs as aggressors through climate conspiracy narratives ends up twisting IP resistance as such to reinforce those very narratives, thereby creating a confirmation bias. This effectively dismisses their factual rebuttals and peaceful

opposition. The primary target of such disinformation is the broader public, whose acceptance of these narratives legitimises militarisation, leading to displacement, violence and silencing dissent. Once public consent is secured, climate disinformation becomes a powerful enabler of attacks against those who challenge dominant climate and development models.

Second, these harms cannot be separated from the Philippines' entrenched counter-insurgency architecture. The "Whole-of-Nation" approach – which, in theory, serves as a holistic, development-oriented strategy to guarantee national security – has, in practice, been instrumentalised to embed military influence in the entire state apparatus. As a consequence, instead of truly protecting Filipinos from counter-insurgency, the operations of the NTF-ELCAC, and the enforcement of the ATL have been weaponised to legitimise attacks on IPs. Climate disinformation strengthens this architecture by providing ideological cover: it recasts militarisation as protection, displacement as sustainability, and repression as governance.

Third, the unresolved tensions between IPRA and the Regalian Doctrine has produced a rights framework that is procedural rather than protective, where Indigenous land claims remain conditional, contestable and subordinate to state-defined development priorities. In practice, this contradiction renders IP rights vulnerable to reinterpretation and suspension, particularly in the context of resource extraction, infrastructure expansion and climate-related projects.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that addressing climate disinformation in the Philippines requires more than fact-checking or media literacy initiatives. It necessitates confronting the structural power relations that underpin climate governance, land control and information production. As long as Indigenous territories are treated as development frontiers and Indigenous resistance is framed as a security threat, climate disinformation will continue to flourish.

Therefore, effective climate governance in the Philippines must adopt a rights-based framework. This requires prioritising Indigenous self-determination, securing land tenure, demilitarising ancestral domains and embracing diverse knowledge systems. Genuine progress toward climate action that is not only effective but also just, inclusive and ecologically sustainable can only be achieved by dismantling the legal, economic and media structures that facilitate the spread of climate disinformation and, in doing so, legitimise attacks on IPs.

Bibliography

Agranzamendez, Reynaldo U. (2013) 'The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA): a vehicle for liberty and prosperity', at: <https://libpros.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ipra-speech-dean-rua.pdf>.

Alfonso, J. (2025) 'Inside the CPP-NPA-NDFP's Abducted-Surface-Donate Playbook', Kontra Kwento, at: <https://www.kontra-kwento.net/post/inside-the-cpp-npa-ndfp-s-abducted-surface-donate-playbook>.

Alindogan, Jamela. (2020) 'Philippines ABS-CBN TV Network Ordered Shut', Al Jazeera, at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/video/2020/5/5/philippines-abs-cbn-tv-network-ordered-shut>.

Amnesty International (2024) 'Philippines: Authorities increasingly using Facebook to stifle young activists' right to freedom of expression and protest', Amnesty International, at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/10/philippines-authorities-using-facebook-to-red-tag-young-activists/>.

Amnesty International (2025) 'Philippines: What do we get in return? How the Philippines nickel boom harms human rights', Amnesty International, at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA35/8607/2024/en/>.

Amnesty International (2025) 'Philippines Amnesty International report 2024-2025', Amnesty International, at: <https://www.amnesty.org.ph/amnesty-report-2024-25-philippines>.

Arguillas, Carolyn O. (2016) 'Duterte to big miners: "you have to stop;" small miners: "we will support you"', Minda News, at: <https://mindanews.com/top-stories/2016/06/duterte-to-big-miners-you-have-to-stop-small-miners-we-will-support-you/>.

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (2010) 'Traditional livelihoods and Indigenous Peoples', AIPP, at: https://iwgia.org/images/publications/0663_English.pdf.

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (2023) 'Study and advice on the Impact of militarisation on the rights of Indigenous Peoples', AIPP, at: <https://aippnet.org/emrip16-item-3-study-and-advice-on-the-impact-of-militarization-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples-by-beverly-longid/>.

Asian Development Bank (2009) 'Land and cultural survival - the communal land rights of Indigenous Peoples in Asia', WB, at: <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/27980/land-cultural-survival.pdf>.

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (2023) 'False solutions – climate colonialism and tragedy of commons', APWLD, at: <https://apwld.org/false-solutions-climate-colonialism-and-tragedy-of-commons/>.

Aspinwall, Nick. (2023) "'We Will Cut out Your Tongue": Filipino Activists Recount Kidnap Ordeal', Al Jazeera, at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/19/we-will-cut-out-your-tongue-filipino-activists-recount-military-kidnap>.

Baizas, Gaby (2022) 'How false narratives on election cheating spread ahead of 2022 elections', Rappler, at: <https://www.rappler.com/philippines/elections/ways-how-false-narratives-disinformation-election-cheating-spread-2022-polls/>.

Bajo, Anna Felicia (2025) 'Marcos signs into law bill promoting development of PH natural gas industry', GMA News, at: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/932917/marcos-signs-into-law-bill-promoting-development-of-ph-natural-gas-industry/story/>.

Balana, Cynthia D. (2011) 'Palawan tribal folk hit use of fake leaders', Inquirer, at: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/12798/palawan-tribal-folk-hit-use-of-fake-leaders>.

Bañez, Ma. Arve B. (2019) 'Poverty, war and peace: Lumad and Muslim women's issues in Mindanao', University of the Philippines, at: <https://up.edu.ph/poverty-war-and-peace-lumad-and-muslim-womens-issues-in-mindanao/>.

BBC (2023) 'Philippines media guide', BBC, at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-67765888>.

Beltran, Michael (2025) 'AI and disinformation fuel political tensions in the Philippines', Aljazeera, at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/7/15/ai-and-disinformation-prompt-political-rivalries-in-the-philippines>.

Bonzo, Lucelle et al. (2025) 'Is the Philippines' reforestation drive coming up short?', DW, at: <https://www.dw.com/en/is-the-philippines-reforestation-drive-coming-up-short/a-72736174>.

Brock, Joe and John Geddie (2022) 'Unilever's Plastic Playbook', Reuters, at: <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/global-plastic-unilever/>.

Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (2024) 'Enhancing digital connectivity in remote areas in Mindanao', BIMP-EAGA, at: <https://bimp-eaga.asia/articles/enhancing-digital-connectivity-remote-areas-mindanao>.

Buenaventura, Tomas (2023), 'The communist insurgency in the Philippines: a 'protracted people's war' continues', ACLED, at: <https://acleddata.com/report/communist-insurgency-philippines-protracted-peoples-war-continues>.

