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Mainstreaming climate change adaptation into local land use planning in Metro Manila: lessons learned and potential for knowledge transfer

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As recent IPCC reports have highlighted, urban areas are now home to most of the world's population. The majority of such urban growth continues to occur in less developed regions and is expected to persist, specifically in Asia. Due to extensive anthropogenic change along coastal zones, as well as their inherent exposure to natural hazards such as sea level rise, erosion, and tropical storms, coastal cities are especially at risk to the adverse impacts of climate change. Having consistently ranked as one of the countries most at risk to the negative impacts of anthropogenic climate change, the Philippines has undertaken significant efforts to integrate climate change adaptation into various policies and planning documents. This research reflects on the specific practice of mainstreaming climate change adaptation (CCA), as well as disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures, into local land use planning in Metro Manila as a means of reducing the region's present and future risk. Effective land use planning represents a proactive and economical approach to managing both current and future climate change related risks, especially when taking into consideration the significant expenses necessary to remedy issues caused by poorly or unplanned development, which often most negatively impacts a community's most vulnerable members. Specifically, the aim of this research is to take stock of what progress has been made toward mainstreaming climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies into local land use planning in Metro Manila and to understand how this impacts those who are most vulnerable to climate change. The analysis also strives to comprehend how the knowledge gained from the Metro Manila case study can be transferred to other cities in Southeast Asia facing similar challenges. Methodologically, the software MAXQDA was utilized to conduct a qualitative data analysis of 39 policy and planning documents, ranging from the national to the local level. This analysis demonstrates that policy and planning documents at all levels integrate future-oriented climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies to a certain extent. However, despite the consistent and comprehensive integration of such strategies into documents across scales, numerous documents cite significant challenges in implementing CCA and DRR strategies, especially at the local level. Poor and/or inconsistent coordination between government offices, in addition to other stakeholders, limited or poorly prioritized and difficult-to-access financing, as well as a lack of continuity in personnel due to political election cycles, particularly at the local level, were frequently referenced as representing significant barriers to proper implementation of CCA and DRR strategies. Future research will be conducted

in the form of expert interviews, which will help to better understand the current issues regarding the local implementation of these strategies and in what ways these can be improved or altogether remedied.