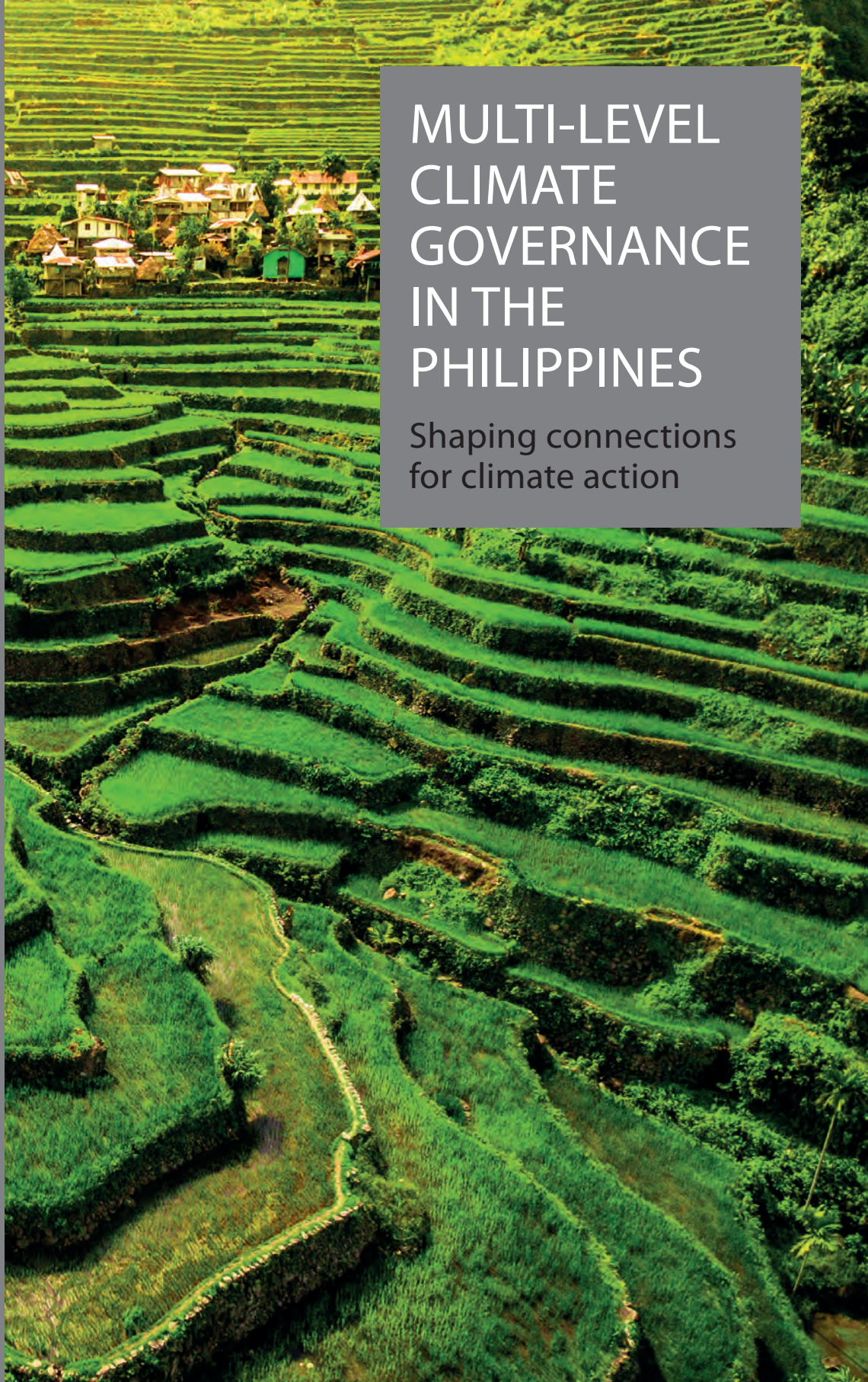

MULTI-LEVEL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

Shaping connections for climate action

V-LED COUNTRY STUDY PHILIPPINES

V-LED | STIMULATING URBAN CLIMATE ACTION

VERTICAL INTEGRATION AND LEARNING FOR
LOW-EMISSION DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

MULTI-LEVEL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

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By adelphi and UN-Habitat Philippines

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V-LED

STIMULATING URBAN CLIMATE ACTION

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Contents

Acronyms

AIP	Annual Investment Programme
CCC	Climate Change Commission
CC-CCAM	Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation
CCCCAM-DRR	Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction
CCET	Climate Change Expenditure Tagging
CDP	Comprehensive Development Plan
CDRA	Community Disaster Risk Assessment
CLUP	Comprehensive Land Use Plan
COP	Conference of Parties
CORE	Communities for Resilience
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DBM	Department of Budget and Management
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
ENRO	Environment and Natural Resources Officer
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GHGi	Greenhouse Gas Inventory
HLURB	Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LCCAP	Local Climate Change Action Plan

LDRRMO	Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer
LED	Low Emission Development
LGA	Local Government Academy
LGU	Local Government Unit
NCCAP	National Climate Change Action Plan
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NDRRMC	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NFSCC	National Framework Strategy on Climate Change
NGA	National Government Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPTE	National Panel of Technical Experts
NUDHF	National Urban Development and Housing Framework
PDP	Philippine Development Plan
PDRRM	Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act
PLLENRO	Philippine League of Environment and Natural Resource Officers
PSF	Peoples' Survival Fund
PTFCC	Presidential Task Force on Climate Change
RA	Republic Act
RPS	Rationalising the Local Planning System
SUC	State Universities and Colleges
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
V-LED	Vertical Integration and Learning for Low-Emission Development

Executive summary

Avoiding the disastrous effects of climate change calls for a global transformation that strengthens resilience to a changing climate and reduces global greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) to zero shortly after the middle of the century. This is a structural change of enormous scale and speed that requires joint action by all sectors of society and levels of government. Coordinating these efforts and ensuring their coherence within a multi-level governance system is key to driving forward effective, efficient and ambitious climate actions.

Facing significant threats to its resources and population, the Philippines took early action to reduce vulnerabilities and establish a national climate policy framework. Implementing climate change plans and policies requires cooperation with a complex web of actors at the local and regional level. At both the national and sub-national levels in the Philippines, new mechanisms and tools are emerging in response to the governing challenges and the increasingly present effects of climate change.

This study summarises the important progress the Philippines has made in developing its policy and institutional architecture in response to climate change through the lens of multi-level governance and multi-stakeholder climate action. It is written for both policy makers and development practitioners working in the Philippines and is based on the four-year project known as V-LED, or Vertical Integration and Learning for Low-Emission Development in Africa and Southeast Asia. From 2015 through 2018, V-LED aimed to stimulate local climate action by rallying ambition and connecting national institutions, local governing units, communities and businesses. Based on experience gained from this project and additional research, the study analyses climate governance in practice, highlighting encouraging practices and continuing challenges of effective multi-level governance.

Acknowledging its acute vulnerability to the effects of a changing climate, the Philippines has created a complex national governance architecture. It was one of the very first countries to enact a comprehensive national climate change law (2009) and created a

central Climate Change Commission to coordinate climate policy and action. As a global leader in climate change adaptation, the Philippines developed a number of policies, plans and regulations to address vulnerability, especially in relation to disaster risk management and reduction.

While the Philippines' Intended Nationally Determined Contribution includes potentially ambitious mitigation efforts, budgets and on-the-ground priorities are primarily focussed on adaptation. Signalling the importance of local climate action, the national government mandated the elaboration of Local Climate Change Action Plans. However, because there is no legal mechanism that binds local governments to national climate change targets, compliance and follow-through depends on local political will and capacity. Developing seamless communication and guidance between national and local actors is a challenge due to the number of local government units as well as the complexity of the national system and guidelines. There is a need to listen to local governments and design regulations and interventions based on their expressed needs and priorities.

Promising efforts have been made to advocate for mitigation and low-emission development at the sub-national scale, involve civil society and academia to support local governments with technical expertise, and facilitate horizontal exchange and learning between sub-national governments facing similar challenges and risks.

To remain at the forefront of climate change response, the Philippines will need to scale up successful efforts, strengthen existing coordinating mechanisms, and create user-friendly planning and implementation mechanisms based on the needs and capacities of local governments. This study identifies possible entry points to ensure complementary and consistent policies and practices:

- **Reinforce coordinating institutions at the national level to achieve policy and regulation coherence.** Established by the 2009 Climate Change Act, the Climate Change Commission is pivotal to advancing coherent national policies and regulations that are coordinated across national agencies, accessible to sub-national governments and relevant to local realities. The Commission should be well-resourced and remain as the central climate change authority within the national government.
- **Strengthen support offered to local government units from national agencies and civil society.** Regional hubs could operate as one-stop-shops for the

latest guidelines and recommendations and offer support. Existing relationships with universities and colleges could be replicated and expanded to increase local governments' access to expertise. And national associations of local government networks can encourage additional peer-to-peer learning and cooperation.

- **Promote visions for sustainable, low-emission development to inspire transformative local action.** National communication strategies can highlight the many socio-economic co-benefits of GHG mitigation and low-emission development. Rather than treating mitigation as an add-on or afterthought, policy mechanisms and tools for implementation can encourage the simultaneous pursuit of economic growth and sustainability.

The Philippines has the policy framework in place to provide a model for sustainable development and climate change adaptation. Throughout the V-LED project, stakeholders at all governing levels as well as civil society demonstrated their willingness to engage in dialogue and exchange in order to progress climate action. Now is the time to expand good practices of coordination and integration and create new mechanisms, where needed, to increase the ambitions and capacities of sub-national actors.

Philippines key facts:

- Home to 105 million people, the Philippines is the world's 13th most populated country, the population is expected to grow to 150 million by 2050.[1]
- 47 per cent of the population lives in urban areas.[2]
- 21 per cent of the population lives in poverty.[2]
- The service sector makes up 60 per cent of the economy, followed by industry (31 per cent) and agriculture (9.5 per cent) – not counting the large informal sector[2]

Sources: 1) UNDESA 2018; 2) The World Bank 2018.

1. Introduction

– "Looking at the climate change landscape in the Philippines, what do you see?"

– "An incomplete puzzle. I say a puzzle because somehow everybody knows what a puzzle looks like: What's there and what's not there. There's still effort needed to really put the picture together. It's a matter of understanding where a particular piece could come from. And it's up to those who are currently holding the pieces of the puzzle to call on the others who are, perhaps, holding the missing pieces."

The Philippines faces serious risks posed by climate change and provides a remarkable example of how to respond. "Recognising the vulnerability of the Philippine archipelago and its local communities, particularly the poor, women, and children, to potentially dangerous consequences", the country is at the forefront of climate change policy and action (Republic of the Philippines 2012: 2).

As a former member of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) put it: **"Institutionally, the Philippines is one of the first countries to recognise the importance of a systematic institutional response"** (2016). The country's climate change governance architecture includes impressive legislative and institutional components such as the Climate Change Act (the second worldwide, after the UK; Grantham 2018), the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) and the CCC, achieved through national efforts and with international support. Dedicated agents of change are found across the relevant bodies, scales and acting institutions, from local government units (LGUs) to National Government Agencies (NGAs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

This study sheds light on the **collaborative and coordinative efforts** needed to effectively tackle the complex challenge of climate change and 'put the picture together', as quoted above. A leading question is: How can the country's multi-level governance framework effectively unleash the full potential of stakeholders for collaborative, transformative local climate action?

As part of the **V-LED project** – Vertical Integration and Learning for Low-Emission Development – with its emphasis on collaboration, this country study uses a multi-level governance lens in understanding the different dimensions of climate action and influence in the Philippines. Of specific interest are the relationships of actors in addressing climate change vertically between different levels of government, and horizontally across different sectors.

The V-LED Philippines country study **recognises:**

- that local climate change action is key for building resilience, reducing vulnerability and emissions,
- that effective multi-level governance coordination and cooperation are necessary to ensure policy coherence between local level action plans and national policy frameworks;

The V-LED Philippines country study **asks:**


How is the Philippines developing and implementing climate change policies across and between levels of governance?


What types of coordination between national and sub-national actors enable and drive local climate action and how?


What other factors support local climate action and how?

