

PHASE OUT FOSSIL FUELS AND FAST TRACK CLEAN ENERGY

*HOW TO TALK ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE, FOSSIL
FUEL THREATS AND THE NEED FOR A FAIR ENERGY
TRANSITION IN THE PHILIPPINES*

2022

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September 2022



About the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is a global initiative to phase out fossil fuels and support a just transition. The world is beginning to recognise that unprecedented levels of international cooperation will be required to prevent the proliferation of fossil fuels, to phase out existing stockpiles and infrastructure, and to fast-track a just and peaceful transition to sustainable development and greater wellbeing for all.

www.fossilfueltreaty.org

About Climate Access

Climate Access is a nonprofit organization focused on building political and public support for climate and clean energy solutions by developing and promoting the adoption of effective communication and engagement approaches. Climate Access draws from social science, best practices in the field and its in-depth climate communication and public engagement experience to make complex issues easy to understand and involve stakeholders in decision making and supporting policy and program implementation. Climate Access offers strategic framing, narrative, activation and engagement services and runs a resource and training center for more than 3,700 members from nonprofit, government, academic and community organizations.

www.climateaccess.org



The “Phase out Fossil Fuels and Fast Track Clean Energy Philippines Playboo”k was produced by Climate Access on behalf of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative.

Project support from the Quadrature Foundation

playbook contents

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introduction

BACKGROUND

Fossil fuels are responsible for more than 80 percent of the emissions causing climate change to date. Climate policies and programs focus on reducing emissions from the burning of fossil fuels but largely ignore the source of the problem – the production of coal, oil and gas – which governments and fossil fuel companies are expanding unchecked. Their plans, if allowed to continue, would generate more than twice the amount of emissions allowable to avoid catastrophic climate change.

This is not surprising given the influence of the fossil fuel industry and its government proponents in shaping the narrative around coal, oil, and gas, undermining support for impactful supply side policies. They amplify arguments about the necessity and inevitability of fossil fuels (despite their threat to humanity), the economic benefits they deliver and their role as innovators in advancing progress. Most recently, they claim the industry is part of the solution to climate change with hollow net zero commitments that rely on unproven, expensive technologies and timelines that undermine our efforts to preserve a livable planet.

The Philippines and its 7,600+ islands are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change – extreme weather, rising sea levels and death to marine ecosystems that underpin many local food security needs. The movement in Asia and around the world to shift from fossil fuels to clean energy and low-carbon technologies is growing and successfully blocking some of the expansion of new coal, oil and gas projects despite being David in a fight with the ultimate Goliath. Yet fossil fuel expansion plans and existing production levels remain inconsistent with survival. Those advocating for a fossil fuel phase out and fair energy transition must scale up efforts to tell a new story about the imperative and benefits of a fossil fuel free world and how we get there.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAYBOOK

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative aims to change the narrative around fossil fuels and climate change as one of its core goals. This means elevating the risks associated with existing and planned fossil fuel production, connecting the need for a phase down of fossil fuels with the imperative of a global, fair transition to clean energy and outlining a pathway to achieve it.

In 2021, on behalf of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, Climate Access in partnership with Drive Agency conducted media, social media and polling analyses and in partnership with Drive Agency message testing in five countries - the United States, India, Brazil, Philippines and Kenya. This was done to inform the Initiative's communication efforts and share with organizations addressing supply side issues including the network of groups advocating for a Fossil Fuel Treaty. In addition, Climate Access and the Climate Narratives Initiative conducted similar research in Canada and developed [framing guidance](#).

The *Phase Out Fossil Fuels and Fast Track Clean Energy Philippines Framing Playbook* offers guidance on how to talk about fossil fuel supply side issues, a fair transition and the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. A summary of key trends from the research sources listed below are included in an appendix.

METHODOLOGY

Recommendations in the *Phase Out Fossil Fuels and Fast Track Solutions Playbook* are informed by the following research:

Philippines media analysis: Climate Access used Google News to track coverage in national news outlets.

