



PH HAIYAN ADVOCACY INC.

"An Advocacy Group on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation"

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27 August 2025

HON. RAPAHAEL P.M. LOTILLA

Secretary

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Visayas Avenue

Quezon City



Thru : **HON. ALEX D. JIMENEZ** - Regional Director
Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) – Region VIII

Subject: **Request for Clarification and Consideration on the Exclusion of Tacloban City from the Real-Time Water Quality Monitoring Pilot Project**

Dear Director Jimenez,

We wish to commend the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for deploying a **real-time water quality monitoring system** in Ormoc Bay, a valuable step toward safeguarding the marine and coastal resources of Eastern Visayas. This initiative will greatly help in ensuring sustainable fisheries, tourism development, and climate resilience.

However, we would like to respectfully inquire **why Tacloban City, the only Highly Urbanized City (HUC) in Region 8, was not selected as a pilot site** for the same system.

Tacloban, being the region's **economic, educational, and administrative center**, is also one of the most **climate-vulnerable cities** in the country. It sits at the confluence of Cancabato Bay and San Pedro Bay, where water pollution, siltation, flooding, and climate-induced hazards directly affect the health, livelihood, and safety of more than **250,000 residents**, including surrounding municipalities that depend on its coastal waters.

Considering these realities, we respectfully submit that Tacloban's inclusion in the DENR's real-time water monitoring program would:

- 1. Strengthen disaster risk reduction and climate resilience** by detecting harmful algal blooms, low dissolved oxygen levels, and other threats to fisheries and public health.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (Proverbs 9:10)

2. **Enhance transparency and data-sharing** with local governments, academe, and civil society in designing evidence-based interventions.
3. **Demonstrate leadership in urban environmental governance**, consistent with Tacloban's HUC status and role as the regional hub.

In this regard, we respectfully request that DENR consider **expanding the pilot project to include Tacloban City**, or at the very least, clarify the criteria used in selecting Ormoc as the lone site in Eastern Visayas.

PH HAIYAN and our partner organizations stand ready to collaborate with your office in ensuring that Tacloban also benefits from this important innovation.

We look forward to your favorable response.

Very truly yours,



PETRONILO "PETE" L. ILAGAN
Chairman and CEO