1.1 Structure of the study

The study is divided into five chapters. Following the introduction, **Chapter 2** introduces the reader to the theoretical background, acknowledging the importance of a coherent and coordinated multi-level governance approach for ambitious climate actions. The chapter also gives an overview of the research methods used to gather and analyse data. **Chapter 3** surveys the climate governance architecture of the Philippines, how it is set up in terms of institutions, mandates, policies and structured relationships.

How such policies, regulations and relationships play out in practice in the Philippines — through the perceptions of policy makers and implementers — is analysed in **Chapter 4**. The planning cycle of Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs) serves as a case-example to explore multi-level climate governance in action. **Chapter 5** focuses on entry points to strengthen coordination and empower local governing actors.

2. Chapter highlights:

- → **Sub-national governments and non-state actors have an important role to play in shaping the global response to climate change as well as achieving Nationally Determined Contributions.**

- → **Coherence and coordination within a multi-level governance system are key in raising ambitions and increase the effectiveness of actions that respond to climate change.**

- → **This study looks at the multi-level institutional arrangements and governance processes that enable or hinder the planning, budgeting and implementation of local climate action in the Philippines**

2. Theoretical background and research methods

The avoidance of dangerous climate change calls for a global transformation process towards a low-carbon society that reduces global greenhouse gas emissions to zero shortly after the middle of the century (UNFCCC 2015). This is a structural change of enormous scale and speed that requires joint action by all sectors of society and levels of government. Coordinating these efforts and ensuring their coherence within a multi-level governance system is key to driving forward effective, efficient and ambitious climate actions.

2.1 Transformative multi-level climate governance: global trends

With the adoption of the **2015 Paris Agreement**, the global climate regime shifted towards a more inclusive climate governance system, applicable to all countries in light of their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Unlike the former approach of the Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC 1998) – under which only some countries, representing 14 per cent of global CO2 emissions, were subject to emissions reduction targets (Annex I Parties) – under the Paris Agreement, all countries share the responsibility for a global climate response. The Paris Agreement gives national governments the opportunity to set their own emissions reduction and adaptation targets through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). In the first round of pledges, 176 countries submitted their NDCs for the period up until 2025/2030. Countries will update these targets every five years from 2020 onwards, with the aim of ratcheting-up their ambition with each submission.

Now, as the Paris Agreement enters into force, the focus of action is shifting from international negotiations to national, regional, and local governments that must translate the Paris goals into local climate action. Opportunities for driving climate action forward have increasingly been shaped by a diverse range of both state and non-state actors. Over the past two decades, research has highlighted the critical role of sub-national governments in building resilience and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Many

of the sectors with high mitigation potential, such as housing, transport, land use, urban planning, infrastructural development and waste, are often under the control of sub-national government entities. Leveraging this **"transformative power"** (UN-Habitat 2016; WBGU 2016), an increasing groundswell of sub-national actors have set ambitious GHG reduction goals and moved ahead even in the absence of national leadership or significant international progress (Chan et al. 2015). At the same time, companies and civil society actors are making their own climate commitments and are driving action though a plethora of collective (transnational) climate action networks and coalitions. For these reasons, **sub-national governments and non-state actors have an important role to play in implementing climate actions that support national adaptation and GHG emissions targets and drive ambitions up.**

Given this reality, the decision accompanying the Paris Agreement explicitly encourages governments to work more closely with non-party stakeholders including cities and regions (UNFCCC 2015). Alongside the negotiations, sub-national and non-state actors were cited as critical drivers of the successful outcome of the 21st Conference of Parties (COP 21) (Hale 2016). Inclusion of such actors was further boosted by, among others, the launch of the Global Climate Action Agenda and the Talanoa Dialogue process that set out to advance cooperative climate action across levels of government and with non-state actors.

Despite the promising blueprint of the Paris Agreement, the combined national pledges to date fall well short of the objective to hold global temperature rise to below 2 °C, let alone 1.5 °C (Robiou du Pont et al. 2017; UNEP 2017). Furthermore, as the range of climate actors broadens and becomes more complex, the resulting **polycentric climate governance landscape increases the risk of fragmentation** (Biermann et al. 2009; van Asselt 2014). At the global level, an increasingly dispersed range of transnational climate actors outside the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) regime might not work towards the same goals and may therefore undermine coherence whereby different components "are compatible and mutually reinforcing" (Keohane and Victor G. David 2011). In other words: "If we do not achieve building a shared understanding across the borders of stakeholders

"If we do not achieve building a shared understanding across the borders of stakeholders and sectors working on different aspects of essentially the same issues, we will remain in the silos that work in isolation, being weaker, or even undermining each other's efforts" (Hemmati and Rogers 2015).

and sectors working on different aspects of essentially the same issues, we will remain in the silos that work in isolation, being weaker, or even undermining each other's efforts" (Hemmati and Rogers 2015).

At the domestic level, climate efforts are often still disconnected from or not responsive to each other, resulting in inefficient overlaps, missed opportunities for collaboration and even maladaptation. Many of the NDCs were produced quickly, with inadequate consultation and do not reflect local priorities (LEDS GP 2017). To date, few countries have **systematically linked activities** on the ground to national priorities and policies, and vice versa. While sub-national governments have contributed or even pioneered low-emission pathways, their efforts alone cannot replace national actions or achieve transformational changes independent of other levels of government. Local actors depend on regional and national regulatory frameworks that provide incentives and resources (Corfee-Morlot et al. 2009; UNEP 2016). Conversely, sub-national initiatives may hold the **key to transformative approaches** that could be scaled up and help shape enabling frameworks at the national level (Fuhr et al. 2018). Furthermore, in many cases there is a lack of coherence between countries' sector plans (especially the energy sector) and their NDC (LEDS GP 2017).

A multi-level climate governance approach can bring about greater alignment or "orchestration" of climate actions (Abbott 2017; Zelli and van Asselt 2013; Chan et al. 2015). The importance of multi-level governance for transformative climate action has gained increasing global traction. The recent IPCC special report on global warming of 1.5 °C stresses that "climate action requires multi-level governance from the local and community level to national, regional and international levels" and recognises the concept as an important enabler for systemic transformation (IPCC 2018: 61). To close the emissions gap and achieve transformative levels of climate action, we urgently need an "all hands on deck" approach (Hale 2016) with **coordinated climate action** across political levels, sectors, and actors. The scale and the speed of the transformation needed to protect our life supporting system require states to critically examine and enhance their existing multi-level governance frameworks to enable vertically and horizontally coordinated action, which is a synergistic division of labour and collaborative institutional arrangement.

2.2 Terminology and definitions

We consider climate action to encompass measures and initiatives that:

(1) reduce the sources of GHG emissions (mitigation) and

(2) reduce vulnerability to climate change, enhance resilience and manage the impacts of climate change (adaptation).

Multi-level climate governance is the synergistic interplay between different levels of government, as well as between a variety of non-state actors, in governing climate action. The notion of multi-level governance implies that tackling climate change requires collaborative processes and actors operating at multiple interlinked scales. It also brings into focus both vertical and horizontal forms of coordination (see figure 1).

Multi-level climate governance is the synergistic interplay between different levels of government, as well as between a variety of non-state actors, in governing climate action.

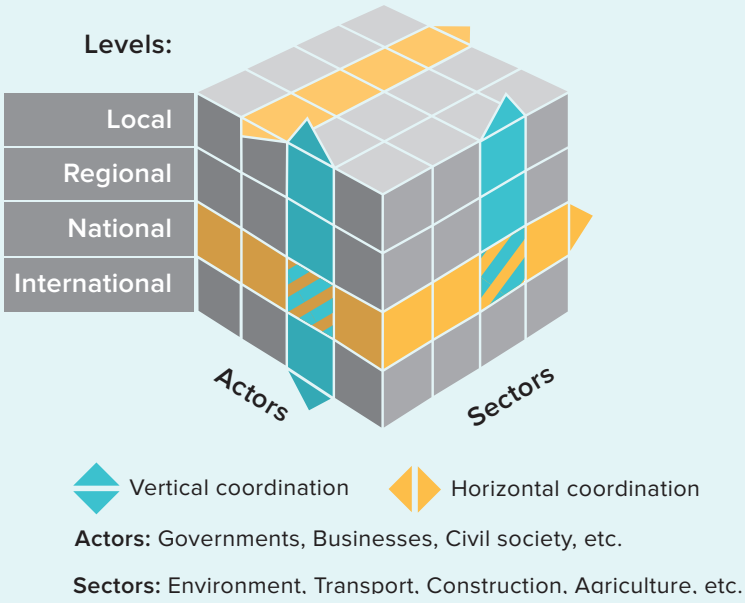
Vertical coordination occurs across different governance levels, encompassing local, regional and national governments within the same state, but also supra-national and international scales such as the UNFCCC climate regime (Bulkeley 2010; Corfee-Morlot et al. 2009; Hooghe and Marks 2003; Jänicke 2017). Vertical interactions are two-way relationships that can be top-down or bottom-up. In a top-down multi-level governance framework, the central government defines how sub-national actors engage in climate action through instruments such as national climate policies and laws that regulate climate-relevant sectors, or funding schemes that incentivise specific local actions (Adriázola et al. 2018). In a bottom-up framework, local authorities have substantial autonomy to develop policies and actions that can be scaled up and influence national climate policies. Most climate governance frameworks combine elements of both vertical approaches in a hybrid system.

Horizontal coordination refers to actor-to-actor interactions at the same governance level, such as national sector forums, regional governance bodies and bilateral city-to-city cooperation agreements, as well as wider (transnational) local government networks.

Enabling factors for local climate action include:

- enabling policy frameworks, including clear mandates aligned to planning frameworks and budgetary cycles across levels of government and ministries;

Figure 1: Multi-level climate governance encompasses vertical and horizontal types of coordination (adapted from Jänicke 2013).



- strong institutional capacities;
- local autonomy, including control over assets, policies and development strategies;
- high levels of awareness and knowledge, combined with high levels of climate stress;
- availability of financial resources and incentives, paired with existing socio-economic co-benefits of climate action;
- an environmentally concerned civil society;
- membership in transnational municipal climate action networks;
- and political leadership, such as climate champions.

See e.g. Adriázola et al. 2018; Bulkeley 2010; C40 and Arup 2015; Charbit 2011; Charbit and Michalun 2009; Fuhr et al. 2018; Salon et al. 2014.

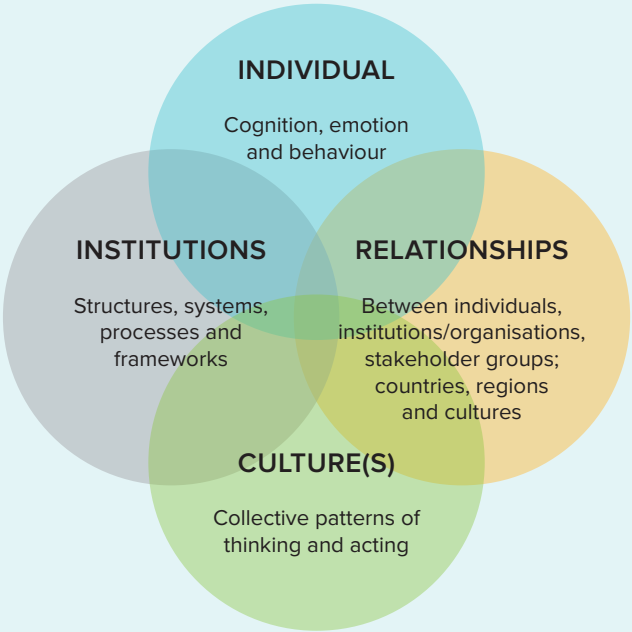
2.3 Data collection and analytical framework

This study used **qualitative research methods** to collect empirical data and evidence. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with stakeholders from civil society, community based organisations, local government units (LGUs) and national agencies, academia, private sector, development partners and international organisations. In total 20 interviews were conducted with actors on all levels (including the CCC, Department of Interior and Local Government or DILG and Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council among the national agencies). For reasons of confidentiality individual interviewees have not been named.