Bulatlat (2021) 'Farmers groups call to end fake and forced surrender campaign', Bulatlat, at: <https://www.bulatlat.com/2021/08/15/farmers-groups-call-to-end-fake-and-forced-surrender-campaign/>.

Bulatlat (2025) 'Marcos Jr 4th SONA falls short of bare minimum, critics say', Bulatlat, at: <https://www.bulatlat.com/2025/07/28/marcos-jr-4th-sona-falls-short-of-bare-minimum-critics-say/>.

Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft (2025) 'WorldRiskReport 2025', Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft, at: <https://weltrisikobericht.de/worldriskreport/>.

Business Insider UK (2018) 'Philippines' Duterte says to end mining 'one of these days'', Yahoo News, at: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aHRdxENfM3YfUF0dVRt4PzA3eMJ7D9pTy6RlBfOefc0/edit?tab=t.0>.

Cabañes, Jason Vincent A. and Fernando A. Santiago Jr. (2022) 'Counter-disinformation beyond fact-checking: insights from the Philippines', Fulcrum, at: <https://fulcrum.sg/counter-disinformation-beyond-fact-checking-insights-from-the-philippines/>.

Cabico, Gaea Katreena (2023) 'Greenpeace calls on DENR to scrap 'reprehensible' collab with fossil fuel firm', Philippine Star, at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2023/06/15/2274121/greenpeace-calls-denr-scrap-reprehensible-collab-fossil-fuel-firm>.

Cabico, Gaea Katreena (2025) 'Philippines bets on natural gas to accelerate renewable energy', Dialogue Earth, at: <https://dialogue.earth/en/energy/philippines-bets-on-natural-gas-to-accelerate-renewable-energy/>.

Calayan, Mark Moises (2025) 'Mining project in Kalinga: Makilala Mining began initial works in 2005; MOA signed bet. Balatoc ICC and MMCI in 2022', Guru Press Cordillera, at: <https://www.gurupress-cordillera.com/post/mining-project-in-kalinga-makilala-mining-began-initial-works-in-2005-moa-signed-bet-balatoc-icc>.

Calipay, Connie (2025) 'DENR logs 85% tree survival in nat'l greening program in Bicol', Philippine News Agency, at: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1251517>.

Camus, Miguel R. (2024) 'Lucio Tan's MacroAsia edges closer to mining operations with Infanta Nickel project in Palawan', Insider PH, at: <https://insiderph.com/lucio-tans-macroasia-edges-closer-to-mining-operations-with-infanta-nickel-project-in-palawan>.

Cariño, Jacqueline K. (2022), 'Militarisation under the mantle of Anti-terrorist mania: the case of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines', OHCHR, at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/indigenouspeoples/emrip/seminars/undrip/jill-carino-impact-militarization-ip-rights-philippines-final.docx>.

Celsius Resources (2024) 'MCB Project receives certification for compliance with FPIC process', Celsius Resources, at: <https://celsiusresources.com/announcements/6512330>.

Center for Environmental Concerns (2024) 'SONA 2024: Further attempt to greenwash the Marcos Jr. administration', CEC, at: <https://www.cecphils.org/sona-2024-marcos-jr-and-his-broken-green-promises/>.

Cervantes, Filane Mikee (2023) 'SWS: 47% of Filipinos 'competent' with English language', Philippine News Agency, at: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1207936>.

Cervantes, Filane Mikee (2024) 'Trust score in news stable at 37% since start of PBBM admin – report', Philippine News Agency, at: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1227143>.

Chavez, Leilani (2021) 'Complete turnaround': Philippines' Duterte lifts ban on new mining permits', Mongabay, at: <https://news.mongabay.com/2021/04/complete-turnaround-philippines-duterte-lifts-ban-on-new-mining-permits>.

- Chavez, Leilani and Susan Claire Agbayani (2020) 'Missing mangroves are root of contention over Philippine airport project', Mongabay, at: <https://news.mongabay.com/2020/09/missing-mangroves-are-root-of-contention-over-philippine-airport-project>.
- Chua, Yvonne T. (2025) 'Filipino concern over online disinfo hits record high—Digital News Report 2025', Tsek.ph, at: <https://www.tsek.ph>.
- Chua, Yvonne T. (2025) 'Filipino concern over online disinformation hits record high, report finds', Philippine Star, at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/06/17/2451013/filipino-concern-over-online-disinformation-hits-record-high-report-finds>.
- Climate Change Commission (2024) 'From tradition to action: integrating Indigenous knowledge into climate adaptation plans', Office of the President of the Philippines, at: <https://climate.gov.ph/news/938>.
- Columbia University (2024) 'Red-tagging in the Philippines: the modern McCarthyism threatening freedom of expression', Columbia University, at: <https://globalfreedomofexpression.columbia.edu/publications/red-tagging-in-the-philippines-the-modern-mccarthyism-threatening-freedom-of-expression/>.
- Conde, Carlos H. (2024) 'Philippines worst in Asia for killings of environmental defenders', Human Rights Watch, at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/09/12/philippines-worst-asia-killings-environmental-defenders>.
- Cordillera Peoples Alliance (2023) 'Press release: CPA decries DENR Secretary's Statement on FPIC and redtagging in the Philippines', CPA, at: <https://cpaphils.org/cpa-decries-denr-secretarys-statement-on-fpic-and-redtagging-in-the-philippines.html>.
- Coutinho, Ana Benoliel (2023) 'No biodiversity – no future for food, or why we need more nature in agriculture', Development Aid, at: <https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/164569/no-biodiversity-no-future-for-food>.
- Davey, Ed (2024) 'Politician who pushed Philippines natural gas boom is behind firm that planned to profit', The Associated Press, at: <https://kitchener.citynews.ca/2024/06/20/politician-who-pushed-philippines-natural-gas-boom-is-behind-firm-that-planned-to-profit>.
- Davey, Ed (2024) 'The Philippines goes all in for natural gas, a climate pollutant', AP News, at: <https://apnews.com/article/philippines-batangas-reef-lng-natural-gas-climate-6f9b928ac739939e9362f1573fdde69b>.
- Daytec-Yañgot, Cheryl L. (2021) 'FPIC: A Shield or Threat to Indigenous Peoples' Rights?', UN-REDD, at: <https://www.un-redd.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/Indigenous%20Peoples%20Experiences%20on%20Free.%20Prior%20and%20Informed%20Consent:%20A%20Collection%20of%20Case%20Studies%28Philippines%29.pdf>.
- De La Cruz, Gabrielle (2025) 'Celsius hits regulatory milestone at Philippine Copper-Gold Project, plans next steps', Investing News Network, at: <https://investingnews.com/celsius-regulatory-milestone-philippine-project/>.
- Department of Environment and Natural Resources (n.d.) 'DENR pushes for nationwide forest conservation to reduce climate change impacts', DENR, at: <https://r7.denr.gov.ph/news-events/denr-pushes-for-nationwide-forest-conservation-to-reduce-climate-change-impacts/>.
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (n.d.) 'National REDD Plus System, Philippines', GIZ, at: <https://www.giz.de/en/projects/national-redd-plus-system-philippines>.
- De Vera, Sherwin (2022) 'Dam project shatters tribal peace, unity in Apayao's capital town', Altermidya, at: <https://www.altermidya.net/dam-project-shatters-tribal-peace-unity-in-apayaos-capital-town/>.
- Dimitriadis, Dimitris et al. (2023) 'How Shell used a 'granfluencer' to promote its brand', DeSmog, at: <https://www.desmog.com/2023/08/15/shell-granfluencer-promote-fossil-fuels-greenwash/>.
- Doyle, Cathal (2019) 'The Philippines Indigenous Peoples Rights Act and ILO Convention 169 on tribal and Indigenous Peoples: exploring synergies for rights realisation', The International Journal of Human Rights, 24(2-3): 70-190 at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/13642987.2019.1679120?needAccess=true>.
- Dumlao, Artemio (2019) 'HR group slams ex-colonel's appointment as NCIP chair', The Philippines Star, at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2019/06/06/1924034/hr-group-slams-ex-colonels-appointment-ncip-chair>.
- Eckstein, David et al. (2019) 'Global Climate Risk Index, 2019', German Watch, at: https://www.germanwatch.org/sites/default/files/Global%20Climate%20Risk%20Index%202019_2.pdf.