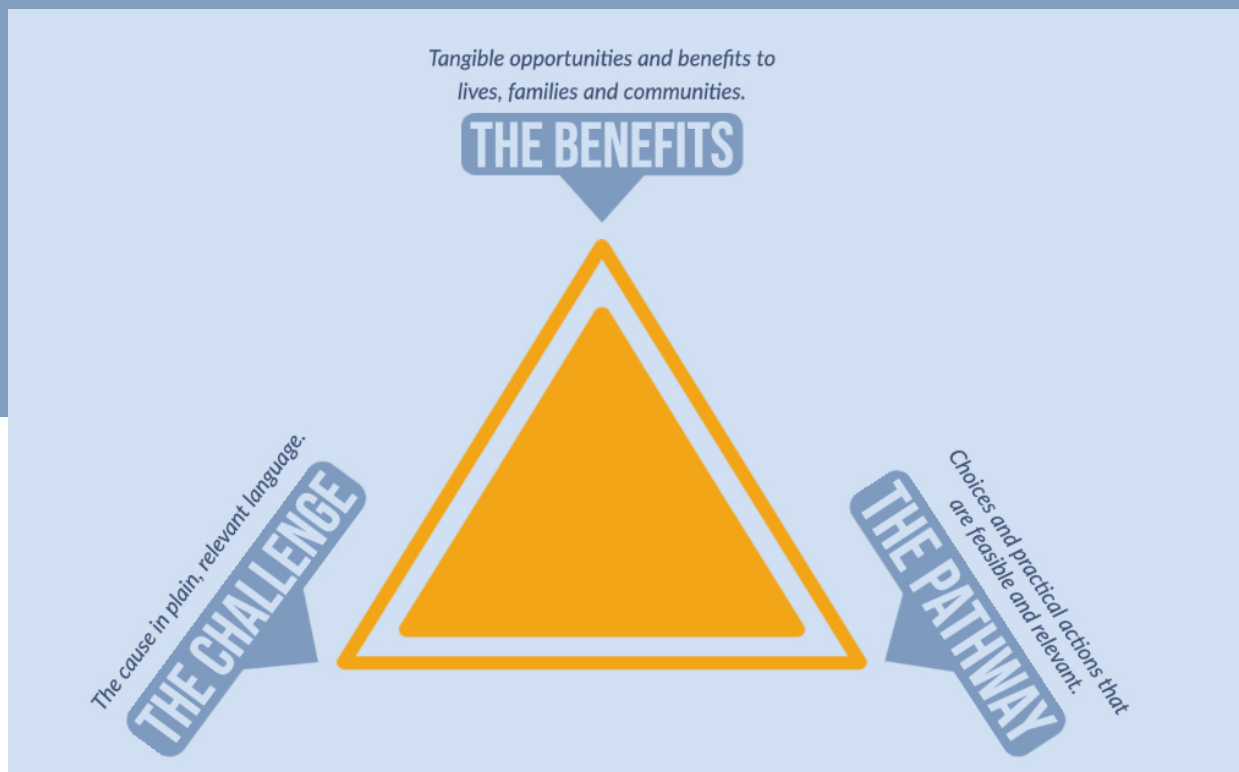
Philippines polling analysis: The Climate Access team reviewed available public opinion research conducted in 2020 and 2021 on climate change, the phase out of fossil fuels, climate and clean energy solutions. A total of 3 studies were analyzed from sources including Yale, HHI, and UNDP.

Philippines message testing: Climate Access worked with Drive Agency on message testing via social media. Drive Agency also conducted a social media analysis.

recommendations

TOP LEVEL FRAMING RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ Lead with or incorporate a positive vision of a world without fossil fuels where communities are benefiting from renewable energy including being able to develop and provide health and people with access to affordable, green energy.
- ▶ Highlight the risks the Philippines is facing from flood, droughts and typhoons and link to fossil fuels as the driver.
- ▶ Talk about the role of fossil fuels in driving air pollution and climate change with health professionals as messengers.
- ▶ Emphasize that fossil fuels are not needed for development given renewable energy is available and affordable.
- ▶ Amplify that it's not an energy transition if fossil fuel producing countries keep growing the problem - oil, gas and coal production. The first step is to end expansion.
- ▶ Point out the need for a plan to reduce the risk of extreme weather and achieve energy and economic security via a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty where the Global North takes responsibility for their fair share of the climate crisis and supports the Philippines to move to clean energy.



THE MESSAGE TRIANGLE

A message triangle can help guide you to create a story that sticks. This tactic helps to keep things simple amidst the noise and connect the dots between what people care about and what can be done. It highlights key themes to integrate and amplify in communications while allowing room for specific messages to be tailored for different stakeholders and audiences.

When you hit each of the points, you remove barriers to engagement and create a complete narrative for your audience with a clear challenge, pathway forward and benefits of taking action.