Insights were additionally gathered during events and workshops of the V-LED project (between December 2015 and November 2018) and other related thematic conferences. Policy analysis of national and sub-national climate change strategy was conducted in relation to the collected qualitative data as well as existing literature. Through the interviews and observations, "stories" of vertical and horizontal coordination for local climate action from the point of view of those involved emerged. The analysis of multi-level climate governance in the Philippines in this Country Study is based on the perceptions and opinions of our interviewees, combined with findings from the document review and expert knowledge of the partners in the project consortium.

The **analytical lens** is inspired by the academic discussion of multi-level climate governance described above and by the four "dimensions of collaborative initiatives for sustainability" outlined by Hemmati and Rodgers (2015): institutions, cultures, individuals and relationships (see figure 2). The institutional and cultural dimensions are the structural conditions that enable or hinder coordination for local climate action (e.g., the institutional climate regime, the policy framework and the behaviours, attitudes and norms that influence how climate change decisions are made in the country). The individual dimension examines the factors that drive actors (understood as individuals, groups, networks, and organisations, both state and non-state, at multiple governance levels) to engage in climate action, such as their perceptions, ideas and visions. The fourth dimension looks at the relationships between actors, scales and regions that enable or hinder coordinated climate action, such as trust and respect. Although the main focus was placed on 'institutions' and 'relationships', all four dimensions influenced the design of the interview questions as well as the analysis of the factors that enable local climate action, allowing for an integral perspective. The literature on multi-level governance provided the means to assess the architecture of the climate change regime both in theory (**Chapter 3**) and in practice (**Chapter 4**).

Figure 2: Four dimensions of collaborative initiatives (adapted from Hemmati and Rodgers 2015).



3. Chapter highlights:

- → **The Philippines is one of the first countries in the world to regulate climate change and establish institutions to ensure coherence and coordination of climate change efforts across sectors and levels of government.**

- → **At the sub-national level, local governments are expected to be at the frontline of planning and implementing climate change actions.**

- → **While much is still to be done to enable local governments to implement impactful climate actions and align development and climate change agendas, the Philippine multi-level climate governance framework rests on a strong foundation**

3. The climate change governance architecture of the Philippines

Driven by the urgency of responding to its high vulnerability to climate change, the Philippines is one of the first countries in the world to enact a comprehensive climate change law and policy to guide its national climate change response. Following the Climate Change Act of 2009, the country has set up an institutional framework aimed at strengthening coherence and vertical and horizontal coordination across sectors and levels of government, to drive forward meaningful climate change actions.

The Philippines is the fifth most vulnerable country to climate change in the world (Eckstein, Künzel and Schäfer 2018). In 2013, it ranked first following the terrible devastations of one the most intense cyclones recorded in world history: "Super Typhoon Yolanda" (known internationally as Haiyan), with a death toll of more than 6,300 people (Republic of the Philippines 2013). By virtue of its archipelagic geography and location in the tropical Pacific, the Philippines is highly exposed to sea level rise and climate-related hazards such as typhoons, floods, landslides and droughts. Climate-related impacts are projected to increase in the coming decades, threatening the country's vast coastlines where all major cities and the majority of the population are situated as well as sectors dependent on climate-sensitive natural resources, such as agriculture and fisheries.

With these risks in mind, the Philippine government puts great emphasis on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, defining climate change mitigation as a "function of adaptation" (Republic of the Philippines 2015), highlighting that it offers co-benefits and opportunities for enhancing climate-resilient development (CCC 2018a). The emphasis on adaptation actions is clearly reflected in public spending. Results from a climate change expenditure tagging exercise for the financial years 2016 and 2017 show that 95 per cent of the national and 96 per cent of the local climate change budget was spend on climate change adaption related investments – as opposed to mitigation actions (DBM and CCC 2017).

The Philippines is a minor contributor to global climate change, emitting 0.39 per cent of the world's greenhouse gases (WRI 2017). With 1.1 tonnes per person in 2014, Philippine CO2 emissions per-capita are low in comparison to countries such as Vietnam (1.8 tonnes per capita), China (7.5 tonnes per capita), or Germany (8.9 tonnes per capita) (The World Bank 2017). In 2015, 27% of the final energy consumption and 25% of the electricity output came from renewable energy in the Philippines (The World Bank 2017).

In its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) the government pledges to reduce its emissions by 70 per cent by 2030 compared to a business as usual scenario. This pledge is fully conditional on external support. This pledge can be considered a highly ambitious contribution to the Paris Agreement (Robiou du Pont and Meinshausen 2018). However, the country's present development trajectory is far away from its Paris pledge and not 1.5 °C compatible (Climate Action Tracker 2017). At the time of writing, the Philippines was in the process of developing the NDCs updated NDC to be communicated to the UNFCCC before 2020.

Due to economic growth and a rapidly growing population, GHG emissions are projected to increase significantly in the Philippines, especially in the transport, waste and energy sectors. The continued support for coal-based power generation and the objective of increasing coal-fired power capacity by 2040 cast doubts on whether the Philippines will achieve its ambitious NDC pledges (Climate Action Tracker 2017). Similarly, ddditionally emissions from the transport sector are expected to double with continued urban growth. Mitigation actions in this sector would yield many co-benefits such as improving the already severe urban air pollution and traffic congestion (ADB 2015).

In light of the country's mitigation potential and high vulnerability to climate change impacts, this chapter provides an overview of the multi-level policy and institutional climate change response of the Philippines. Section 3.1 provides an overview of the evolution of the complex policy and regulatory framework that shapes the country's national climate response. Section 3.2 looks at the key national institutions that drive the country's climate change response. Section 3.3 then moves the focus to sub-national climate governance, while Section 3.4 explores climate financing.

3.1 The evolution of climate change governance

The 1987 **Philippine Constitution** states that it is "the policy of the state to advance the right of the Filipino people to a balanced and healthful ecology, in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature" (Republic of the Philippines 1987). The Philippine Strategy

for Sustainable Development followed in 1990 and laid the grounds for sustainability policies to come. As early as 1991, the country set up an Inter-Agency Committee on Climate Change. Therewith, **the country was one of the first to set up a national committee dedicated to climate change prior to the ratification of the UNFCCC.**

Following the "Earth Summit" in 1992, the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development and the Philippine Agenda 21 (adopted in 1996) were established to create an enabling environment for the integration sustainable development into decision-making processes. Several sectoral policies followed: the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernisation Act of 1997 highlights links to climate change and the Clean Air Act of 1999 features remarks on greenhouse gas emissions and "called for a national plan on GHGs to be prepared" (Grantham 2017).

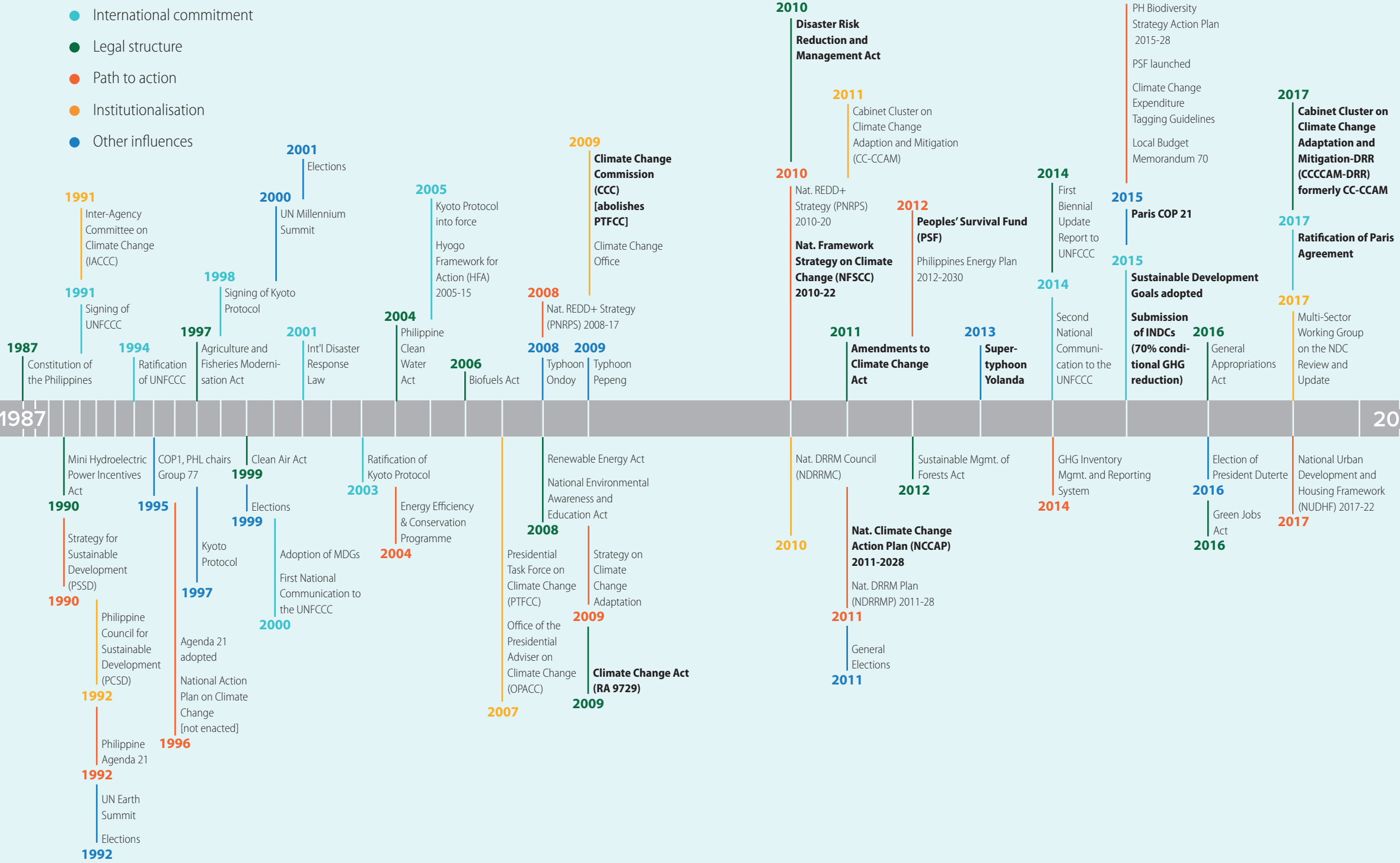
The Philippines signed the UNFCCC in 1992, ratified it in 1994 and served as the chair of the Group 77 at the first COP in 1995 in Berlin, Germany. The country signed the Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC 1998), which it helped to negotiate as a Non-Annex I country, in 1998 and ratified it in 2003. Moreover, the Philippines submitted two National Communications to the UNFCCC (in 2000 and 2014).Additional sectoral policies followed in the new millennium, on solid waste management, water, renewable energy, energy efficiency, conservation and forestry.

In 2007 the Presidential Task Force on Climate Change (PTFCC) and in 2008 the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Climate Change were set up to advance national climate change actions, focussing on adaptation, mitigation and risk reduction. Later, the PTFCC became subsumed under the new Climate Change Commission.

Policy reform under the 2009 Climate Change Act

With the adoption of the **2009 Climate Change Act**, or Republic Act 9729 (Republic of the Philippines 2009), the Philippines became the second country after the United Kingdom to introduce legally binding national legislation to tackle climate change (Grantham 2018). The Climate Change Act paved the way for a coherent multi-level climate response with an overarching mainstreaming approach and the aim of harmonising and consolidating previous sector-based climate initiatives. The Act calls for the systematic integration of climate change action into policy making processes and development planning by all agencies and levels of government.

Figure 3: Chronology of the Philippine climate change governance architecture.



The Act first established the **Climate Change Commission** (CCC) as the sole policy-making body tasked to coordinate, monitor and evaluate national climate change responses. It also completed the groundwork for the development of the **National Framework Strategy on Climate Change** (NFSCC, 2010-2022) and the **National Climate Change Action Plan** (NCCAP, 2011-2028).

The NFSCC guides the country's overarching climate change agenda and provides direction to national and sub-national development planning processes. It stresses that the national priorities are both adaptation and mitigation, with an emphasis on adaptation as the anchor strategy while mitigation actions are to be pursued as a function of adaptation (Climate Change Commission 2010: 2.7).