- Eco-Business (2022) 'Philippine president Marcos: 'Renewable energy is top of climate agenda'', Eco-Business, at: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/philippine-president-marcos-renewable-energy-is-top-of-climate-agenda/>.
- Edge, Louise (2025) '89 billion and counting: Unilever's out of control plastic sachet habit', Greenpeace, at: <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/story/77194/89-billion-and-counting-unilevers-out-of-control-plastic-sachet-habit/>.
- Estella, Pauline and Martin Löffelholz (n.d.) 'Philippines', Media Landscapes, at: <https://medialandscapes.org/static/country/philippines/media/social-networks.html>.
- Flores, Helen (2023) 'Government, social media firms to combat fake news', Philippine Star, at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2023/08/13/2288298/government-social-media-firms-combat-fake-news>.
- Flores, Nicole Dominique (2024) 'A case of greenwashing': How the Philippines' energy transition comes at the cost of lives, biodiversity', Philippine Star, at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2024/12/06/2405457/a-case-greenwashing-how-philippines-energy-transition-comes-cost-lives-biodiversity>.
- Friends of the Earth (2014) 'Nine reasons why REDD is a false solution: new report from Friends of the Earth International', FoE, at: <https://foe.org/blog/2014-10-nine-reasons-why-redd-is-a-false-folution-friends-of/>.
- Galvez, James (2024) 'MCB Project mining permit granted by Philippine Government', Philippine Resources, at: <https://www.philippine-resources.com/articles/2024/3/mcb-project-mining-permit-granted-by-philippine-government>.
- Garrido, Micaela Cayton et al. (2024) 'Religious and cultural freedoms of Indigenous Peoples in Indonesia and the Philippines', Asia Religious and Ethnic Freedom, at: <https://cnxus.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/ForUploading.Indigenous-Peoples-in-Indonesia-and-the-Philippines.docx.pdf>.
- Gelmini, Stefano (2021) 'We're living in a golden age of greenwash', Greenpeace, at: <https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/golden-age-of-greenwash/>.
- Global Forest Watch (2023) 'Philippines', Global Forest Watch, at: <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/PHL/?map=eyJjYW5Cb3VuZCl6dHJlZX0%3D>.
- Global Forest Watch (2024) 'General Nakar', Global Forest Watch, at: <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/PHL/62/11/?category=climate>.
- Global Witness (2024) 'Missing voices, the violent erasure of land and environmental defenders', Global Witness, at: <https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/land-and-environmental-defenders/missing-voices/>.
- Global Witness (2024b) 'How the militarisation of mining threatens Indigenous defenders in the Philippines', Global Witness, at: <https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/land-and-environmental-defenders/how-the-militarisation-of-mining-threatens-indigenous-defenders-in-the-philippines/>.
- Global Witness (2025) 'Sunk costs: a mega-airport in the path of climate disaster', Global Witness, at: <https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/forests/sunk-costs-a-mega-airport-in-the-path-of-climate-disaster/>.
- Global Witness (2025) 'Toxic platforms, broken planet', Global Witness, at: <https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/digital-threats/toxic-platforms-broken-planet/>.
- Global Witness (2025) 'What is red-tagging, and how does it harm climate action?', Global Witness, at: <https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/digital-threats/what-is-red-tagging-and-how-does-it-harm-climate-action/>.
- Global Witness and Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (2023) 'Joint statement on suspension of reclamation projects in Manila Bay, Philippines', Global Witness, at: <https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/land-and-environmental-defenders/joint-statement-on-suspension-of-reclamation-projects-in-manila-bay-philippines/>.
- GMA Regional TV News (2026) 'NEWS UPDATE: At least five alleged officers of the New People's Army (NPA) abandoned the armed struggle as they surrendered to authorities with their firearms in San Fernando', Facebook, at: https://www.facebook.com/GMARegionalTVNews/posts/pfbid0hD1GPHRbJHrLAHE4VYt9eakK7fxT8uhPKituV6hPwwgdHivUMHB7XBawe14DG3skl?locale=th_TH.
- Gonzales, Anna Leah and Benjamin Pulta (2023) 'PBBM: Gov't must equip citizens to fight disinformation', Philippine News Agency, at: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1207781>.

Greenpeace Philippines (2022) 'Greenpeace to Marcos Jr: the climate crisis needs action, not empty words', Greenpeace, at: <https://www.greenpeace.org/philippines/press/53509/greenpeace-to-marcos-jr-the-climate-crisis-needs-action-not-empty-words/>.

Greenpeace Philippines (2023) 'Greenpeace mocks DENR-Shell ties: 'Thank you' for enabling climate greenwashing', Greenpeace Philippines, at: <https://www.greenpeace.org/philippines/press/59574/greenpeace-mocks-denr-shell-ties-thank-you-for-enabling-climate-greenwashing/>.

