



MEMORANDUM

FOR : **The Directors**
Biodiversity Management Bureau
Environmental Management Bureaus
Forest Management Bureau
Land Management Bureau
Mines and Geosciences Bureau
Climate Change Service

FROM : **The OIC Director**
Policy and Planning Service

SUBJECT : **UPDATES ON THE EU'S GENERALISED SCHEME OF PREFERENCES (GSP) PLUS**

DATE : **04 JAN 2024**

This has reference to the letter from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) dated 21 December 2023, transmitting updates on the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) Plus. Hereunder are the recent updates for your reference.

EXTENSION OF EU-GSP PLUS REGULATION UNTIL 2027

Please be informed that the European Parliament and Council formally adopted on 22 November 2023, the European Commission's proposal of extending the current GSP regulation for four (4) years or until 2027. This extension comes with the established monitoring mechanism which includes the exchange of information through a scorecard, the conduct of mission, and site visits to review the Philippines' effective implementation of 27 International Conventions on human rights, labour rights, **environmental and climate change protection**, and good governance.

On the other hand, should the proposed successor GSP regulation enter into force before 2027, the extension of the current GSP regulation will be shortened while providing for an adequate transition period.

As of date, the DTI is yet to receive information from the EU on the next monitoring cycle, and this is being anticipated this year (2024). In this regard, we would like to request your respective Offices to **provide an updated focal point person/s for the EU-GSP related matters**, following this format (*Name, Designation, Office, Viber, and Email*).

COUNTRY REPORT FOR 2020-2022

On 11 November 2023, the European Commission published the GSP country report for the period of 2020-2022 and its country annexes including the Philippines. The report can be accessed using this link: <http://tinyurl.com/496sj3xj>.

The DENR, as the lead agency for the Environment Cluster is being requested to review and provide comments on the report on Environment and Climate Change Protection under pages 4, 20-24 of the Country Report.

Please be informed that the report has been briefly discussed during the DENR consultation meeting in preparation for the scoping exercise on the proposed PH – EU FTA and during the DENR Trade Focal Group Meeting which was held on 23 November 2023 and 13 December 2023, respectively.

While the report has been published and considered final, the additional inputs/comments on the EU's findings may be used as basis for the country's reapplication to the successor GSP regulation and the next monitoring cycle.

ACTION REQUESTED

In view of the above, we would appreciate receiving your 1) updated focal point person/s (*see ANNEX A*) and 2) comments on the EU-GSP+ Philippine Country report **on or before 10 January 2023**, through this email address: psddivision@gmail.com. For your reference, enclosed are the following related documents:

- **Annex A:** Environment Cluster Delegation during the 4th EU-GSP+ Monitoring Mission; and
- **Annex B:** Philippine Country Report matrix, with initial inputs from the concerned Bureaus during the consultation meetings conducted.

For your appropriate action, please.


CHERYL LOISE T. LEAL

No.	Environment Cluster Delegation During the 4 th EU-GSP Plus Monitoring Cycle			Virtual	In-Person
	Name	Designation	Contact Details		
1	Atty. Jonas Leones	Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and international Affairs / Cluster Head			✓
DENR - Climate Change Service					
2	Albert Magalang	EMB - CCS		✓	
DENR - Policy Studies Division					
3	For. Llarina Mojica	Chief, PSD	mojicallarina@gmail.com		✓
4	Febrielyn Tumines	Econ II	febtumines@gmail.com	✓	
5	Zayrelle Ann Suello	Econ II	zausuello@denr.gov.ph	✓	
DENR - Forest Management Bureau					
6	Alejandro R. Sibucan, Jr.	Chief, Forest Economics Section, Forest Policy, Planning and Knowledge Management Division	alejandrino.sibucan@gmail.com	✓	
DENR - Mines and Geosciences Bureau					
7	Jean Carleen Margery Mendoza	Mining Tenements Management Division	mining.tenement@gmail.com	✓	-
8	Donna Mae Longga		mining.tenement@gmail.com	✓	-
9	Engr. Christian Philip Umerez	Mine Safety, Environment and Social Development Division	minesafety@mgb.gov.ph	✓	-
10	Engr. Jan Jeremiah Villaroman	Mining Technology Division	jami.villaroman@gmail.com	✓	-
11	Engr. Jaypee Juanerio		jaypee.juanerio@mgb.gov.ph	✓	-
12	Jemimah Bela Torrefie	Planning, Policy and International Affairs Division		✓	
DENR - Environmental Management Bureau					
13	Ms. Ma. Delia Valdez	Senior EMS	delia_valdez@emb.gov.ph	✓	
14	Engr. Santini Quiocson	Engineer II	santini_quiocson@emb.gov.ph	✓	
15	Ms. Juvinia Serafin	Chief, Solid Waste Management Division	juvinia_seraphin@emb.gov.ph	✓	
16	Ms. Consolacion P. Crisostomo	Chief-Policy, Planning and Program Development	consolacion_crisostomo@emb.gov.ph	✓	
17	Ms. Mary Esther D. Ofiaza	Planning Officer III	meyeth_ofiaza@emb.gov.ph	✓	
18	Engr. Vizminda A. Osorio	EMB Assistant Director	vizminda_osorio@emb.gov.ph	✓	
19	Engr. Edwin Romel Navaluna	Chief, Chemical Management Section	Edwin_navaluna@emb.gov.ph	✓	
20	Engr. Jose Joel Maleon	Senior EMS	joel_maleon@emb.gov.ph	✓	
21	Mr. Onofre P. Escota	Project Monitoring and Evaluation Officer/ Coordinator	onofre_escota@yahoo.com	✓	
22	Mr. Geri Geronimo R. Sañez	Chief, Hazardous Waste Management Section	onofre_escota@yahoo.com	✓	
Climate Change Commission					