The NCCAP is the country's long-term climate change roadmap that guides actions across all levels of government. The Plan is divided into three six-year phases, aligned with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan, the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) and the Philippines' electoral and planning cycles (Shrivastava 2014: 2). The NCCAP is formulated around seven **thematic priorities:** (1) food security; (2) water sufficiency; (3) ecosystem and environmental stability; (4) human security; (5) climate-smart industries and services; (6) sustainable energy and (7) knowledge and capacity development.

A year after the passing of the Climate Change Act, Congress passed the **2010 Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act** (PDRRM). The PDRRM Act invites "the full participation of the [LGUs] and communities in governance" (Grantham 2010) and mandates that LGUs establish Disaster Risk Management (DRRM) offices. Additionally, the PDRRM and Climate Change Act both consider adaptation as a mechanism for addressing climate-related disaster risk, which fosters the convergence of DRRM and adaptation at the policy level (The World Bank 2013).

In 2012, the **Republic Act No. 10174** (Republic of the Philippines 2012) made important **amendments** to the Climate Change Act,

- creating the **Peoples' Survival Fund** (PSF) with the allocation of 1 billion Pesos per year (18.9 million USD in 2018), to cater for adaptation activities at the local level (officially launched in 2015);
- and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of nine National Government Agencies and the CCC, recognising the need for a stronger **cross-sectoral and multi-level climate governance framework.**

The years 2014 and 2015 saw the development of further monitoring and finance mechanisms such as the Philippine **GHG Inventory Management and Reporting System** was established in 2014 (Executive Order 174). This system focuses on the national inventory and does not cover sub-national governments' entity and community level inventories.

3.2 The institutional structure coordinating climate change action

Since the adoption of the Climate Change Act and its amending law, the Philippines created several new centralised institutions aimed at ensuring greater policy coherence and horizontal and vertical coordination to drive forward effective and efficient climate actions.

The **Climate Change Commission** is at the centre of the country's climate governance architecture. Its role profoundly changed with the amendment of the Climate Change Act. While the Act had created the CCC as the "sole policy making body", Republic Act 10174 amended made it the "lead policy making body", recognising the relevant mandates and authority of other agencies. The CCC is expected to coordinate and synchronise climate change programmes horizontally and vertically:

> "In the development and implementation of the National Climate Change Action Plan, and the local action plans, the Commission shall consult and coordinate with the NGOs, civic organisations, academe, people's organisations, the private and corporate sectors and other concerned stakeholder groups" (Republic of the Philippines 2012).

The CCC is led by three commissioners and formally chaired by the President of the Republic. It has two supporting bodies. First, the Climate Change Advisory Board composed of 27 national government agencies and sectoral representatives. The amendment expanded the composition of the CCC's advisory board to include the Department of Budget and Management and the Department of Finance (considering the creation of the PSF) among others and the Chair of the National Youth Commission and the President of the Sanggunian Kabataan National Federation (the elected youth representatives in LGU Councils). Second, the National Panel of Technical Experts, made up of the country's lead climate scientists.

The Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CC-CCAM) was created in 2011 "to focus on increasing convergence and coordination among government

agencies" as well as with civil society (Republic of the Philippines 2015:2). Executive Order No. 24 (2017) reorganised the Cabinet Clusters system, for example by integrating good governance into the policy frameworks. The CC-CCAM became the **Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction** (CCCCAM-DRR) and is composed of 20 government agencies The Cluster focuses on the conservation and protection of the environment and natural resources and serves as a venue for discussing cross-cutting concerns on climate change and disaster risk management. The Cluster takes the lead on integrating policies and programmes on climate risk management, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and sustainable development. The CCCCAM-DRR cluster is led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The CCC serves as its secretariat.

The Climate Change Act and its amendment further allocate specific roles to some national government agencies based on their core functions. For example, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Local Government Academy (LGA) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) are mandated to provide climate change capacity-building programmes for LGUs. Financial departments are mandated to coordinate with the CCC on matters related to climate finance and budgeting.

National sectoral agencies are appointed to deliver on various key areas. One of the reasons for convergence among the agencies is to make implementation and coordination with LGUs more efficient, effective and impactful. Local governments are expected to translate these instructions into ordinances and priorities that address local conditions and facilitate implementation on the ground through the LCCAPs.

3.3 Sub-national climate governance

In 1991 the Local Government Code (Republic Act 7160) devolved powers and authority to local governments and created Leagues of sub-national actors (see box 1). LGUs have authority over natural resource management, pollution control and environmental protection. They are supervised by the DILG, which represents the government's executive branch towards the LGUs.

LGUs are required to prepare two main types of plans: **Comprehensive Land Use Plans** (CLUPs) and **Comprehensive Development Plans** (CDPs) that should be informed by risk assessments, scientific data and climate projections. The Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) oversees the CLUP process and issued the Supplemental Guidelines

for Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCA-DRR) in CLUPs. At present, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) is finalising the mainstreaming of CCA-DRR in CDPs.

The Climate Change Act defined LGUs as frontline agencies in the formulation, planning and implementation of climate actions and mandated them to formulate **Local Climate Change Action Plans** (LCCAP) (see figure 4) that should address both adaptation and mitigation.

As a cross cutting tool between disaster risk management, adaptation and mitigation, the Climate and Disaster Risk Assessments (CDRA) are essential to: identify hazards and hazard-prone areas, conduct climate impact chain analysis and generate maps of five exposure units (population, natural resources, urban use, critical point facilities, and lifeline utilities). The CDRAs analyse the adaptive capacities of the LGU, formulate a disaster risk assessment matrix and recommend actions for climate change adaptation and DRR. Some LGUs have recently included GHG emissions tracking, mitigation targets and sustainable development strategies.

The LCCAPs are the designated vehicles for change at the LGU level. Local plans should follow and complement national policy, in particular the NCCAP. Senator Loren Legarda, a champion of climate action in the country has stated that "If we would reach the target of all LGUs having their own science-based LCCAPs, I believe this would unlock our path towards a sustainable and climate-resilient nation" (Legarda 2017). The CCC reaches out to the LGUs with initiatives such as the Communities for Resilience (CORE) programme, offers access to the People's Survival Fund (PSF) and supports capacity building related to the LCCAP.

Box 1: Sub-national government structure (DILG 2018)

Devolved local government units (LGUs) consist at the time of writing of:

- **81 provinces, excluding Metro Manila which is an Administrative Region; subdivided into:**
- **145 cities, further divided into highly urbanised, independent (of the provinces) components and component cities within the provincial jurisdiction;**
- **1.489 municipalities, always part of their respective provinces;**
- **42.044 barangays, the smallest political unit.**

Similarly, four leagues represent LGUs: the League of Provinces, Cities, Municipalities and Barangays *(Ligangmga Barangays)*.

Leagues such as the Philippine League of Environment and Natural Resource Officers (PLLENRO) play an important role in climate action but are not based on or mandated by the local government code.

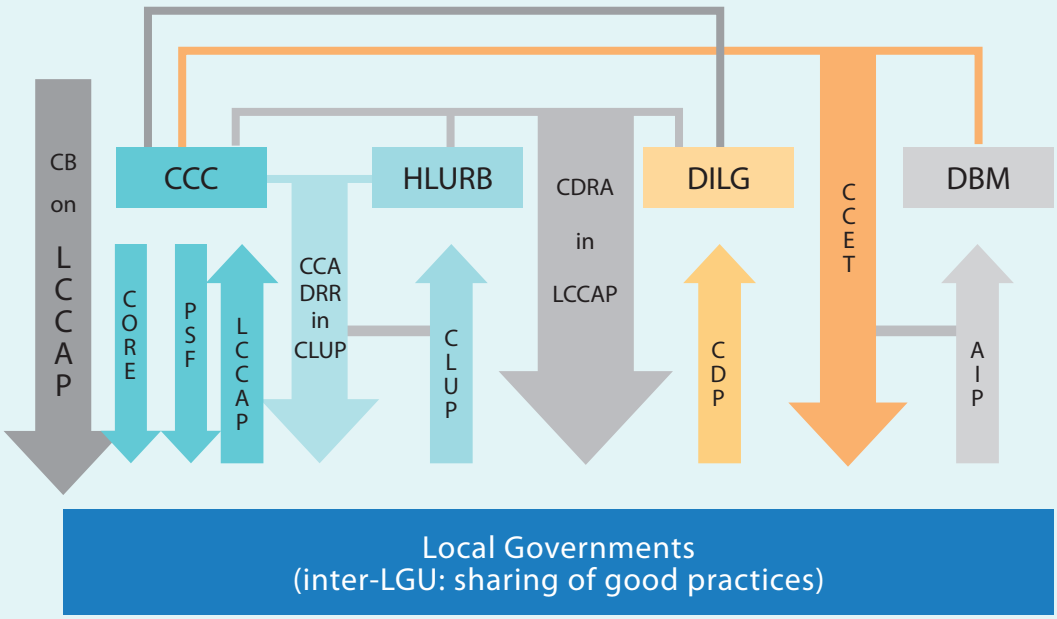
In terms of **roles and responsibilities,** the national agencies shall "extend technical and financial assistance to LGUs for the accomplishment of their Local Climate Change Action Plans" (Republic of the Philippines 2009: 9). The sub-national level is distinguished as follows:

- "Municipal and city governments shall consider climate change adaptation one of their regular functions.
- Provincial governments shall provide technical assistance, enforcement and information management in support of municipal and city climate change action plans.
- Inter-local government unit collaboration shall be maximised throughout the operations of climate-related activities" (Republic of the Philippines 2009:9).

The LCCAPs are developed within the same planning system that produces the CLUPs and CDPs. Both the national framework strategy on climate change (NFSCC) and the national action plans (NCCAP) create the policy structure to enable alignment of local action plans. The NCCAP apportions several actions to LGUs, ranging from establishing the regulatory framework at the local level to implementation of actual activities. The results framework embodied in the NCCAP illustrates how implementation cascades from the national level down to the LGU level.

With regards to the **implementation of national climate change policies at the local level**, there is currently no specific legislation or policy instrument that binds local governments to the national climate goals and targets. As such, policies are only selectively implemented at the local level. To incentivise local climate action, however, the DILG included the presence of LCCAP as one of the indicators in the Seal of Good Local Governance, which is needed to access the People's Survival Fund (PSF).

Figure 4: Mainstreaming climate change into local development planning (adapted from Recabar 2018).



Institutions: CCC (Climate Change Commission), DBM (Department of Budget and Management), DILG (Department of Interior and Local Government), HLURB (Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board), LGU (Local Government Unit)

Relations via: AIP (Annual Investment Programme), CB (Capacity Building), CCA (Climate Change Adaptation), CCET (Climate Change Expenditure Tagging), CDP (Comprehensive Development Plan), CDRA (Community Disaster Risk Assessment), CLUP (Comprehensive Land Use Plan), CORE (Communities for Resilience), DDR (Disaster Risk Reduction), LCCAP (Local Climate Change Action Plan) PSF (Peoples' Survival Fund)

3.4 Climate finance

The **People's Survival Fund** (PSF) bill was signed into law in 2012 (see box 2) to enhance long-term access to domestic climate finance for LGUs. It further aimed to:

(1) strengthen the CCC's independence and control over its decision-making processes;

(2) incentivise LGUs to mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction into their local development plans for increased access to the fund;

(3) and serve as an instrument to enhance horizontal and vertical governance linkages.

To strengthen coordination as well as diversity and transparency the **PSF Board** was established.

The **climate budgeting system** consists of (1) the National Climate Budget Tagging, which involves national government agencies, state universities and colleges as well as government-owned corporations. (2) The Local Climate Budget Tagging which involves LGUs.

> "Climate budgeting is an important additional foundation of the climate change response of the Philippines. Its continued implementation is recognised in the Philippines' (Intended) Nationally Determined Contribution as a means of implementation for the Philippines to enhance climate resilience and promote mitigation efforts. It puts the Philippines in a strong position to leverage financing for its [Climate Change] response" (DBM and CCC 2017: 25).

In 2015 Local Budget Memorandum No. 70 made climate budgeting mandatory for local governments, while the amended **Climate Change Expenditure Tagging** (CCET) Gui-

Box 2: The People's Survival Fund

The PSF was part of RA 10174, amending the Climate Change Act of 2009. The fund is meant to finance climate change adaptation actions by local government units, communities and NGOs. It receives an annual allocation of one billion Philippine Pesos from the national budget (with a pause in 2017), which may be complemented by grants and donations.