The challenge – the cause in plain, relevant language.

The pathway – choices and practical actions that are feasible and relevant.

The benefits – tangible opportunities and benefits to lives, families and communities.

You can start at any point, depending on where your audience is on the issue and cares about, then link to the other two points.

The benefits – the vision of what a fair shift away from fossil fuels will be like – is often left out or downplayed yet is needed to generate a sense of hope and momentum. Consider leading with it. All three components are needed. Individuals must feel a challenge to want to engage yet it must be balanced. If you dial up the threats, also dial up the pathway and the opportunity.

THE MESSAGE TRIANGLE IN ACTION

Fossil Fuel Treaty Meta-Narrative

Here is an example of how to bring the three points of the message triangle together into a cohesive narrative. This is a high-level framework offering key themes to integrate and amplify across fossil fuel supply side campaigns.

► Vision/Benefits

The Philippines can improve on its energy system resilience by accelerating the adoption of clean energy from the sun, wind and water so that our communities and every Filipino will have access to reliable energy while creating economic opportunities and new jobs. Phasing out polluting coal, oil and gas at the same time will protect us from more extreme weather from climate change, clean up the air and reduce the need to import energy as well as global conflicts. The solutions are here now and more affordable and reliable than fossil fuels.

► Challenge

Floods, droughts, typhoons. The Philippines is facing more extreme weather events more often, threatening communities, lives and livelihoods. Climate change caused mostly by oil, gas and coal is behind it. It doesn't end there. Air pollution from fossil fuels is responsible for more than 27,000 premature deaths in our country which struggles with the third highest levels of air pollution in the world. Meanwhile, the fossil fuel industry is making windfall profits while Filipinos struggle to make ends meet as energy and other costs rise due in large part to the fossil fuel funded war in Ukraine. All the while, the oil, gas and coal sector blocks progress to clean up air and water pollution and cut the carbon emissions driving extreme flooding, wildfires and heat waves that are harming communities across the country. Fossil fuel companies have plans to expand production, locking in climate, security and economic risks. The countries most responsible are in the Global North. Countries such as the United States, Canada, Norway, the UK and Australia that have created most of the climate pollution and have benefitted the most from fossil fuel production.

► Pathway

It's time to protect all Filipinos and their livelihoods from more extreme weather and air pollution by making a plan to fast-track the adoption of clean energy and low-carbon technologies while starting to phase out coal, oil and gas, the three products that cause the greatest harm to our future. A plan that ensures countries most responsible for the climate crisis and with the greatest capacity to accelerate a clean energy transition must lead and support nations in the Global South to be part of it. That's why a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is needed so countries work together to move to clean energy, end the expansion of fossil fuels and start to wind down production to keep extreme weather from getting worse in a way that is fair and fast.

Unpacking the Triangle

Lead with the vision/benefits of a fair and fast energy transition. Choose which points to highlight based on the stakeholders you aim to reach (i.e. health, economic, climate, equity). Be sure to link to oil, gas and coal as the main driver of the challenge and the risk of fossil fuel expansion.

The Vision/Benefits

- ▶ Make the benefits clear and tangible.
 - *Renewable energy from the sun, wind and water can give all Filipinos access to affordable, reliable energy and power our country's development into the future.*
 - *Powering our transportation and buildings from clean energy which is where the most emissions come from will help us tackle the climate emergency and protect ourselves from more extreme floods, droughts and typhoons.*
 - *The Philippines is already moving to clean, renewable energy but more can be done. Accelerating the adoption of renewable energy in every community across the country will create jobs and economic opportunities in addition to reducing dependence on the transportation of fuel, including inter-island transmission lines that are vulnerable to intense storms.*
 - *Clean air is possible by moving away from polluting coal, oil and gas. Those living on the frontlines of fossil fuel production facilities will have options for healthier, better lives and secure livelihoods.*
- ▶ Make the case that the benefits of action outweigh the costs of inaction. We have more options and it will take fewer resources to make a shift now, rather than spending more each year to respond to and recover from extreme weather events. Moving money out of fossil fuels will protect assets from being stranded as the world moves away from oil, gas and coal.
- ▶ Provide examples of how the transition is already underway and gaining momentum in the Philippines and around the world. Include local examples as much as possible. For example, 47 percent of energy in the Philippines is already from clean sources. Geothermal is the biggest source with the third largest capacity in the world, following the United States and Indonesia. With massive untapped solar energy potential, moving to 100 percent clean energy is possible.