ANNEX A

23	Jerome E. Ilagan	Chief of the Policy Research and Development Division (PRDD), Climate Change Commission	ilaganjerome.ccc@gmail.com		✓
24	Elaine Borejon	Senior Science Research Specialist		✓	
Department of Science and Technology - NCBP					
25	Mr. Reimond Corona		lorelieu5@gmail.com ;		
26	Lorelie Agbagala	NCPB Head Secretariat	ncbpsecretariat@dost.gov.ph ; secretariatncbp@gmail.com	✓	

Philippine Country Report – Environment and Climate Change Protection (Annex B)

Articles	Comments made during the DENR Consultation Meetings (for further inputs)	Updates/Comments
Overview		
<p>The Philippines has made good progress on the implementation of all relevant environmental and climate conventions, has ratified the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and is preparing for the ratification of the Basel Ban Amendment to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes.</p>	<p>EMB reported that the ratification on the Basel Ban Amendment to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes was on hold due to the change of Administration</p> <p>EMB may wish to provide a detailed plan regarding the ratification.</p>	
<p>The Philippines has taken steps towards the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES), but there have been no notable developments in the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety since 2020. The Philippines has applied to receive technical support towards the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. In 2021, the Government submitted its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement, but it needs operationalisation and monitoring tools for its implementation.</p>		
Article 5. 3 UN Conventions on Environmental Protection and Climate Change (Conventions 16-23)		
<p>The Philippines is home to two-thirds of the earth's biodiversity and ranks third in the world in marine biodiversity. The country also ranks among the top ten countries globally with the largest number of species threatened with extinction. It is also among the world's most disaster-prone countries. At risk from both climate-related and geological hazards such as floods, droughts, typhoons, landslides and mudslides, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, the country experiences on average 20 tropical cyclones every year and an almost daily occurrence of seismic shocks which cost the country an average of 0.5% of its GDP annually.</p> <p>As one of the fastest growing countries in Asia, economic development and population growth have exacerbated the country's environmental challenges. Ineffective management of biodiversity resources¹, policy gaps, poor enforcement of environmental laws and regulations, and conflicts have also resulted in the decline of natural resources in terms of both quantity and quality, especially for those nearing extinction. The Philippines is however taking steps towards the implementation of environmental conventions. As an emerging economy, the Philippines' greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) have doubled over the last decade, though missions per capita remain rather low (1.3t per capita). As an archipelago, the Philippines is very vulnerable to climate change impacts, including sea level rise, increased</p>		

¹ <https://www.usaid.gov/philippines/energy-and-environment>

Philippine Country Report – Environment and Climate Change Protection (Annex B)