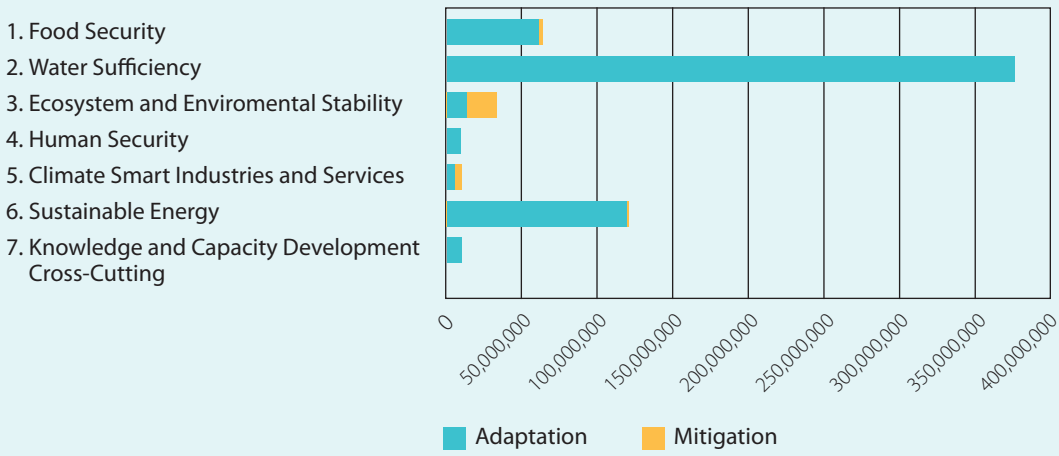
The PSF is managed by the PSF board, which consists of the Department of Finance, the Climate Change Commission, the Department of Budget and Management, the National Economic Development Authority, the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Philippine Commission on Women and representatives from academia, the private sector and NGOs such as the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities.

delines (Joint Memorandum Circular 2015-01) supported all national agencies in tracking all their expenditures for adaptation and mitigation measures.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) mandated local governments to submit their Annual Investment Plans (AIP), some of which included climate-tagged programmes prior to the provision of budget. Using the existing local level investment programming and budgeting process, the CCET requires LGUs to tag their climate change expenditure to ensure that their climate change initiatives are properly supported and that they are able to access timely information when planning projects that address climate change issues; make investment decisions that benefit the environment; and ensure that budget allocated for climate change projects are used for their intended purpose.

For fiscal year of 2016, 45 national agencies identified climate change-related expenditures in their budget. The bulk is concentrated within a few agencies, most prominently the Department of Public Works and Highways with 74 per cent in 2016 (DBM and CCC 2016: 3) and 82 per cent in 2017 (DBM and CCC 2017: 16). From 2016 to 2018, national CCET shows that among the **NCCAP's seven priorities** (see figure 5) water sufficiency received the greatest share (61 per cent), followed by sustainable energy (20 per cent) (DBM and CCC 2017:17).

Figure 5: Climate change expenditures according to the NCCAP's strategic priorities cumulated over fiscal years 2016-2018 (derived from DBM and CCC 2017: 17).



Box 3: Recent milestones in setting up the Philippine climate governance architecture.

Legislative framework

- Renewable Energy Act (2008)
- Climate Change Act (2009) and its amendments (2012)
- Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, PDRRM (2010)
- People's Survival Fund Act (2012)
- Green Jobs Act (2016)

Institutional architecture

- Climate Change Commission, CCC (2010)
- Climate Finance Group (2012)
- Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction, CCCCAM-DRR (2011, respectively 2017)
- People's Survival Fund Board

Policy framework

- Philippine Development Plan, PDP (2011-2016)
- National Framework Strategy on Climate Change, NFSCC (2010-2022)
- National Urban Development and Housing Framework, NUDHF (2017-2022)
- National Climate Change Action Plan, NCCAP (2011-2028)
- Local Climate Change Action Plans, LCCA

Climate finance mechanisms

- Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET): 5.5 per cent of domestic budget was spent on climate change related investments in 2016 and 6 per cent in 2017 (DBM and CCC 2017).
- The PSF is a national fund designed to finance climate change adaptation actions by LGUs and accredited community organisations.
- The CCC serves as the focal point for the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the Adaptation Fund.

4. Chapter highlights:

- → **Local Climate Action Plans can be important drivers for sub-national climate action; however local governments need clear guidance from national agencies and greater support from experts to elaborate and implement the plans.**

- → **Adaptation to climate change and managing disaster risk are the climate resilience priorities at the national and local governing levels, but progress is being made to incorporate sustainability into development and to track GHG emissions at the local level.**

- → **The National Climate Change Commission has the tools to shape and coordinate the national government's response to climate change, but lacks mechanisms to effectively liaise with sub-national governments.**

4. Multi-level climate governance in practice

"If you ask governments, the real motivation is: We want to learn, we want to take some actions! Because at the end of the day it is us who suffer. The question is: How? What are the mechanisms that would really propel us?"

(Interview with a climate expert 2017).

The Philippine climate governance framework consists of a comprehensive set of policies, establishing a basis for transformative climate action. These national strategies need to be transposed into feasible plans of action for sub-national governments. While **Chapter 3** described the Philippine climate governance architecture and its functioning in theory, **Chapter 4** discusses climate governance in practice. Based on the perceptions and experiences of national, regional and local government representatives, national experts and civil society actors, this chapter looks at the planning cycle of the LCCAP and the horizontal and vertical coordination mechanisms that promote sub-national climate actions. We specifically asked our interviewees about the drivers and enablers of local action and the types of coordination that effectively support it.

The chapter is divided into four sections. **Section 4.1** dives into the realities of local climate action and the factors that motivate or hinder local governments to address climate change issues. The section notes that local governments prioritise DRRM and climate change adaptation actions over low-emission development concerns. This corresponds to national policy directions as well as on-the-ground needs of communities who are increasingly confronted with climate change induced weather extremes. Still, climate change mitigation actions are also increasingly taken up, often initiated by donor projects. The section further highlights that LGUs are experiencing a number of challenges in complying with their mandate to develop local climate action plans, including the availability of resources, capacity gaps and confusing or overlapping guidelines provided by the national level.

The following sections explore horizontal coordination of climate change policies and actions at the national (**Section 4.2**) and sub-national level (**Section 4.3**), while **Section 4.4**

focuses on vertical integration. The sections note that the country has made important progress in enhancing policy coherence and coordination by establishing dedicated national institutions. Additionally, progress has been made in tracking climate change expenditures across sectors and levels and involving non-governmental stakeholders in supporting local capacity development. Yet, the country's multi-level climate governance system is still evolving and the central CCC is facing some practical challenges in effectively facilitating horizontal coordination across sectors and systematically providing guidance and tools to LGUs. Work is yet to be done in improving the coordination between national and sub-national entities and institutionalising feedback loops that enable learning and exchange between levels.

Building on the analysis presented in this chapter, **Chapter 5** will present entry points for driving forward multi-level climate action in the Philippines.

4.1 Local climate action realities

LGUs are at the 'forefront' of climate action, as a member of the CCC put it: "they are the ones who have the pulse of the people and they have an idea on how to best respond to climate effects based on local realities – after all, they are the ones who are directly affected by climate impacts" (2016). To date, local governments' response to climate change has focussed principally on adaptation and disaster risk management. This reflects both national priorities and local experiences. The increasing frequency of climate change disturbances, especially severe weather events, is prompting LGUs to act. In an interview an Environmental and Natural Resource Officer (ENRO) from a city within metro Manila described how adverse weather events influence political will:

> "Because of the typhoon in 2009 our office is very active – an awakening period for our city to collaborate and be more aggressive in addressing climate change. 22 villages were flooded, ten people dead, the city hall was flooded for three weeks – that's why the mayor is aggressive in promoting climate resilience policies" (2017).

The quote is representative of the **primary driver for climate action** at the local level. Given the country's **high vulnerability**, LGUs primarily engage in activities that protect communities from climate impacts and build resilience and readiness.

Secondly, national regulations mandating LGUs to engage in climate planning and action were named frequently by interviewees as important reasons to act on climate change locally. Also the demand from the national level for converging DRRM and climate change

actions at the local level, as articulated in the Climate Change and DRRM Act, was seen as a driving factor.

Local government efforts to pursue low-emission development strategies exist, but are limited to a few "champions" (see box 4), as one climate expert passionately remarked:

> "Locally, people are trying to converge; and there are a lot of efforts from […] the UN, from the [Civil Society Organisations], to really explain the interlinks and the differences [between DRR and other climate response strategies]. However, given the conditions in the country, people are more passionate about DRR. […] Climate actions require you to look beyond that […], if your ultimate goal really is sustainable development" (2017).

Some LGUs are proactively **engaging** in **international exchanges** on low-emission development and one ENRO expressed that **reputational benefits** were strong motivations to invest in low-emission development, stating his city's ambition to be "recognised as a model city for sustainability. That's the driving force. Because the mayor and all of us in here […] would like to render the best services that a City Government has to offer to its constituents and other stakeholders" (2016).

While the national level has an important role to play in setting up an enabling policy framework for local climate action, LGUs have — for multiple reasons explored below — struggled to comply with national guidelines. An important example is the development of **Local Climate Change Action Plans** (LCCAPs). By mid-2016 — seven years after the Climate Change Act and five after its amendments — only 160 LGUs had developed LCCAPs, representing less than ten per cent of the country's LGUs (Serafica 2016). In response, CCC Secretary Emmanuel de Guzman demanded 500 LCCAPs by the end of 2017 and that all remaining LGUs submit their plans by the end of 2018 (Ibid). However, as of December 2017, only 200 LGUs had developed their plans. What is hindering the LCCAPs from becoming the transformative tools for climate action they were meant to be? Our interviews point out that LGUs face a number of challenges in responding to climate change.

Mayoral **leadership** was described as key (see box 4) to advancing climate policy and implementation, but with a long list of campaign pledges to accomplish in a short three-year term, top political officials often limit their climate actions to short-term responses to sudden onset climate disturbances. As one sympathetic league member put it:

"If you are the mayor, you've got all the concerns, all the problems in the city; it's not only climate change; and we are lucky enough that some of the mayors – actually, very few of the mayors – prioritise the environmental aspect. But the problem in the town in the Philippines is when you prioritise the environment, it's not so popular […], it's not responsive with the very daily needs of the people. And they only have three years to implement the programmes and projects. You will get lost, you will not be re-elected if you focus on the environment aspect because that will consume the budget of the general fund… that's how ironic the situation is" (2017).

Most interviewees also agreed that **awareness, knowledge and capacity** of local authorities on issues related to climate change remain low. Information and data is provided by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and other institutions but specific **mechanisms to capacitate and retain knowledge at the local level and at scale are lacking**. In 2017, through the support of the V-LED project, the government trained 328 LCCAP coaches from state universities, colleges and local and national government nationwide to guide local planning and technical staff in formulating or updating their LCCAPs. Nonetheless, as a climate expert put it in an interview: "there's still a lot of work to be done" (2017).

In order to develop their LCCAPs, LGUs are required to liaise with a number of technical national agencies, such as the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology and the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority. Engaging with city networks, NGOs and international organisations might empower local governments to act on climate change issues, but they should also coordinate with local communities, private businesses, national line agencies and neighbouring LGUs. In other words, LGUs, similar to national agencies, face the twin challenge of horizontal (intra- and often inter-LGU) and vertical integration.

Box 4: Local climate action champion Albay

One impressive example of visionary political leadership is provided by Albay, an internationally recognised forerunner in the field of climate action. Part of the highly vulnerable Bicol region, the province came to play a "unique role in promoting climate change adaptation" when it "spearheaded the first-ever National Conference on Climate Change Adaptation in October 2007, […] led by the President" (Lasco et al. 2008).

The newly founded Centre for Initiatives and Research on Climate Adaptation further "sought to influence national policy by supporting several bills in the Philippine Congress that pertain to climate change" (Lasco et al. 2008).