Guardian Environment Network (2016) 'Philippines won't honour UN climate deal, says president', The Guardian, at: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/jul/19/philippines-wont-honour-un-paris-climate-deal-president-duterte>.

Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (2024) 'Targeted climate education interventions for poor, less-educated, and older Filipinos needed', Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, at: <https://hhi.harvard.edu/blog/only-22-filipinos-satisfied-government's-efforts-address-climate-change>.

Hashem, Heba (2023) 'Why LNG in the Philippines is more of a problem than a solution', Energy Tracker Asia, at: <https://energytracker.asia/lng-in-the-philippines-is-a-problem/>.

Hassa, Khalid (2018) 'Opening address at the high-level meeting on the ratification of ILO C169 or Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples', ILO Country Office, at: <https://www.ilo.org/resource/statement/opening-address-high-level-meeting-ratification-ilo-c169-or-convention>.

Hent (2022) 'Isnag receive benefit from 150mw Gened-1 hydro', Herald Express, at: <https://baguioheraldexpressonline.com/isnag-receive-benefit-from-150mw-gened-1-hydro/>.

Howe, Sue (2025) 'Social media statistics in the Philippines', Meltwater, at: <https://www.meltwater.com/en/blog/social-media-statistics-philippines>.

Human Rights Foundation (2023) 'Red-tagging in the Philippines: a license to kill', HRF, at: <https://hrf.org/latest/red-tagging-in-the-philippines-a-license-to-kill/>.

Human Rights Watch (2024) 'Philippines, events of 2024', Human Rights Watch, at: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/philippines>.

Hylolmo, Sonam Lama (2024) 'In largest ever study, Indigenous and local communities report the impacts of climate change', Mongabay, at: <https://news.mongabay.com/2024/04/in-largest-ever-study-indigenous-and-local-communities-report-the-impacts-of-climate-change/>.

Ibon International (2024) 'False "Terrorism" Charges against Philippine CSOs Undermine People's Right to Development', Ibon International, at: <https://iboninternational.org/2024/05/08/false-terrorism-charges-against-philippine-csos-undermine-peoples-right-to-development/>.

Indigenous Peoples Rights International (2024) 'A call for effective and genuine consultations on the revised FPIC guidelines', IPRI, at: https://www.focus-obs.org/?jet_download=b37d51716433cfece79a8243b2594741b0b0614b.

International Association of Women in Radio and Television-Philippine Chapter (2018) 'Amplifying the people's voices: the Philippine community radio experience and challenges', International Association of Women in Radio and Television-Philippine Chapter & Fokus-Norway, at: <https://iawrt.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/amplifying-the-peoples-voices.pdf>.

International Labour Office (2017) 'Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change: From Victims to Change Agents through Decent Work', International Labour Organisation (ILO), at: https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@gender/documents/publication/wcms_55118_9.pdf.

International Labour Organisation (2017) 'Indigenous peoples and climate change', ILO, at: https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@gender/documents/publication/wcms_55118_9.pdf.

International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (2013) 'Philippines: Indigenous communities hit by Typhoon Yolanda', IWGIA, at: <https://iwgia.org/en/philippines/1916-philippines-indigenous-communities-hit-by-typhoon.html>.

International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (2023) 'IWGIA, AIPP and LAHURNIP condemn the arbitrary designation of legitimate Indigenous Peoples human rights defenders as terrorists by Philippine authorities', IWGIA, at: <https://iwgia.org/en/news/5261-iwgia-aipp-lahurnip-condemn-arbitrary-designation-legitimate-indigenous-peoples-human-rights-defenders-terrorists-philippine-authorities.html>.

- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (2025) 'The Indigenous World 2025: Philippines', IWGIA, at: <https://iwgia.org/en/philippines/5674-iw-2025-philippines.html>.
- Israel, C. Danilo and Maria Diyina Gem Arbo (2025) 'The National Greening Program: hope for our balding forests', Philippine Institute for Development Studies, at: <https://www.pids.gov.ph/publication/policy-notes/the-national-greening-program-hope-for-our-balding-forests>.
- Israel, Kyle Pierre et al. (2023) 'Deforestation and forest degradation analysis of Southern Sierra Madre, Philippines using Google Earth Engine and community mapping', The International Archives of the Photogrammetry Remote Sensing and Spatial Information Sciences XLVIII-4/W8-2023: 313-320 at: <https://isprs-archives.copernicus.org/articles/XLVIII-4-W8-2023/313/2024/isprs-archives-XLVIII-4-W8-2023-313-2024.pdf>.
- Johnstone, Cale (2025) 'Scorched future: the rising toll of extreme heat in the Philippines', Global Disaster Preparedness Centre, at: <https://preparecenter.org/story/scorched-future-the-rising-toll-of-extreme-heat-in-the-philippines/>.
- Kemp, Simon (2015) 'Digital 2015: the Philippines', Datareportal, at: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2015-philippines>.
- Kemp, Simon (2017) 'Digital 2017: the Philippines', Datareportal, at: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2017-philippines?rq=philippines>.
- Kemp, Simon (2020) 'Digital 2020: the Philippines', Datareportal, at: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-philippines?rq=philippines>.
- Kemp, Simon (2023) 'Digital 2023: the Philippines', Datareportal, at: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-philippines>.
- Kemp, Simon (2025) 'Digital 2025: the Philippines', Datareportal, at: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-philippines>.
- Khan, Rachel E. and Yvonne T. Chua (2023) 'Countering disinformation – tools and initiatives in the Philippines', University of the Philippines & International Media Support, at: <https://www.mediasupport.org/publication/countering-disinformation-tools-and-initiatives-in-the-philippines/>.
- Koons, Eric (2024) 'Climate change in the Philippines: causes, effects and solutions', Climate Impacts Tracker Asia, at: <https://www.climateimpactstracker.com/climate-change-in-the-philippines-causes-effects-and-solutions/>.
- Koons, Eric (2024) 'Climate change in the Philippines: causes, effects and solutions', Climate Impacts Tracker Asia, at: <https://www.climateimpactstracker.com/climate-change-in-the-philippines-causes-effects-and-solutions/>.
- Lamb, William F et al. (2020) 'Discourses of climate delay', Cambridge University Press 3: e17, at: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/global-sustainability/article/discourses-of-climate-delay/7B11B722E3E3454BB6212378E32985A7>.
- Lapniten, Karloston (2022) 'Collusion, corruption allegations hound dam projects in last nature frontier of the Cordillera', Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, at: <https://pcij.org/2022/09/10/collusion-corruption-allegations-hound-dam-projects-in-last-nature-frontier-of-the-cordillera/>.
- LiCAS (2024) 'A matter of consent, greenwashed promises and irregularities in Philippines' hydropower projects', LiCAS News, at: <https://spotlight.licas.news/greenwashed-promises-irregularities-taint-consent-process-in-hydropower-project/index.html>.
- Lighthouse Reports (2025) 'Forest fraud: national greenwashing program', Lighthouse Reports, at: <https://www.lighthousereports.com/investigation/forest-fraud-national-greenwashing-program/>.
- Loja, Johnrich (2025) 'Democratizing Jura Regalia: revisiting the contemporary legal basis for the Regalian Doctrine's blanket application', Manila University Law School 69(67): 68-128, at: <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Delivery.cfm/5680503.pdf?abstractid=5680503&mirid=1&type=2>.
- Loyola, James A. (2024) 'SMC launches Philippines' first biodiversity offset site', Manila Bulletin, at: <https://mb.com.ph/2024/2/25/smc-launches-philippines-first-biodiversity-offset-site>.
- Lozano, Angelo L. et al. (2025) 'National greening program in the Philippines: a thematic review of policy frameworks, implementation practices and measured outcomes', International Journal of Environment and Climate Change 15(7): 125-39, at: <https://journalijecc.com/index.php/IJECC/article/view/4918/10318>.