<p>frequency of extreme weather events and natural disasters, and rising temperatures. The country is especially exposed to tropical cyclones, flooding, and landslides, and has the second-highest annual weather-related fatalities rate worldwide.</p> <p>To strengthen environmental law enforcement, in 2021, the Government established the Environmental Law Enforcement and Protection Service.</p>		
<p>EU–Philippines Development Cooperation on Environment and Climate</p> <p>Under the MIP 2021-2027 the priority area 1: Green, Resilient Economy and Green Jobs will focus on the sectors of Circular Economy and Plastic Waste Management, Digital connectivity and green digital transformation and Specific Climate Change adaptation and mitigation actions. A new programme on Green Economy has been proposed and is under preparation (€60 million). The programme will support the transition towards circular economy and plastic waste, following a three-level approach focusing on central level, local level and private sector. Ongoing cooperation with the Philippines is supporting the sustainable energy generation to meet the growing needs of the economy and provide energy access to the poor and marginalised sector in accordance with the Philippine Development Plan, generating electricity from renewable sources, increasing efficiency of energy use, and increasing access for the poor to affordable, disaster-resilient energy, through the Access to Sustainable Energy in the Philippines project (ASEP, €66 million). The programme is ending in 2023. Under regional cooperation the EU supported the preservation of the natural environment with the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP, €10 million).</p>		
<p>5.3.1 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)</p>		
<p>The Philippines ratified CITES in 1976, but its legislation is still classified under Category 2, which means it does not meet all the requirements of the CITES implementation. The Philippines has taken several measures to combat wildlife crimes and curb illegal wildlife trade. The annual value of illegal wildlife trade in the country is estimated at USD 1 billion; this includes the market value of wildlife and its resources, their ecological role and value, damage to habitats, and loss in potential ecotourism revenues².</p> <p>The Wildlife Law Enforcement Action Plan 2018-2028 came into effect in January 2021 and serves as the national roadmap for addressing wildlife crimes. A draft of the amendments to the 20-year-old Wildlife Act was introduced in the Senate in</p>	<p>BMB reported that the The Philippines already implements the CITES through the BMB Wildlife Resources Division (BMB) and is already a Category 2 Compliance.</p>	

² Addressing Illegal Wildlife Trade in the Philippines, p. 3, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/490006/addressing-illegal-wildlife-trade-philippines.pdf>.

Philippine Country Report – Environment and Climate Change Protection (Annex B)

<p>2021 but did not make it into law. Meanwhile, the Philippines has automated the issuance of CITES import, export, and re-export permits of terrestrial species, with permits being granted online.</p>		
<p>5.3.2 Waste Conventions: Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)</p>		
<p>The Government of the Philippines has consistently met its reporting obligations under the Basel Convention. Philippine laws, regulations and procedures related to waste trade and the definition of hazardous waste are well aligned with the requirements of the Convention.</p> <p>Since March 2020, the Philippines is also implementing the Basel Convention Plastic Waste Amendments pertaining to the control of the transboundary movements of plastic waste. The Government has been building the capacity of its customs and environmental administrations with support from donors to prevent cases of illegal traffic of plastic wastes and enforce policies on transboundary movements of plastic waste.</p> <p>The Philippines is moving towards ratifying the Basel Convention Ban Amendment that prohibits developed countries from exporting their hazardous waste and toxic wastes to other countries, whether for disposal or recycling³</p> <p>With regard to the Stockholm Convention, the national reports for the third and fourth reporting cycle are overdue.</p> <p>The last report, due in August 2022, was submitted in November 2022. The National Implementation Plan (NIP) of the Stockholm Convention was last updated in 2014. In 2020, the Philippines applied for technical support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to update the NIP to include all POPs listed under the Convention up to 2020⁴. The request for support also covers the updating of the inventory for all POPs to enable the consistent implementation of the requirements of the Convention. The regulatory reforms are proposed to include the complete ban of import and use of POPs, with specific reference to industrial POPs, in compliance with the Convention.</p>		
<p>5.3.3 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety</p>		
<p>The Philippines' Government is compliant with its reporting obligations under the CBD.</p> <p>The authorities are running programmes for the conservation of key species such as the rufous hornbill, tamaraw, Philippine cockatoo and dugong.</p>		

³ Greenpeace and EcoWaste Coalition (2020) Waste trade and the Philippines: How local and global policy instruments can stop the tide of foreign waste dumping in the country, <https://www.greenpeace.org/philippines/publication/4208/waste-trade-and-the-philippines-how-localand-global-policy-instruments-can-stop-the-tide-of-foreign-waste-dumping-in-the-country>

⁴ GEF (2020) Reduction of POPs and UPOPs through integrated sound management of chemicals, <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/10686>

Philippine Country Report – Environment and Climate Change Protection (Annex B)