Unlike at the national level where the CCC was set up to fulfil a coordination function; there is no counterpart that could take up a similar role at the sub-national level. Furthermore, there is often **no local climate change focal person** who could be trained to coordinate and liaise on matters related to climate change. Given the multi-disciplinary and multi-faceted issue of climate change, no department, even in large cities, can tackle the issue alone. While the development of the LCCAP in cities usually falls within the ambit of the Planning and Development Office (the main planning department), it is routine for smaller municipalities to appoint only one person as a planning officer. The responsibility to develop climate related plans is often assigned to the person who already fulfils the function of the ENRO and Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer (LDRRMO) (interviews with ENROs 2017). This person is however rarely capacitated to adequately address climate change adaption, and even less so, climate mitigation. Moreover, according to a representative of the Philippine League of Environment and Natural Resources Officers (PLLENRO), only 20 per cent of LGUs even have a dedicated ENRO. Another national climate expert remarked:

> "When the DRR law was passed, they created personnel with a budget. When the climate change law was passed, they said there has to be a focal point. No mention of how they are going to be funded. So the LGUs tried to be very innovative about it: 'I'll assign it to the development planning officer, or I will assign my LDRRMO, because my concern on climate change is just on disaster, […] I don't want to look at the other stuff'" (2017).

Climate change advocates, civil society actors and international development partners see this **narrow focus on disaster risk management** as an obstacle to comprehensive change. Expanding the scope of LGUs' response to climate change beyond disaster risk management is an immediate task that reveals another: looking at mitigation as a function of adaptation and working on both concurrently. For the financial year 2017, the CCC received 334 submissions by LGUs in the framework of their climate budget tagging exercise (about 20 per cent of LGUs). In the presentation of the data, emphasis was put on the 190 LGUs from the highly vulnerable provinces: 18 per cent of their total annual investments were tagged as climate change relevant, of which 96 per cent focused on adaptation (DBM and CCC 2017: 19). While the general share of adaptation investments declined since financial year 2016, the mitigation share almost doubled.

Moreover, **limited financial capacities at LGU level** restrain local climate action. In an interview, a climate expert operating at the national level put the financial dilemma of LGUs into national perspective: "There are so many climate funds that could support innovative

local actions that could directly link the private sector to local government. There is no mechanism that could facilitate that, there is no sub-national lending, no such direct access and everything has to be done state level" (2017). In order to thrive, however, LGUs would: "need to have that outright access to innovation, outright access to technology, outright access to financing that could be applied directly and without any barriers, because at the end of the day there are a lot of layers you would have to go through. You want them to act, but then you make them go through so many layers, and somehow, they are not even included in those layers, so they are at the waiting end" (2017).

Meaningful local action is hampered by multiple national demands that have to be met with limited local resources. Currently, LGUs are expected to formulate 33 specialised plans (more than 40 when viewed over the years). This strains their resources and limits their capacity to innovate and implement. According to an expert from DILG (2016), more than one third of NGA-mandated plans have not been formulated at the local level. Smaller LGUs struggle to even comply with developing the two fundamental plans: the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP). They are "overwhelmed and overworked" (2016), a DILG expert commented. A member of the Housing and Development Coordinating Council responsible for overseeing the CLUP process explained:

> "Well, there's substantial compliance, except for LGUs who do not have the people who will do the actual writing. […] We cannot and they cannot. They have very lean manpower. […] the document, everything in the consultation, public hearings; gathering all these information and to have the plan actually written – that's where the deficiency is" (2016).

Furthermore, essential **guiding structures** for the LCCAP development are not yet fully established, including "a clear mechanism of how [LCCAPs] will be submitted by local governments to the national government" (interview with city network 2017). The gaps in vertical coordination might be partly due to **insufficient horizontal alignment at the national level**, for example the intense discussion among a number of agencies on whether the LCCAP should be integrated into the CLUP or a standalone document. The former would effectively reduce the number of plans LGUs are required to elaborate, however keeping the LCCAP independent highlights climate change as a priority that needs to be addressed. The CCC eventually declared – solomonically and diplomatically – that both options are to be viable. Such fragmentation at the national level creates confusion at the local level, as an interviewee from a city network explained: "At present, climate change action planning is fragmented across different national government agencies.

The national government needs to ensure that tools cascaded to local governments are standardised and consistent to avoid confusion" (2016).

National agencies have developed individual tools and approaches, which has added to the confusion. Take the Supplemental Guidelines on Mainstreaming DRR-CCA by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) and the guidebook on LCCAP formulation by the LGA: "While both toolkits are aimed at coming up with a quantified vulnerability index, the process employed is different. Even the parameters used to rate adaptive capacities differ" (2017). There is a danger of similar confusion taking hold of the NDC process, as another ENRO remarked: "The national level and the local level should actually have a linear perspective. But it's not really happening – in reality [there is a] lack of support, [. . .] politics and then incoordination, no coordination" (2016).

Interviewees from all levels of government also identified a **need for more explicit national guidance** for local mitigation actions. An interviewee from the CCC explained: "We don't have any policy guidelines. There is no guideline for LGU's to even pursue their greenhouse gas inventories" (2016). The longest standing guidance and tools available to LGUs focus on addressing vulnerabilities and risks – hence the plans' heavy focus on adaptation. In response, international projects have worked with LGUs to capacitate and encourage GHG mitigation actions. Some LGUs have developed GHG inventory (GHGi) and emission management plans with the assistance of the USAID B-LEADERS (Building Low Emission Alternatives to Develop Economic Resilience and Sustainability) and the Climate Change and Clean Energy project. The projects enhanced LGUs' capacities to conduct entity and community level-GHGi. To the surprise of national agencies:

> "The initial impression was that some LGUs are willing to develop the [GHG inventories] because they have funding from said agencies and might discontinue doing them if the funds run out. However, as I saw in the case of Legazpi City [...], members of the LGUs planning staff are capable of developing the GHGi on their own and in fact are already integrating them into the CLUP. I guess it is just a matter of mind set and receptiveness to a new tool or task and not so much the capacity of the LGUs since during the workshop it was demonstrated that making a GHGi was doable" (2018, via UN-Habitat).

Another project success was that the CCC adopted the GHGi tool as part of its Communities for Resilience (CORE) programme. However, there is still an **absence of a legal instrument for local level GHG inventory**, similar to that of Executive Order 174 at the national level. V-LED also advocated for the inclusion of mitigation actions in the LCCAP.

The Local Government Academy of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG-LGA) heeded this call and included two elements in an updated version of the LCCAP Guidebook: 1) emissions inventory as part of the 'situational analysis' and 2) identification of mitigation actions.

Given the rather fragmented enabling environment for local action, a number of interviewees strongly suggested that **reliable guidance and support from the national government would be an important enabling condition for local climate action**. If the goals are clarity and support for the local level, there is no way around the challenge of improving horizontal coordination among national agencies.

4.2 Horizontal coordination at national level

The Philippine climate governance architecture signifies the governments' recognition of the need for various national agencies to work together to effectively address climate change issues. The need to harmonise various national climate change strategies is articulated in the Climate Change and DRRM Act and other national frameworks and action plans. The Climate Change Act states that "recognising that climate change and disaster risk reduction are closely interrelated and effective disaster risk reduction will enhance climate change adaptive capacity, the State shall integrate disaster risk reduction into climate change programmes and initiatives" (Republic of the Philippines 2009).

Furthermore, the NCCAP outlines seven thematic areas for action which are coordinated nationally by the Cabinet Cluster. However, keeping the actions in sync across sectors has been described as challenging (interview with national expert on housing 2016).

One positive approach towards enhancing coordination has been the introduction of the **Climate Change Expenditure Tagging** (CCET). The CCET provides means for reporting government and donor spending on climate change issues. This has been instrumental for advancing the monitoring of climate-related expenditures in the national budget system. One emerging lesson learnt from the CCET is that "enhancing convergence across sectors and between the national and local government levels of financing is a top priority. There is recognition that a shift is needed to go beyond sector-based mainstreaming as the primary entry point for action" (DBM and CCC 2017: 25).

Many exemplary sectoral climate change plans, strategies and guidelines are accessible online but not utilised as designed. Information and knowledge remains in databanks. This is a challenge of **access and knowledge dissemination** - there no centralised

knowledge platform, for example, let alone regional varieties. With regard to mitigation, the Philippine Inventory Management and Reporting System, institutionalised in 2014, could serve as a central mechanism for tools and information across national agencies; but at present these lies mostly with agencies and offices that have respective projects.

The **principal institutional actors** charged with coordinating national climate policy, regulation and action are the CCCCAM-DRR and the CCC. The CCC is the designated lead coordinating body of the government and should facilitate coordination between the relevant agencies and stakeholders. However, the CCC requires further institutional strengthening (such as more personnel) to effectively coordinate with other agencies and institutions, as most interviewees agree (from Leagues, LGUs and NGAs 2017). A number of other national agencies have direct mandates related to local planning: NEDA, HLURB and the DILG – and hence need to be involved in translating national climate strategies into local plans and actions. The present consensus among the agencies is to 'mainstream' climate change into development planning, however the Climate Change Act still mandates the development of an LCCAP (which, as previously noted, the CCC declared may or may not be integrated into the CLUP).

Harmonisation of efforts among national agencies regarding the question of how to best support LGUs in planning their climate response, have been carried out through Joint Memorandum Circulars. Knowledge products and resources have been produced jointly to benefit their LGU constituencies.

Both the CCC and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) pursue efforts to build capacity and strengthen collaboration at different government levels. In 2011 they signed a Memorandum of Understanding to harmonise guidelines for local planning and promote the incorporation of both CCA and DRR concerns into local plans. It remains inoperative until today, however.

The CCC utilises its authority to convene and create partnerships across national agencies to facilitate climate actions and build its own capacity as well as the capacities of partner institutions. "We acknowledge that the **expertise** on particular issues lies with the technical agencies so we have to make sure that we coordinate with them properly and conduct a lot of consultations" (2016). On the other hand, when the NFSCC acknowledged the relative importance of climate change mitigation, agencies started to consult the CCC:

> "[…] it really took us quite some time to get the buy-in of a lot of the stakeholders for mitigation. […] But when it was framed in the Framework Strategy how we view

> mitigation […]: 'Yes, mitigation is also important, but not as important as adaptation; but it's still one of the pillars for us to address climate change' – that's where we began […]: 'Okay we should also start thinking about mitigation'" (CCC 2016).

V-LED organised "mitigation 101" workshops to key national agencies such as NEDA, DILG and HLURB in 2017. As mitigation slowly makes its way into the national conversation, demand grows for information about how to incorporate mitigation efforts into development planning. Some interviewees from NGOs observed a shift from adaptation versus mitigation towards **adaptation** and **mitigation** (2017). In a similar vein, an interviewee from the CCC stated that: "There are actually opportunities for mitigation, but it's just a matter of what those opportunities are and how does it relate to our sustainable development goals, and I think that's the link that we have to really focus on" (2016). An interviewee from DILG added: "It is additional work, but there are benefits to gain along the process. You can look at it not only from the environmental protection perspective at LGU level, but socio-economically mitigation actions can facilitate job generation and increase investments" (2018, via UN-Habitat).

Are these opportunities already clear and accessible at sub-national level? As one climate expert mentioned: "Right now, we're all talking national; and [LGUs] are so dependent on that, which is so frustrating. If you want action, then their connections on that horizontal level, if at all possible, can really make a difference (2017).

4.3 Horizontal coordination at sub-national level

Horizontal coordination at the local level is described as lacking and perceived as difficult by interviewees. This is partly because the LGUs are divided into municipalities, cities and provinces, with **few mechanisms** designed to facilitate cooperation across these different intra-local scales. There is also no concerted voice advocating for all LGUs at the national level. Experts note that the various leagues of LGUs work amongst themselves, but they are not focussed on influencing national decision making or improving vertical coordination. The system is too layered and complex for local governments to have much influence on their own.

The **LGUs also differ in their climate vulnerabilities**. While the 33 highly urbanised cities suffer from flooding because of their density, the smaller coastal and agricultural LGUs are deeply affected by the changing agricultural cycles. Finding areas for cooperation across the different needs and priorities is a challenge.