- MacInnes, Angus et al. (2017) 'Free, prior and informed consent: how to rectify the devastating consequences of harmful mining for indigenous peoples', *Perspectives in Ecology and Conservation* 15(3): 152-160, at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S167900731730004X?ref=pdf_download&fr=RR-2&rr=9d3be4216e0445b3.
- Macusi, Erna S. et al. (2023) 'Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs), Livelihood Resources and Aspirations of the Matigsalog and Ata Tribes', *Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute* 15(14): 11182, at: <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/15/14/11182>.
- Madgwick, Jane (2021) 'Manila's new airport: opportunity to build with nature', *Asia Times*, at: <https://asiatimes.com/2021/10/manilas-new-airport-opportunity-to-build-with-nature/>.
- Magtoto, Reynard (2025) 'AFP campus tour in Masbate deepens 'militarization' of schools, violates DepEd order', *Bulatlat*, at: <https://www.bulatlat.com/2025/10/01/afp-campus-tour-in-masbate-deepens-militarization-of-schools-violates-deped-order/?tztc=1>.
- Malasig, Jeline (2025) 'Pinoy remain among world's most internet-savvy users — 2025 report', *Interaksyon*, at: <https://interaksyon.philstar.com/trends-spotlights/2025/02/26/292410/pinoys-among-worlds-internet-savvy-users-2025-report/>.
- Mamangun, Jo Maline (2025) 'More than copper and gold: the people who won't be moved', *Bulatlat*, at: <https://www.bulatlat.com/2025/05/09/more-than-copper-and-gold-the-people-who-wont-be-moved/>.
- Manila Bulletin (2022) 'All 22 IP barangays in Apayao see sustainable future with renewable power facility', *Manila Bulletin*, at: <https://mb.com.ph/2022/02/02/all-22-ip-barangays-in-apayao-see-sustainable-future-with-renewable-power-facility>.
- MASIPAG National Office (2025) 'Marcos Jr. SONA 2025: Empty promises, neglected farmers – MASIPAG rallies for systemic change', *MASIPAG*, at: <https://masipag.org/marcos-jr-sona-2025-empty-promises-neglected-farmers-masipag-rallies-for-systemic-change/>.
- Mason, Dorothy et al. (2025) 'Extracting value, losing ground: the critical minerals boom in Palawan', *New Mandala*, at: <https://www.newmandala.org/extracting-value-losing-ground-the-critical-minerals-boom-in-palawan/>.
- Mindoro Today (2024) 'Military refutes abduction claims of former NPA rebel in Mindoro', *Mindoro Today*, at: <https://mindorotoday.tv/2024/10/20/military-refutes-abduction-claims-of-former-npa-rebel-in-mindoro/>.
- National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (2018) 'IPRA and NCIP', *NCIP*, at: https://www.sec.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2018_RTD_NCIP-PPT-PRESENTATION-SUSTAINABILITY-1.pdf.
- National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (2024) 'AFP condemns "fake news" and "Abduct-Surface-Donate" scheme in Matias Case', *NTF-ELCAC*, at: <https://www.ntfelcac.gov.ph/post/afp-condemns-fake-news-and-abduct-surface-donate-scheme-in-matias-case>.
- National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (2026) '12 dating rebelde, nagbalik-loobdahil sa 'whole-of-nation' approach', *Facebook*, at: https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1228184289413681&set=a.199097248989062&locale=th_TH.
- National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (n.d.) 'Our Story', *NTF-ELCAC*, at: <https://www.ntfelcac.gov.ph/about>.
- Nepomuceno, Priam (2023) 'Stop donation drives using abduction claims, NTF-ELCAC tells militants', *Philippine News Agency*, at: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1212185>.
- Newman Nic, et al. (2024) 'Reuters institute digital news report 2024', *Reuters*, at: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2024-06/RISJ_DNR_2024_Digital_v10%20lr.pdf.
- Ourfilipinograndma (2022) 'You can't spell 'loyalty' without 'LOLA'', *Instagram*, at: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CiySfG8jH4D/>.
- O'Donovan, Alexandria (2025) 'Social Media as an Environmental Tool', *Florida Museum*, at: <https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/earth-systems/blog/social-media-and-its-role-in-environmental-communication/>.
- Panti, Llanesca T. (2021) 'Duterte lifts nine-year ban on new mining deals', *GMA News*, at: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/companies/783822/duterte-lifts-nine-year-ban-on-new-mining-deals/story/>.