The Challenge

- ▶ Droughts, floods and typhoons are becoming more extreme and frequent due to climate change. [75 percent of deaths](#) caused by extreme weather in the Southwest Pacific region are in the Philippines. If we don't cut the emissions driving climate change, we'll face more events like Supertyphoon Yolanda.
- ▶ Extreme weather from climate change is mostly due to coal, oil and gas. To date, more than 80 percent emissions trapped in the atmosphere and warming the planet are from fossil fuels.
- ▶ These fossil fuels pollute our air and water ([1 in 5 deaths globally](#) each year is due to pollution from fossil fuels and 27,000 of them are in the Philippines) and are driving the climate crisis and the extreme weather we are experiencing as a result. These extreme weather events are harming and displacing people and cost more each year to respond to.
- ▶ Highlight the financial risks of relying on fossil fuels including being reliant on imports during volatile energy markets.
 - *Thailand and the Philippines accounted for [40% of total oil imports](#) to Southeast Asia.*
- ▶ Make the point that scientists (IPCC) and energy experts (IEA) agree there can be no new fossil fuel projects and we need to accelerate the adoption of clean energy and other low-carbon solutions or we will lock in catastrophic climate impacts. Yet the evidence is being ignored as countries pledge climate action while building out more of the problem.
- ▶ Highlight that countries have plans for expansion that would lock in [two times](#) the amount of climate pollution than the levels needed to have a safe climate. Cite the United States, Canada, U.K. and other wealthy fossil fuel producing countries as [examples](#) of who is behind the problem and that have benefited the most from fossil fuels. It's not an energy transition these countries and others expand oil, gas and coal production.
- ▶ Pivot to who is responsible for the problem - the fossil fuel industry.
 - *Fossil fuel companies and their executives are making record profits as people face higher prices for energy and rising costs across the board.*
 - *The fossil fuel industry has deceived the public for decades, burying evidence that their products cause climate change just as tobacco companies lied about cigarettes causing cancer. Now oil, gas and coal companies are saying they can continue to expand, misleading the public with empty promises based on false solutions. Take net zero pledges where the emphasis is capturing emissions through technologies that don't work, are expensive and not at scale.*

- *Fossil fuels are funding Russia's invasion of Ukraine and driving conflicts around the globe. Fossil fuel companies are profiting while people struggle with high energy and food costs and lack of availability.*
- ▶ Elevate the gaps in government action and international cooperation.
 - *Governments around the world are letting oil, gas and coal companies off the hook. Most climate policies have ignored the production of fossil fuels. Even the global Paris Agreement where nations committed to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius avoids the issue by not even mentioning the words oil, gas and coal.*
 - *Wealthy fossil fuel countries in the Global North are driving dangerous fossil fuel expansion including pressuring Africa to develop dirty energy projects for export. The Global South has paid the social, environmental and economic price for fossil fuels yet haven't gained the benefits.*
 - *With nothing to hold them accountable, most countries are not willing to move away from oil, gas and coal, assuming their products will be among the last in the climate era or arguing if they cut production, others will up theirs.*
 - *Wealthy countries are not contributing their fair share to address the climate crisis. Support for accelerating a transition to renewable, clean energy as well as dealing with the impacts of climate change has been lacking.*

The Pathway

- ▶ Identify the present as the crossroads moment to address mounting threats from extreme weather, rising energy prices and air pollution. We either expand the source of the problem (fossil fuels) or move to 100% clean energy and low-carbon economies for our prosperity and security.
 - *The pathway forward to climate, economic, health and global security is investing in clean energy from the sun, wind and water. The Philippines is already a clean energy leader and can move to 100% renewable energy to foster development and increase the well-being of all Filipinos.*
 - *While we need to foster the growth of renewable energy, we need to weed out the source of the problem - oil, gas and coal - at the same time.*
- ▶ Amplify that there are enough fossil fuels already in production to support us through a transition and enough [renewable energy capacity](#) in every part of the world to deliver energy security for every Filipino and person around the world. The Philippines is particularly well positioned to take advantage of solar power. Focus on the fact that the solutions we need to power our businesses, homes, communities and lives from clean energy are available now and affordable.

