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Green careers guide

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COP 26: Youth Engagement – Green Jobs

In 2017, I was fortunate to be granted a Newton PhD scholarship to pursue a degree in Environment and Sustainable Technology at the University of Manchester. I finished in 2020 with a thesis on the sustainability assessment of synergistic generation of energy and water supply in remote communities.

My interest in this research space started when I first learned about environmental science in high school and the challenges human society faces because of our activities. During my undergraduate study, I continued to learn more about the engineering solutions that are being applied to address environmental issues. However, as I progressed in my education and career, I recognised that technology alone cannot solve the biggest challenge we face: climate change.

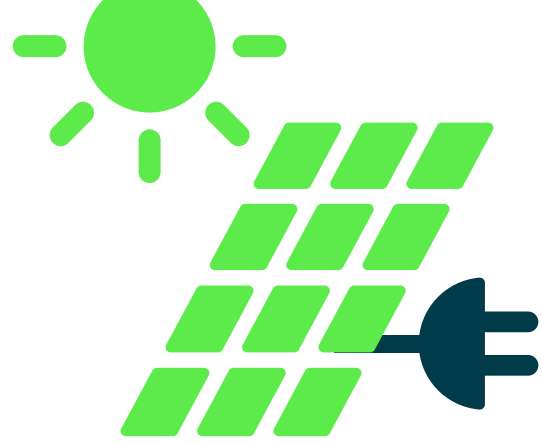
Climate change matters to each one of us since all of the resources and services that we enjoy from nature are strongly affected by the dynamics of the climate. As a citizen of a developing and archipelagic country, I have experienced first-hand the impacts of rapid accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Stronger and more frequent storms hinder the development of communities, especially those who have very little to start with.



Hence, I proposed my thesis topic with the aim of finding sustainable solutions to energy and water access that do not contribute to climate change while being resilient against its effects. The skills I gained during my studies enabled me to be aware of the complexity of climate change while also honing my abilities to communicate with key stakeholders. As a researcher, I have aligned my research agenda towards collaborative and integrated solutions to climate change and other sustainable development goals.

I am very grateful to the support that the British Council and the Philippine Commission on Higher Education has given to my education and career development. The mentoring of my supervisors and the vibrant research community in Manchester have encouraged me further to pursue a career in sustainable engineering. Being part of public engagement activities, especially those involving science communication, has shown me that we can achieve much more especially in Philippines where discussions on sustainability are not as widespread as in the UK.





Having returned from my PhD fellowship, I am now an active member of the University of the Philippines as an assistant professor of sustainable production and responsible consumption. In the three domains of my role (teaching, research and extension), I hope to utilise my expertise to bring in more people into the field of sustainability science and engineering. Although my research group is just in inception, we are already looking at potential projects in energy development, mineral resource utilization and water conservation. I am excited to work with the passionate individuals in these multidisciplinary collaborations.

In teaching, working with curious and enthusiastic students makes me hopeful that the youth will be actively engaged in climate change solutions. In our discussion, I emphasise that each of us needs to (and can do) our part in creating the best future for us and the planet. For those interested in pursuing a research career in climate change and sustainability, my advice is that good mentors and a wide support network will help you push through the seemingly huge and urgent challenge that lies before us.