- Park, William (2022) 'How companies blame you for climate change', BBC, at: <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20220504-why-the-wrong-people-are-blamed-for-climate-change>.
- Peralta, Janine (2024) 'Indigenous rights under pressure as Philippine minerals boom', Dialogue Earth, at: <https://dialogue.earth/en/justice/indigenous-rights-under-pressure-as-philippine-minerals-boom/>.
- Philippine Daily Inquirer (2025) 'Most Filipinos struggle to spot fake news, says survey', Asia News Network, at: <https://asianews.network/most-filipinos-struggle-to-spot-fake-news-says-survey>.
- Philippine Mining Club (2025) 'Celsius Resources has a copper giant in a country where mining is set to boom', Philippine Mining Club, at: <https://www.philippineminingclub.com/celsius-resources-has-a-copper-giant-in-a-country-where-mining-is-set-to-boom/>.
- Presidential Communication Office (2023) 'PCO signs MOU with partner agencies to combat disinformation, misinformation', PCO, at: https://pco.gov.ph/news_releases/pco-signs-mou-with-partner-agencies-to-combat-disinformation-misinformation/.
- Presidential Communications Office (2023) 'DENR to conduct thorough review of Manila Bay reclamation projects following PBBM's suspension on all projects', Presidential Communications Office, at: https://pco.gov.ph/news_releases/denr-to-conduct-thorough-review-of-manila-bay-reclamation-projects-following-pbbms-suspension-on-all-projects/.
- Quitasol, Aldwin (n.d.) 'The Igorots, the Indigenous Peoples of the Northern Philippines under the faces of state terrorism and tyranny', Indigenous Peoples Major Group for Sustainable Development, at: <https://indigenouspeoples-sdg.org/index.php/english/ttt/398-the-igorots-the-indigenous-peoples-of-the-northern-philippines-under-the-faces-of-state-terrorism-and-tyranny>.
- Rainforest Rescue (2011) 'Philippines: Indigenous peoples of Palawan against mining corporations', Rainforest Rescue, at: <https://www.rainforest-rescue.org/press-releases/3565/philippines-indigenous-peoples-of-palawan-against-mining-corporations-1>.
- Ramos, Denise (2023) 'How climate change is harming Indigenous farming in the Philippines', Earth.org, at: <https://earth.org/how-climate-change-is-harming-indigenous-farming-in-the-philippines/>.
- Ramos, Mariejo (2024) 'Philippines communities challenge dash for fossil gas', Context, at: <https://www.context.news/just-transition/philippines-communities-challenge-dash-for-fossil-gas>.
- Ranada, Pia (2016) 'Duterte: Climate change real but Paris treaty unfair', Rappler, at: <https://www.rappler.com/philippines/155071-duterte-climate-change-real-paris-agreement-unfair/>.
- Rappler (2022) 'Duterte "institutionalised" disinformation paved the way for a Marcos Jr victory', Rappler, at: <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/in-depth/duterte-institutionalized-disinformation-paved-way-marcos-jr-victory-2022>.
- Rebadulla, Maxine Erika (2023) 'Nurturing nature: addressing deforestation in the Philippines', Medium, at: <https://medium.com/@maxierebadulla/nurturing-nature-addressing-deforestation-in-the-philippines-20618f70c2cb>.
- Reporters Without Borders (n.d.) 'Philippines', RSF, at: <https://rsf.org/en/country/philippines>.
- Republic of the Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources Forest Management Bureau (2017) 'Update of the Philippine National REDD-PLUS Strategy', Republic of the Philippines Department of Environment & Natural Resources Forest Management Bureau, at: <https://lpr.adb.org/sites/default/files/resource/548/philippines-update-of-the-philippine-national-redd-plus.pdf.pdf?>.
- Retno Kusniati (2024) 'Free, Prior, and Informed Consent Principles as Indigenous Peoples' Right: Soft Law or Hard Law?', *Jambe Law Journal* 7(1): 169-193, at: <https://doi.org/10.22437/home.v7i1.350>.
- Romero, Alexis and Janvic Mateo (2017) 'Duterte signs Paris pact on climate change', Philippine Star, at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/03/02/1676063/duterte-signs-paris-pact-climate-change>.
- San Miguel Corporation (2024) 'SMC launches PHL's first complete biodiversity offset site in Bulacan', San Miguel Corporation, at: <https://www.sanmiguel.com.ph/corporate/news/smc-launches-phls-first-complete-biodiversity-offset-site-in-bulacan>.
- San Miguel Corporation (2024) 'SMC wins international award for Biodiversity Offset Program in Bulacan', San Miguel Corporation, at: <https://www.sanmiguel.com.ph/corporate/news/smc-wins-international-award-for-biodiversity-offset-program-in-bulacan>.

- Santiago, Arline (2021) 'The Cordillera Indigenous Peoples' right to land', Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/EMRIP/RightToLand/SantiagoPhilippinesCordillera.pdf>.
- Schertow, John Ahni (2011) 'Macroasia lies: Indigenous Peoples challenge mining company propaganda', IC Magazine, at: <https://icmagazine.org/macroasia-lies-indigenous-peoples-challenge-mining-company-propaganda/>.
- Serapio, Manolo Jr and Enrico Dela Cruz (2016) 'Philippines' Duterte says nation can survive without mining companies', Reuters, at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/philippines-duterte-says-nation-can-survive-without-mining-companies-idUSKCN10C1O1/>.
- Sethi, Pallavi (2024) 'What are climate misinformation and disinformation and what is their impact?', London School of Economics and Political Science & Grantham Research University on Climate Change and the Environment, at: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/explainers/what-are-climate-misinformation-and-disinformation/>.
- Shell (2023) 'Shell Pilipinas corporation partners with DENR in developing nature-based solutions (NBS) in PH', Shell, at: <https://www.shell.com.ph/about-us/media/media-releases/2023-media-releases/shell-pilipinas-corporation-partners-with-denr-in-developing-nature-based-solutions-nbs-in-ph.html>.
- Shell (n.d.) 'Voluntary carbon offset', Shell, at: <https://www.shell.com.ph/business/shell-card/voluntary-carbon-offset.html>.
- Sigales, Jason (2024) 'Army denies abduction of activist in Laguna, says she surrendered', Inquirer, at: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1994085/army-denies-abduction-of-activist-in-laguna-says-she-surrendered>.
- Subingsubing, Krixia (2023) 'Sea level rise in PH capital exceeds global norm — Namria', Inquirer, at: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1818597/sea-level-rise-in-ph-capital-exceeds-global-norm-namria>.
- Sumicad, Anna (2025) 'Climate crisis on air: the media narratives and their impacts on Filipino climate awareness', YACAP, at: <https://yacap.org/2025/09/30/climate-crisis-on-air/>.
- Talk Walker (2019) 'Social media statistics in the Philippines', Talkwalker, at: <https://www.talkwalker.com/blog/social-media-statistics-philippines>.
- Tapsell, Ross (2025) 'The disinformation paradox gripping the Philippines', East Asia Forum, at: <https://eastasiaforum.org/2025/06/28/the-disinformation-paradox-gripping-the-philippines/>.
- Taylor, Matthew and Jonathan Watts (2019) 'Revealed: the 20 firms behind a third of all carbon emissions', The Guardian, at: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/oct/09/revealed-20-firms-third-carbon-emissions>.
- The Climate Reality Project (2025) 'Greenwashing liquefied natural gas undermines PBBM's climate promises', The Climate Reality Project, at: <https://climatereality.ph/2025/07/25/greenwashing-liquefied-natural-gas-undermines-pbbms-climate-promises/>.
- The Philippine Business and News (2023) 'Shell Pilipinas corporation, DENR partner in developing nature-based solutions (NBS) in Phl', Thephilbiznews, at: <https://thephilbiznews.com/2023/05/26/shell-pilipinas-corporation-denr-partner-in-developing-nature-based-solutions-nbs-in-phl/>.
- The Supreme Court of the Philippines (2023) 'SC: For Online Libel, COurts May Impose Alternative Penalty of Fine Instead of Imprisonment', at <https://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/sc-for-online-libel-courts-may-impose-alternative-penalty-of-fine-instead-of-imprisonment/>
- Transformative Pathways (2023) 'A Survey of Jurisprudence Affecting Indigenous Peoples and their Ancestral Land and Resource Rights in the Philippines (2009-2023)', Transformative Pathways, at: https://www.forestpeoples.org/fileadmin/uploads/fpp/Documents/TP_Reports/Transformative-Pathways-Philippines-Baseline-Study-2.pdf.
- U.S Department of State (n.d.) 'Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations', U.S. Department of State, at: <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.
- Unilever (2021) 'We're partnering with Pasig City to scale up plastic collection', Unilever, at: <https://www.unilever.com.ph/news/2021/plastic-collection-in-partnership/>.
- United Nations (n.d.) 'Greenwashing – the deceptive tactics behind environmental claims', United Nations, at: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/climate-issues/greenwashing>.