Practical **collaborative action** between LGUs exists and can be very meaningful, as exemplified by an "Inter-LGU" of four governments that shared a common concern:

> "The LGUs included […] signed a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the protection of the […] watershed. Why is this so? Because it's not only the city [that] would be affected by the flooding brought about by the overflowing […], but also, the other nearby towns. […] Basically, we are trying to tie up with these cities so that we would be achieving a common goal—and that is to protect the […] watershed" (2016).

To date, such coordination is mostly ad-hoc and project-based (e.g. V-LED offered five good-practice exchanges among LGUs, which were well received, but will end with the project). At first glance, the **leagues** representing provinces, cities, municipalities or barangays seem to have the potential to be advocates for LGUs, in the field of local climate change action as well. In decision-making they would theoretically always need to consult the entire membership, however, which is in practice only feasible for the League of Provinces and Cities. Platforms for horizontal coordination are also provided by professional organisations such as PLLENRO and the Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners (PIEP). Exemplarily, the PLLENRO eventually created the first simplified LCCAP template, featuring the spectrum of "GHG mitigation, vulnerability and hazard maps, DRR" (Interview with an ENRO 2017). This provided an opportunity for local officials to learn what other LGUs have already done.

4.4 Vertical integration

To date **many LGUs have not been able to develop their LCCAPs**. This resulted in further pressure from the executive branch, and in March 2017 the President received the commitment of 1.379 mayors to finish their LCCAPs within the year. As the press release explains: "Many LGUs encounter difficulties in mainstreaming the concept of climate change into their development plans. This is due either to lack of technical capacity on the part of the local planners or funds to undertake the required studies" (CCC 2017). At present, **capacity building** on climate change in the Philippines is delivered through interventions from development partners and donors as well as through national government agencies such as the DILG, HLURB, DOST, DENR and CCC. For instance, DILG has invested in capacity building initiatives for LGUs on climate change and disaster risk reduction since 2013, in the form of orientation, trainings, coaching and mentoring, development of manuals and other information materials. Along these lines, it was an im-

portant step for the CCC and other NGAs to partner with higher education institutions to support LGUs in the formulation of LCCAPs. V-LED supported this process, recognising the need for technical experts on the ground to support the LGUs, as CCC and national agencies have, thus far, limited presence at the regional local level or none whatsoever.

As far as climate financing is concerned, the **PSF** would provide a vehicle for financing local climate resilience. From the many submissions only very few passed the first screening - reportedly due to their low quality. In fact, only two proposals (from Camotes and Gerona) were approved during the 9th PSF Board Meeting in July 2017. "The PSF is unprecedented, after all. It is the first of its kind in the world, and our LGUs and [Civil Society Organisations] are perhaps not yet acquainted with it" (2017), Senator Legarda commented. Even writeshops were conducted, but another side of the story is that the CCC itself experienced difficulties in handling the proposals and disbursing the budget. As one interviewee put it, with regard to the CCC and the PSF: "There should also be a recognition that organisations do not develop overnight, it takes time for them to grow" (2017). In 2017, the PSF secretariat was moved from the Climate Change Office to the Department of Finance.

Are the difficulties in mainstreaming only a problem of capacity or funds, as the press release suggests? Apart from the limited resources and high political turnover rate of LGUs, the procedures and regulations with respect to the LCCAP have been demanding, to say the least - sometimes ambiguous or even contradictory (e.g. the press release speaks of mainstreaming climate change into development planning, while at the same time speaking of stand-alone LCCAPs). The **need for clear national guidance** is highlighted by a PLLENRO representative:

> "That is the gap between the national and the local: expecting so much from the LGUs, […] from local shelter master plan to housing plan to CLUP, transport plan etc. – can you imagine that? [The national agencies] need to produce more friendly templates if they really want a LCCAP from 1.600 municipalities – they should be customised based on the class of the municipality. They should be guided" (2017).

However, in light of the country's decentralised structure, some perceive the notion that NGAs should "shepherd and handhold" LGUs as difficult (interview with climate expert 2017). At the same time: "the capacity [on the national level], I think, is not yet well developed, in terms of translating it into actual support services" (2017). What is missing from the picture to develop this capacity and translate it into effective support for LGUs?

As frontline actors, LGUs are rich sources of knowledge that could improve policy, but there is no established mechanism that draws on local climate action while developing national policy. The CCC has **no coordination mechanism to liaise with sub-national levels**. Its current structure is limited to the national level. Engagements with sub-national actors are done ad hoc and normally within the context of interventions supported by development partners.

Given its mandates (see box 5), "information and knowledge are central to the CCC" (2016), as a representative explained. With regard to LGUs, the commission does not have "a centralised information system to monitor and assess LCCAPs, local capacities etc." The CCC is currently building on the National Integrated Climate Change Database Information and Exchange System (NICCDIES) to address this gap. For local governments, the League of Cities is "building a database of cities [to] identify who among these cities are receiving a lot of grants or a lot of trainings, and then we hope to see that some of the cities have never received any assistance, or any support from any levels of the government" (2017). The League aims to use this analysis to influence interventions more equitably among member cities. The CCC itself shares more than 150 submitted LCCAPs on their website, which can be used as inspiration.

Box 5: Mandates of the Climate Change Commission

The commission has three main mandates:

- **Monitoring and evaluation of climate change programmes and activities**
- **Facilitate capacity building for local adaptation and mitigation planning**
- **Provide technical and financial support to local research and development programmes (CCC presentation, 2018).**

Vertical integration is, to some extent, also a question of numbers: "You cannot cover the 1.700 plus cities and municipalities" (2017), as an advisor to the CCC put it. A member of the Commission confirmed this and questioned the extent to which LGUs can be reached through projects only: "If you don't touch base with an oversight agency that will release a guideline for all, then you can only reach a certain number" (2016). The above-mentioned case of LGUs beginning to create GHG inventories and explore mitigation potentials is a good example how projects can support local climate action. But project-based initiatives are limited in time and budget. Such guidance needs to be institutionalised, accessible and dynamic for uptake at scale. One expert suggested that, unless ordered, LGUs might ask, "What's in it for me? Is there a guide? Is it even mandatory?" (2016).

Box 6: Horizontal coordination and vertical integration

Why coordination on the national level is important for vertical integration was pointedly spelled out and captured by CCC members in the V-LED Regional Workshop Asia 2018 in Kuala Lumpur:

- **"At the national level we need to harmonise our strategies to avoid working in silos because in the end our policies and initiatives have the same purpose: supporting local governments in local climate action."**
- **"The agencies have the same recipients: the LGUs. We need to maximise our harmonising efforts at the national level to facilitate LGU support."**
- **"Coordination at national level requires one voice – a united front when we go down to the local level, also in term of implementation of plans."**
- **"The role of the national government is to make sure that we increase the resilience and increase [the LGUs'] adaptive capacities by giving them adequate assistance in terms of knowledge and information on the tools that can help them address those issues […]. Our role is also to provide them with an avenue, […] a menu of options: 'These are the different sources of funding that you can tap into', because they don't have much information about those things, they're more focused on addressing the concerns of their constituents […]. So we need to equip them with the skills and the necessary information to really address climate issues" (2018).**

Communities of practice could function as instruments to enhance both vertical and horizontal coordination. For example, the ecosystem-based adaptation community of practice includes technical staff of the DENR, HLURB and NEDA. The group is at the same time "closely coordinating with the sub-nationals, the regional people who have the direct link to the communities and to the local government" (interview with community expert 2017).

Another example is the "vertical climate dialogues" facilitated by the V-LED project. The dialogue events aimed at bringing governing actors from different levels together to speak and listen to one another. They managed to effectively promote national actors' understanding of local level realities and concerns (see box 6).

4.5 Coordination with non-state actors

In theory the CCC was set up to coordinate national climate change policies horizontally as well as to integrate other voices through the National Panel of Technical Experts (NPTE) and the NPTE+, the Advisory Board.

The Board provides a multi-stakeholder cooperation and coordination platform but it has not been not fully activated. Although mandated by law and despite efforts to coordinate the various agencies through the CCCCAM-DRR, voices from the leagues and

other non-state actors are often missed (2017). Rather, the CCC uses indirect channels of communication, through the Cabinet Cluster.

Several institutions operating at the national level emphasised the role of other sectors, especially academia, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the not yet very prevalent private sector. As a climate expert working with the CCC explained: "What we're trying to test now, is the partnership of local governments with academics and CSO's, directly strengthening their cooperation. Not only as a form of advocacy, but as a way to introduce, perhaps, a mechanism to make things work on the ground" (2017). The outcomes of these new forms of cooperation remain to be seen.

Different mechanisms to collaborate with State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) have been applied: memorandums of agreement, memorandums of understanding and participation in capacity building - for example the CCC's Training of Coaches, initiated by the V-LED project. UN-Habitat assisted the CCC and DILG-LGA in developing the "Enhanced LCCAP Guidebook 3", which introduces the concept of mitigation and provides guidance to local governments in developing local low-emission development strategies. As mentioned, 328 LCCAP coaches from government, but also state universities and colleges were trained to coach LGUs in formulating or updating their LCCAPs.

> "There is a significant role now, at least in terms of expectations, for SUCs to provide extension support and services to LGUs […]. SUCs have a clear mandate to provide assistance to the LGUs. […] They are supposed to have budget allocation for extension services, but that is also where they are still struggling" (interview with climate expert 2017).

Important lessons could be learnt from analysing and discussing the effectiveness of such partnerships. As a peer reviewer from the national level remarked: "there are also difficulties in getting [higher level institutions] to partner with NGAs" and the implementation of capacity building interventions for LGUs through SUCs was not as conducive as desired.

Non-state actors such as CSOs are regarded by national actors as potentially powerful allies because, similarly to the LGUs, "they're the ones who are actually seeing things on the ground" (2017). They might be able to mobilise local momentum, but their willingness to cooperate with government actors is seen as ambiguous by some: "there are some who are really beginning to work together with the government or with local governments, but there are some who just want to work on their own" (interview with climate expert 2017). NGOs had been "quick to pick up the issue" of local climate action, as an intervie-

wee put it. However, action has mostly been limited to large national and international organisations: "We are still lacking the participation of local NGOs" (interview with expert community 2017).

As noted by experts interviewed, international donors have for a long time bypassed the national government and directly supported local projects. In this system, some LGUs are more visible and more apt at capturing international funds. Meanwhile many LGUs lack connections to donor agencies and the know-how to attract international investments. A 2011 study on climate governance in the Philippines noted that with this "mode of fragmented support", the national level, bigger cities "and more progressive LGUs typically get the lion's share of […] aid" (Ateneo 2011: 8).

Most famous among the 'forgotten' regions of the Philippines is the autonomous region of Mindanao, the second largest and southernmost island, where President Duterte first rose to power as the mayor of Davos. As a member of one League explains: "There are some lucky LGUs […] – mostly in Metro Manila […] – you know, very smart and they can easily get support or assistance from other partners, but there are other cities, especially in Mindanao, that receive very little support" (2017).

How all of these joint endeavours feed into building a system that effectively enables LGUs to implement meaningful climate action remains to be seen. As the chapter has shown, it will be important to continue supporting local governments in planning and implementing local climate actions. Many interviewees perceived LGUs as being able to take up the challenge of climate change, if conditions are supportive. As a climate expert remarked: "Indeed local governments are ready and indeed this can be handled properly, they can really be at peak of this decision-making" (2017).

Furthermore, while horizontal and vertical climate change coordination mechanisms are still evolving, the CCC's role as lead climate change policy making and coordinating body remains of paramount.

It is to be hoped for that the CCC will be able to continue fulfilling civil society's "high hopes […] to be a vital body in shaking up the bureaucracy". Given the cross-cutting challenge of climate change, the CCC's role will further be vital in striving for a coherent and effective climate response, as an interviewee described:

> "It was intended to be a depository of institutional memory of climate change related matters in the Philippines. It was designed to create an atmosphere of formality

of the role of the Philippines in the climate negotiations and to increase coherence in mainstreaming climate change in national and local development planning. Essentially, it was intended to eliminate ambiguities in government institutions dealing with climate change" (2016).

5. Synthesis and entry points

Chapter 3 highlighted that the Philippines has been at the forefront of national climate action for decades. While early national policies do mention mitigation and sustainable development, due to its comparably low GHG emissions and high vulnerability to climate impacts, the Philippines has primarily focussed its efforts on adaptation and disaster risk management. Policies and regulations to pursue mitigation and low-emission development are nonetheless in place, creating ample opportunities for action.