<p>The Philippines is compliant with its reporting obligation under the Cartagena Protocol.</p> <p>There have been no notable developments in the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol since 2020.</p>		
<p>EU–Philippines Development Cooperation on Biological Diversity</p> <p>The Philippines continues to be a beneficiary of the support provided under the second phase of the Biodiversity Finance Initiative, funded by the EU and other European donors that was extended to 2025 and is targeting results based and effective budgeting for biodiversity as well as reduction and redesign of subsidies that are harmful to nature. The Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2028 constitutes the country's third National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan under the CBD.</p> <p>The Philippines has also been implementing several projects to arrest the loss of biodiversity since 2020 with the support from international cooperation agencies.</p>		
<p>5.3.4 Conventions on Climate Change and Protection of the Ozone Layer⁵</p>		
<p>The Philippines submitted its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UNFCCC in April 2021⁶. Biennial Update Reports remain overdue, even if their submission is expected soon. The National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) 2011-2028 is one of the policy framework instruments forming the basis for the NDC⁷ and it is currently under review. Based on the overarching priority of accelerating the just transition to a green economy and the delivery of green jobs, the NDC sets a target of 75% greenhouse gas emissions reduction relative to its business-as-usual scenario of 2000-2030 and peak its emissions by 2030.</p> <p>While the target is ambitious, more than 72% of the target is contingent on international financial support to implement mitigation actions in the agriculture, waste, industrial processes and product use, transport, and energy sectors. In addition, the plans to operationalise the NDC policies and measures and their corresponding financing, technology, and capacity development are yet to be developed, as well as the necessary measurement, reporting, and verification system to track, monitor, and report the progress of NDC implementation.</p>		

⁵ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

⁶ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/Philippines%20-%20NDC.pdf>

⁷ As the country's main instrument on climate action, the NCCAP 2011-2028 includes 7 thematic areas of government action to address climate change, namely: food security, water sufficiency, ecological and environmental stability, human security, climate-smart industries and services, sustainable energy, and knowledge and capacity development, which are pursued coherently with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; <https://climate.emb.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NCCAP-1.pdf>

Philippine Country Report – Environment and Climate Change Protection (Annex B)

<p>The strategy to accelerate climate action and strengthen disaster resilience constitutes a part of the next edition of the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 adopted in December 2022 and aims at the following outcomes: (a) climate and disaster risk resilience of communities and institutions increased; (b) ecosystem resilience enhanced; and (c) low carbon economy transition enabled⁸.</p> <p>The Government had set a moratorium on new coal power plants as from October 2020.</p> <p>However, the percentage of coal power generation in the Philippines increased to 48% in 2021 from 38% in 2020. Further, a study by the Global Electricity Review 2022 revealed that the country recorded an 8% increase in power generated using coal. The Philippines ranked 15th globally in terms of coal share in power generation⁹. At COP26, the Philippines signed the Global Coal to Clean Power Transition Statement but with a reservation regarding clause 3 calling for a coal phase-out. Since its election, the new Government has reaffirmed the coal moratorium but has advocated natural gas, and is also considering nuclear energy, as a stopgap before fully committing to renewable energycentric development. To accelerate transition to renewables, the Philippines opened their electricity market allowing foreign ownership of investments.</p> <p>In October 2021, the Government adopted regulations targeting an 80% reduction on the importation and use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) in the country by 1 January 2045. This target is in line with the Philippines' obligation as a developing country under the Kigali Amendment. On 3 November 2022, the Philippines ratified the Kigali Amendment¹⁰ to the Montreal Protocol to gradually reduce the consumption and production of HFCs, which entered into force in February 2023.</p>		
Conclusions and priorities		
<p>The Philippines has made good progress on the implementation of all environmental and climate conventions. The country has ratified the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol and is preparing to ratify the Basel Ban Amendment to the Basel Convention.</p> <p>The Philippines has submitted its first NDC for implementing the Paris Agreement, however, the plans to operationalise the NDC policies and measures as well as monitoring tools for its implementation are yet to be developed.</p>		

⁸ <https://pdp.neda.gov.ph/philippine-development-plan-2023-2028/>

⁹ <https://powerphilippines.com/think-tank-coal-in-ph-energy-mix-increased-despite-moratorium/>

¹⁰ The Kigali Amendment is not in the list of the GSP relevant conventions. However, it is considered essential in terms of substance.

Philippine Country Report – Environment and Climate Change Protection (Annex B)

<p>During the reporting period, the Philippines has been compliant with the CBD reporting.</p> <p>The final text of the historic Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, agreed at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN CBD in December 2022, calls for all countries to develop national targets. The Philippines is expected to comply on this matter. On CITES, it is necessary that the Philippines brings its national</p>	<p>BMB discussed that the PH is updating the PBSAP as part of the compliance with KM-GBF. Subsidiary for the mother law (CBD)</p>	
---	---	--