- ▶ Stress that the window of opportunity to act is still open according to scientists, but it is small and requires action to start today.
- ▶ **Pinpoint that now what's needed is a plan to phase out fossil fuels and fast track clean energy and other low-carbon solutions.**
 - *What the world needs now is a coordinated plan where every country contributes their fair share.*
- ▶ Call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty as the vehicle to create a global plan.
 - *A Fossil Fuel Treaty would bring countries together to agree to accelerate a transition to clean energy and low-carbon solutions where no country, community or worker is left behind; end the expansion of fossil fuels and wind down existing production to levels that ensure a safe climate.*
- ▶ Emphasize that the Philippines has the ability to play a leadership role in calling for a Fossil Fuel Treaty, inspiring other Southeast Asia nations to join and putting pressure on the Global North to do its fair share to accelerate a shift to clean, renewable energy and weed out the threat of oil, gas and coal.
- ▶ Showcase the momentum underway in the Philippines and globally.
 - *With the Fossil Fuel Treaty proposal putting the notion of equity at the heart of its fossil fuel exit strategy, the initiative is gaining traction within both civil society and institutional structures.*
 - *There are several Filipino organizations supporting the Treaty demands, ranging from think tanks such as the Asian People's Movement on Debt and Development and to civil society organizations like Extinction Rebellion Philippines and Youth Advocates for Climate Action Philippines.*
 - *The number of Asian parliamentarians supporting Treaty pillars is also growing with over 40 elected officials who signed the [call for a fossil fuel free future](#).*

THE PATHWAY TO A TREATY

- **Reference examples of when the world has come together to take on great challenges such as closing the hole in the ozone layer, phasing out asbestos, banning landmines or winding down nuclear weapons.**
- **Outline how the campaign for a Fossil Fuel Treaty is as important as achieving a binding agreement.**
 - ➔ The campaign for a Fossil Fuel Treaty is generating the pressure and social norms needed to spur a phase out of oil, gas and coal and fair expansion of clean energy. Since its launch in late 2020, the campaign has already prompted local and state governments to call on higher levels of government to act, compelled 101 Nobel Laureates to demand international cooperation to address fossil fuels and activated hundreds of scientists and academics and more than 1,300 civil society organizations to advocate for government leadership.
 - ➔ Not every country needs to sign on. In fact, this was the case with the Mine Ban Treaty where a small group of countries were willing to lead and compel others to join.
- **Lay out the steps to a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.**
 - ➔ A critical first step is mobilizing a broad and large cross-section of civil society organizations as well as academics and government, Indigenous, youth, business and other leaders around a common global call for action: Phase out fossil fuels and fast track clean energy in a fair way.
 - ➔ Local, state and national governments endorse the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and compel other governments to join.
 - ➔ It is also important to increase transparency and accountability related to emissions from fossil fuels. A new Global Registry of Fossil Fuels is being developed which will be the first publicly accessible database of all current, planned and potential oil, gas and coal production and the climate pollution they would lock in. This can be used by governments as a basis for negotiating countries' fair share of the responsibility for action, by advocates to demand government action and investors assessing the risk of stranded assets.
 - ➔ The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative is calling for a Global Commission on Fossil Fuels to create an initial group of first mover countries, enhance transparency and develop a formal process for a legal agreement. This can draw on the World Commission on Dams as one of many examples.

resources

For more information on the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, visit www.fossilfueltreaty.org or reference these [FAQs](#).

Check out communication resources available at [Climate Access](#), [Fossil Free Media](#) and [Potential Energy](#).

appendix

▶ **Extreme Weather and Climate Change are Major Topics of Conversation and Concern**