United Nations Development Programme (2022) 'Mapping and Analysis of Efforts to Counter Information Pollution in Europe and Central Asia Region', UNDP, at: <https://www.undp.org/eurasia/publications/information-pollution>.

United Nations Development Programme (2023) 'Forest protectors in the Philippines: how Indigenous groups are safeguarding nature and supporting the fight against climate change', UNDP, at: <https://www.adaptation-undp.org/forest-protectors-philippines-how-indigenous-groups-are-safeguarding-nature-and-supporting-fight>.

United Nations Development Programme (2025) 'Indigenous youth leaders bridging the digital divide through technology for climate justice', UNDP, at: <https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/blog/indigenous-youth-leaders-bridging-digital-divide-through-technology-climate-justice>.

United Nations Development Programme (2025) 'What are climate misinformation and disinformation and how can we tackle them?', UNDP, at: <https://climatepromise.undp.org/news-and-stories/what-are-climate-misinformation-and-disinformation-and-how-can-we-tackle-them>.

United Nations Environment Programme (2011) 'Tackling corruption for governing REDD in the Philippines', UNEP, at: <https://www.ctc-n.org/resources/tackling-corruption-governing-redd-philippines>.

United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Climate Technology Centre & Network (2011) 'Tackling corruption for governing REDD in the Philippines', UNEP & UNCTCN, at: <https://www.ctc-n.org/resources/tackling-corruption-governing-redd-philippines>.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (n.d.) 'What is REDD+?', UNFCCC, at: <https://unfccc.int/topics/land-use/workstreams/redd/what-is-redd>.

United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (2020) 'Philippines mine standoff: Indigenous and environmental rights must be respected, say UN experts', OHCHR, at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2020/04/philippines-mine-standoff-indigenous-and-environmental-rights-must-be>.

United Nations News (2023) 'Philippines: Indigenous knowledge takes on climate crisis', UN News, at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/09/1140337>.

United Nations Office for Project Services (n.d.) 'Towards inclusion for Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines', UNOPS, at: <https://www.unops.org/news-and-stories/stories/towards-inclusion-for-indigenous-peoples-in-the-philippines>.

University of the Philippines Los Baños (2024) 'Gandingan bestows Ka Louie Tabing Award to PH's sole IP community radio', University of the Philippines Los Baños, at: <https://uplb.edu.ph/all-news/gandingan-bestows-ka-louie-tabing-award-to-phs-sole-ip-community-radio/>.

Velasco, Myrna M. (2023) 'Shell to expand nature-based solutions offer to customers for carbon offset', Manila Bulletin, at: <https://mb.com.ph/2023/9/21/shell-to-broaden-nature-based-solutions-offer-to-customers-for-carbon-offset>.

Vera Files (2023) 'Online media: expanding reach', Vera Files, at: <https://philippines.mom-gmr.org/en/media/online/>.

VERO (2023) 'Staying ahead in the Philippine media landscape: opportunities for 2023', VERO, at: <https://vero-asean.com/staying-ahead-in-the-philippine-media-landscape-opportunities-for-2023/>.

Watts, Jake Maxwell and Biman Mukherji (2017) 'Philippines' Duterte threatens mining companies to behave or suffer 'eventual ruin'', Wall Street Journal, at: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/philippines-duterte-threatens-mining-companies-to-behave-or-suffer-eventual-ruin-1500901914>.

World Bank Group (2007) 'The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act: legal and institutional frameworks, implementation and challenges', WB, at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/875051468298739854/pdf/428230WP01NO0P1nal0IPRA0pdf02122108.pdf>.

World Bank Group (2022) 'Country climate and development report', WB, at: <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/4ec3282919652f7545bc25c49c1811e4-0070012022/original/PHCCDR-FINAL-formatted.pdf>.

World Bank Group (2024) 'No data, no story: Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines', WB Group, at: <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/baa43cc91ec55266a538e9023c528bd7-0070062024/original/No-Data-No-Story-Indigenous-Peoples-in-the-Philippines.pdf>.