Chapter 4 has shown that national policies recognise the importance of collaborating across government levels and sectors as well as with academia and civil society. A government representative (2017) stated that the vision is a "seamless government" in which policies and regulations are well-coordinated across sectors and levels. In practice, however, many mechanisms meant to implement climate policies are yet to operate smoothly. The weak synergy between climate change and development policies at the national level hampers effective vertical coordination that could foster more ambitious climate actions at the local level. However, opportunities for improved coherence were observed during the V-LED project, with government actors at all scales showing their willingness to find practical solutions for climate resilience through dialogue and exchange and by responding to local concerns; as Senator Loren Legarda put it in her keynote speech for the Inaugural Expert's Forum of the National Panel of Technical Experts (2017):

"Climate change should not be addressed in isolation, but through an effective collaboration of our efforts, from different fields and specialisations, towards ensuring the safety of our people amid the realities we are facing because of climate change."

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This final chapter proposes entry points to leverage vertical and horizontal coordination mechanisms for climate action. They are part of the larger conversation on how the country's multi-level governance system could effectively unleash the full potential of stakeholders for collaborative, transformative local climate action.

5.1 Entry points for multi-level climate resilience

Establish coherence between and within levels of government

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Local Government Units need guidance and support designing actionable climate change interventions, especially those who do not have the human resources required to address the multitude of nationally mandated sectoral tasks. As such, the first entry point suggests aligning sectoral plans and climate change policies to ensure coherence of actions and thereby contribute effectively to national climate change targets.

A decade ago, the Department of the Interior and Local Government already observed a "present chaos that characterises local planning in the Philippines" (2008). Thereafter, the DILG introduced the Rationalising the local Planning System (RPS) approach, which foresees three avenues for simplification and harmonisation (see box 7).

One year after the introduction of the RPS, the Climate Change Act (2009) introduced the LCCAP as one more local plan to be developed and implemented by LGUs. The RPS approach could serve as guiding principles to develop the LCCAP procedures and mainstream climate change into the mandated plans of LGUs.

Horizontal coordination:

At the **local government level, a multi-sectoral committee** could bring different functions together to specifically integrate climate change into planning processes. This underlines "that addressing climate change is not solely the work of the planning office and/or government office" (interview with city network 2017). In this, the different levels of governance would have complementing roles: the Sanggunian or Local Council would support the committee with clear local planning directives. The national level would actively endorse the committee and enable on one hand a consistent regulatory framework and on the other adequate time and resources to **engage** meaningfully with the planning process. An ENRO of an LGU which was supported by ICLEI and the Asian Cities Climate Resistance Network described the stakeholder convergence as follows:

"Aside from the Mayor, the Planning Department, we also involve the Engineering Department [...], the Social Work Department, City Social Welfare and Development, […] because they're more into gender and development; the Housing Department, […] because aside from regular households, we also have informal sectors that are situated or residing in high risk areas, the Risk Reduction Office, the DILG – the Health offices, we also involve them. Yes, […] a representative from the Provincial Department. […] This team was developed in order for us to develop the Local Climate Change Action Plan" (2016).

Furthermore, the LCCAP planning process could be customised to the different specificities of LGUs; for example, the template could be simplified according to the class of the municipality so that the LCCAP could become an indiscriminate tool for action (interview with ENRO 2017).

Box 7: Rationalising the local Planning System (DILG 2008)

Reduce the number of plans that LGUs must prepare. National government agencies requiring certain sectoral or topical plans must integrate these requirements into the CLUP or CDP.

Harmonise or dovetail planning guidelines with one another to avoid further confusing the LGUs.

Reconfigure the planning process from its traditional technocratic form into one that accommodates the imperatives of multi-stakeholder participation and consultation. This entails 'taming' the planning process so that even those who are not technically trained can participate meaningfully in determining public policies and actions that affect their lives

At the **national level**, inter-departmental cooperation could be particularly strengthened in processes that have potentially large impacts on climate actions, for example the national budget approval stage. Generally, a **central entity such as the CCC** is a tremendous asset but for this, the commission requires further institutional strengthening, including more human resources (i.e. staff) to effectively coordinate with other agencies and institutions (interviews with Leagues and expert community 2017). A strong and well-resourced CCC facilitating productive communication horizontally and vertically would positively bolster climate change interventions. Sustaining the inter-agency joint work programme similar to the one piloted through the V-LED project could lead to effective horizontal cooperation and vertical integration.

Vertical integration:

Discrepancies between the national and local level are usually based on mutual misunderstandings about the realities within which each level has to operate. For example, the NCCAP promotes an ecosystem-based approach that requires inter-LGU collaboration, but LGUs primarily plan and manage actions within their own political boundary (interviews with ENRO and expert community 2017). An ecosystem based approach requires a mechanism that enables LGUs to plan and act across boundaries. **Vertical dialogues** offer a platform to discuss such specificities and find coherent solutions. Two way communication mechanisms between local, provincial and national levels do not only improve the effectiveness of national policies, but when designed with care such multi-stakeholder processes are also powerful tools for collaborative action. Of paramount importance is creating an atmosphere of respect to guarantee that stakeholders from different levels meet on an equal footing. Only then it becomes possible to engage in meaningful dialogue that may help to build trust, coordinate efforts, initiate learning, inspire innovation and generate a sense of ownership of solutions. Like this, inclusive dialogues can produce better coordination and more comprehensive strategies opening up potential for multi-level and multi-stakeholder climate action.

Interdisciplinary boards are powerful coordination mechanisms. The CCC's Advisory Board should be activated in order to communicate voices from the leagues and other non-state actors to the national level. A peer reviewer of this study underscored the importance of expanding the membership of the CCC's Advisory Board to youth councils, i.e. the Sangguniang Kabataan (through the 2012 amendments of the Climate Change Act): "It makes the governance framework more inclusive and in a country with a predominantly young population - youth representation in governance will significantly alter the country's response to climate change." Similarly, the Philippine Commission on Women is a board member of the People's Survival Fund ensuring that gender issues and women's role in accelerating local climate action is integrated in decision making and that gender aspects are addressed by the PSF proposals tabled for the board's consideration.

Regional governance:

One important V-LED finding is the underestimated potential of **regional/ provincial governance**. A regional climate governance approach would facilitate more targeted support to smaller LGUs, allowing, for example, for the **pooling of resources**. Financial recourse can be pooled for finance readiness or collaterals. Likewise, a **pool of experts**

at regional level could offer technical assistance to local governments with regards to the preparation and implementation of LCCAPs; natural resources could be 'pooled' to promote a circular economy based on ecosystem-based planning and risk management. Sophisticated regional governance approaches to climate action are found in a number of countries such as Colombia (Adriázola et al. 2018).

A number of interviewees stated that the physical distance between national climate change entities and the regions is an obstacle to vertical coordination. The "CCC [does not] have a regional office, it is very centralised in Metro Manila, but we have 18 regions. So how do you reach the far away regions?" (interview with ENRO 2017). Clearly designated climate change **focal points at the regional level** could be an institutionalised response to the need for coordination between the national governments and LGUs: "The coordination should be straightforward in such a way that involved parties know whom to contact regarding a concern. The feedback mechanism should be strengthened", said a member of a city network (2017). Moreover, Lasco et al (2008: 4) argue that:

> "local government units at the provincial scale (meso scale) do have resources to commit to climate change adaptation […] An added advantage is that the provincial level has the political clout to ensure action at the local level. Since there are relatively few provinces […] working at that level could be the most cost-effective way as opposed to thousands of municipalities and villages. In short, the meso scale administrative level such as that of the province could provide the most effective means of mainstreaming."

LGUs would greatly benefit from regional or provincial **"one-stop-shops",** offering at the very least a website with risk information and climate change action and planning tools that are currently hosted by different agencies (interview with CCC 2017), and at the very best, a staffed office to provide on demand technical support to LGUs. The entity could be tied to the monitoring and evaluation system and include vertical and horizontal feedback mechanisms. The National Panel of Technical Experts could ensure the quality and relevance of climate information and knowledge being generated, developed and shared. Regions and/or provinces could help **foster Inter-LGU collaboration** and exchanges e.g. good-practice exchanges (such as those conducted by V-LED) and provide customised, region-specific trainings.

Strengthen climate change communication and capacities

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So far the 'knowledge and capacity building' thematic area of the NCCAP receives the least budget (less than one per cent) among the seven thematic areas (figure 5). However, as a dynamic and complex field, climate change requires governing actors to acquire technical knowledge and capacities. **Building knowledge and capacities** enables the development of policies that are implementable across sectors and levels of governance. Capacity building activities can range from a combination of awareness raising activities, formal trainings, on-the-job trainings and engagement in climate change planning and action processes.

The actions of local **climate champions**, meaning pro-active LGUs such as the province of Albay, should be scaled up and communicated as inspirations, especially in the field of low-emission development that is still very novel to local actors. Such horizontal good practice exchanges can be facilitated not only by professional organisations, but also by NGAs and the CCC. Thereby, attention should be paid to linking forerunners with ambitious followers, whereby the latter should be equally supported and made visible.

A proven successful practice would be encouraging local governments to employ **"climate managers"** (interview with CCC 2017), who would cover the full spectrum of climate change-related capacities, including climate finance.

In order for local governments to act, information needs to flow at the right time and respond to specific enquiries. To improve access, relevance and practicality of information, the above mentioned one-stop-shop should be supported by strong **central and regional knowledge and communication hubs.** These hubs would provide customised information services, campaign material, creative visualisation tools for communicating across levels and examples of good practices and challenges. Communication strategies combined with expert support are important to effectively communicate the need for ambitious climate change actions and the different climate risks local governments must address.

Indeed, climate change communication needs to instate a sense of urgency for action and picture a possible alternative. Promoting visions for resilient and sustainable local

development could advance a more coordinated and synchronised low emission pathway. Locally, LGUs might be supported in understanding climate change action as part of their development ambitions: "Pursuing local climate action should not be viewed as an added task altogether; rather, it should be viewed as something that complements a local government's development trajectory" (interview with city network 2017). Mainstreaming could propel appreciation of the co-benefits of local climate actions and more importantly increase the appreciation that mitigation action is supportive and compatible with sustainable development. Some of the local climate action champions already follow this integrated approach: "To give a bigger picture, progress, economic growth and environmental protection must go hand-in-hand so that it could not only benefit the [local] government but also it can be felt by the constituents" (interview with ENRO 2016). The acceptance of and interest in low-emission development might rise with making its profits (and co-benefits) available to local governments, businesses and even citizens (as in the case of the German energy transition 'Energiewende').

5.2 Conclusion

Multi-level governance and inter-sectoral collaboration on climate change towards sub-national implementation have started gaining ground in the Philippines. Notable synergies and developments have been achieved in improving horizontal coordination and vertical integration of policies, actions, investments and monitoring across levels of governance. Examples of such progress are: the creation of an inter-ministerial climate cabinet; national councils comprised of multiple levels of government as well as civil society; cities providing important leadership and input to national policy; inter-LGU cooperation to reduce fragmentation and national networks of local governments on climate change. These developments build a solid foundation for enabling transformative climate action. Yet: "there is still effort needed to really put the picture together. It's a matter of understanding where a particular piece could come from. And it's up to those who are currently holding the pieces of the puzzle to call on the others who are, perhaps, holding the missing pieces."

- to be connected.

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The Republic of the Philippines is a global leader in responding to the effects of climate change. With a strong focus on adaptation, the country has a complex national governance system in place to coordinate cross-sector and multi-level action. As communities across the archipelago experience the dangerous effects of climate change, local and regional governments are presently grappling with how to translate national polices into local action.

How can the Philippines coordinate ambitious climate action across sectors and governing levels? How can local governments respond to risks posed by climate change while simultaneously investing in low-emission development?

This report is part of a series of four country studies and one synthesis report that examine climate change governance and action in Kenya, Philippines, South Africa and Vietnam through a multi-level governance lens. The studies are based on the four-year V-LED project – Vertical Integration and Learning for Low-Emission Development in Africa and Southeast Asia – funded by the German Ministry for the Environment (BMU) as part of its International Climate Change Initiative (IKI).

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