- Wright, Gastón. (2025) 'Big Tech's Shift Away from Content Moderation Changes Everything', Alliance Magazine, at: <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/blog/big-techs-shift-away-from-content-moderation-changes-everything/>.
- YACAP (2021) 'PH climate protest gets creative in calling out government inaction', YACAP, at: <https://yacap.org/2021/09/24/ph-climate-protest-gets-creative-in-calling-out-government-inaction/>.
- Østbye, Stein and Mikko Moilanen (2021) 'Doublespeak? Sustainability in the Arctic — a text mining analysis of Norwegian Parliamentary Speeches', MDPI, Sustainability, 13(16): 9397, at: <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/16/9397>.
- Administrative Order No. 1 (2024), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, at: <https://ncip.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/AO-01-2024-NCIP-Rules-of-Procedure.pdf>.
- Anti-Terrorism Act (2020), Republic of the Philippines, at: https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2020/pdf/ra_11479_2020.pdf.
- Biennial Transparency Report (2025), Republic of the Philippines, at: <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/%5BFinal%5D%20Philippine%20Biennial%20Transparency%20Report.pdf>.
- Climate Change Act (2009), Congress of the Philippines, at: https://climate-laws.org/documents/administrative-order-implementing-the-climate-change-act-2009_b66d?id=the-climate-change-act-ra-9729-and-its-implementing-rules-and-regulations-irr-administrative-order-no-2010-01_a739.
- Constitution (1987), Republic of the Philippines, at: https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Philippines_1987#s63.
- Convention No 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (1989), International Labour Organisation, at: https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169.
- Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/1577 (2025), European Council, at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2025/1577/oj/eng#:~:text=29%20July%202025,-updating%20the%20list%20of%20persons%2C%20groups%20and%20entities%20covered%20by,1577%20of%2029%20July%202025>.
- Cybercrime Prevention Act (2012), Republic of the Philippines, at: https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2012/ra_10175_2012.html.
- Declaration Of Schools As Zones Of Peace (2005), Republic of the Philippines Department of Education, at: <https://www.deped.gov.ph/2005/08/08/do-44-s-2005-declaration-of-schools-as-zones-of-peace/>.
- Deepfake Accountability and Transparency Act (2024), House of Representatives, at: https://docs.congress.hrep.online/legisdocs/basic_20/HB00250.pdf.
- Executive Order No. 193 (2015), Republic of the Philippines, at: https://lawphil.net/executive/execord/eo2015/eo_193_2015.html.
- Executive Order No. 26 (2011), Republic of the Philippines, at: https://lawphil.net/executive/execord/eo2011/eo_26_2011.html.
- Executive Order No. 26 (2011), Republic of the Philippines Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, at: <https://pcsd.gov.ph/pcsd-resolution-no-11-418/>.
- Executive Order No. 70 (2018), President Rodrigo R. Duterte, at: <https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebookshelf/showdocs/5/85355>.
- Forests for Life Programme (2025), Forest Management Bureau, at: <https://fmb.denr.gov.ph/ffl/>.
- Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (1997), Republic of the Philippines, at: <https://ncip.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/IPRA-LAW.pdf>.
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1971), United Nations, at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/cedaw.pdf>.
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965), United Nations, at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-elimination-all-forms-racial>.
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1967), United Nations, at: https://treaties.un.org/doc/treaties/1976/03/19760323%2006-17%20am/ch_iv_04.pdf.

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1967), United Nations, at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>.
- Kyoto Protocol (1997), United Nations, at: <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/docs/cop3/l07a01.pdf>.
- National Adaptation Plan for 2023-2050 (2023), Climate Change Commission, at: <https://www.climate.gov.ph/knowledge/ph-nap-2023-2050>.
- National Climate Change Action Plan for 2011-2028 (2011), Climate Change Commission, at: https://policy.asiapacificenergy.org/sites/default/files/NCCAP_TechDoc.pdf.
- National Framework Strategy on Climate Change for 2010-2022 (2010), Climate Change Commission, at: <https://climate.gov.ph/files/NFSCC.pdf>.
- Nationally Determined Contribution (2021), Republic of the Philippines, at: <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/Philippines%20-%20NDC.pdf>.
- Natural Gas Industry Development Act (2025), Republic of the Philippines, at: https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2025/ra_12120_2025.html.
- Paris Agreement (2015), United Nations, at: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf.
- Presidential Decree No. 410 (1974), Republic of the Philippines, at: https://lawphil.net/statutes/presdecs/pd1974/pd_410_1974.html.
- Presidential Decree No. 705 (1975), Republic of the Philippines, at: <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/phi19101.pdf>.
- Proclamation No. 374 (2017), President Rodrigo R. Duterte, at: <https://ldr.senate.gov.ph/executive-issuance/proclamation-no-374-s-2017>.
- Public Assembly Act (1985), Republic of the Philippines, at: <https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebookshelf/showdocs/2/52245>.
- Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, (2024), Human Rights Council, at: <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/56/46/ADD.2>.
- Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review The Philippines (2008), Human Rights Council, at: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g08/136/75/pdf/g0813675.pdf>.
- Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review The Philippines (2012), Human Rights Council, at: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g12/123/16/pdf/g1212316.pdf>.
- Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review The Philippines (2017), Human Rights Council, at: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g17/108/99/pdf/g1710899.pdf>.
- Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review The Philippines (2022), Human Rights Council, at: <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/WG.6/41/PHL/1>.
- Republic Act No. 3872 (1964), Republic of the Philippines, at: https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1964/ra_3872_1964.html.
- Revised Penal Code (1930), Republic of the Philippines, at: https://www.un.org/depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/PHL_revised_penal_code.pdf.
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), United Nations, at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf.
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992), United Nations, at: https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/background_publications_htmlpdf/application/pdf/conveng.pdf

Annexe I: List of Respondents

Interview Code	Respondent's Background	Date of Interview
KII01	IP Media Representative	23/12/2025
KII02	IP Organisation Representative	23/12/2025
KII03	Environmental NGO Representative	13/01/2026
KII04	Development Organisation Representative	14/01/2026
KII05	Development Organisation Representative	14/01/2026
KII06	IP Organisation Representative	22/01/2026
KII07	Development Lawyer	30/01/2026
KII08	Development Organisation Representative	06/02/2026
KII09	Youth Peacebuilding Organisation Representative	06/02/2026
KII10	Social Development Organisation Representative	13/02/2026
KII11	IP Organisation Representative	25/02/2026
KII12	Media Representative	27/02/2026

Annexe II: List of Participants of Focus Group Discussion

Interview Code	Respondent's Background	Date of Interview
FGD01	IP Organisation Representative	27/02/2026
FGD02	IP Organisation Representative	27/02/2026



-  Asia Centre
-  Asia Centre
-  Asia Centre
-  @asiacentre_org
-  asiacentre_org
-  asiacentre

website: asiacentre.org
email: contact@asiacentre.org

Asia Centre is a civil society research institute in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC).

The Centre's core activities involve research, capacity-building, advocacy and media initiatives, having its programmatic priority on four key constitutional liberties as enshrined in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR): freedom of religion or belief (Article 18), freedom of expression (Article 19), freedom of association (Article 20) and the right to public and political participation (Article 21).

Asia Centre collaborates with civil society stakeholders, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and duty-bearers to support their respective initiatives.

It operates from its Research Hub and AI Hub in Bangkok (Thailand), Media Hub in Johor Bahru (Malaysia) and Training Hub in Phnom Penh (Cambodia).