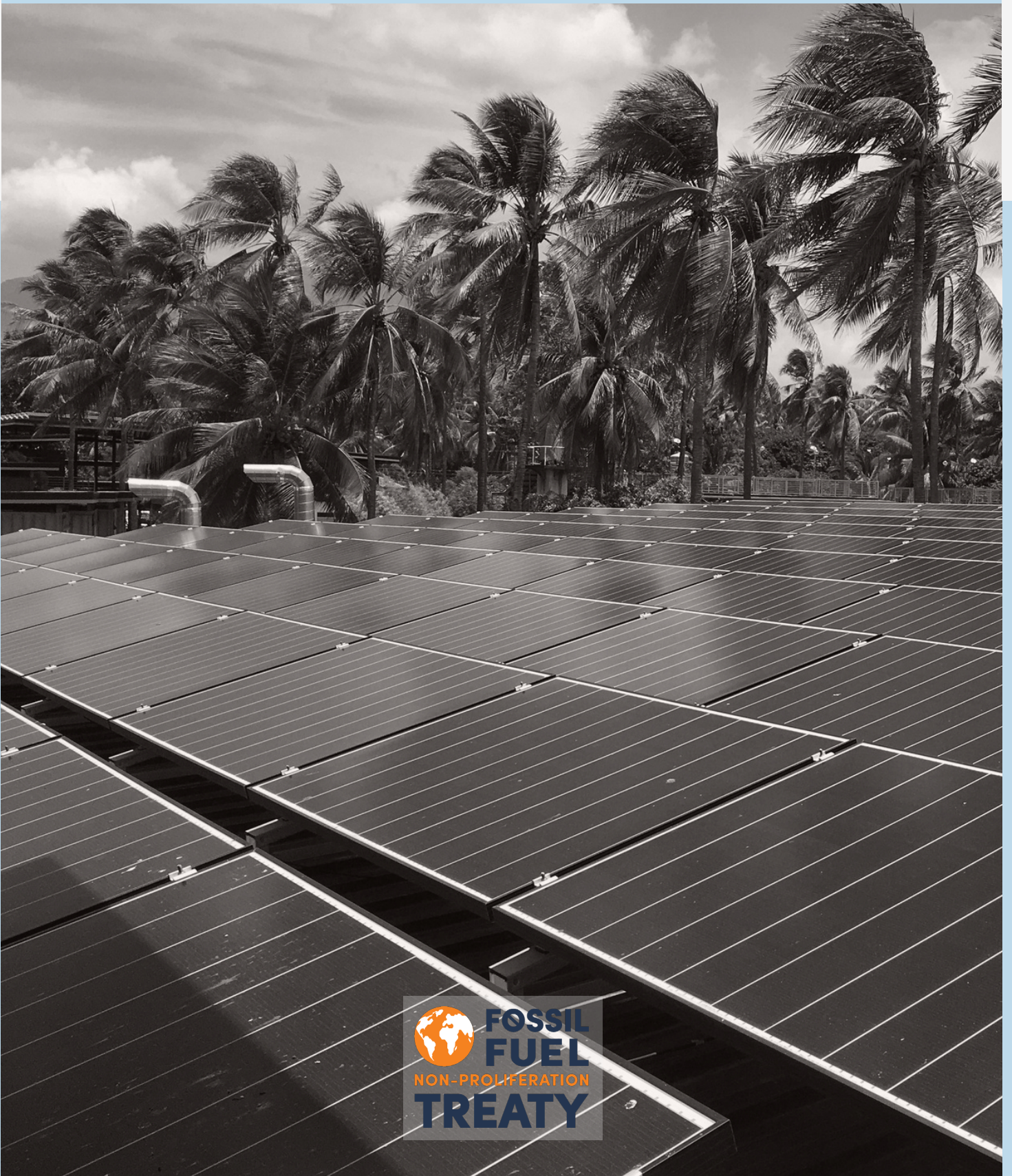
- 55 percent of Filipinos are very alarmed about climate change (as compared to 33 percent in the US which is at an all time high). Despite this, half of the public say they need a lot more information about climate change and less than half say they know a lot or a moderate amount regarding the issue. Less than half also believe climate change is due to both human and natural causes or that climate change will impact them personally. Only 42 percent agree that the disasters they are experiencing are due to climate change.
- Droughts, flooding and typhoons are major topics of conversation in the media and on social media. In particular, the impact of extreme weather on the agricultural, fishery and forestry sectors was featured prominently given they represent the Philippines' largest source of employment.
- In the media and on social media the role of fossil fuels in driving climate change is being made, however the link between extreme weather events and fossil fuels is not.
- In message testing, focusing on natural disasters and linking them to the need to transition away from fossil fuels through a global treaty tested the best across five audience segments.

▶ **Air Pollution is a Major Concern but Not Associated with Fossil Fuels**

- Air pollution and the related health risks are covered frequently in the media and discussed on social media.
- The link between fossil fuels and air pollution is for the most part, not being made. Health professionals are not prominent voices in climate conversations and coverage.
- Framing the need to move away from oil, gas and coal due to air pollution did not resonate in message testing.

▶ **Mixed Views Regarding a Phase Out of Fossil Fuels**

- The role of fossil fuels in driving climate change and the need to move away from them is being acknowledged by the media as well as to scale up clean power deployment. Climate solutions with a focus on renewable energy is also a topic of conversation on social media.
- The need for funding from the Global North to help the Global South transition was also a theme.
- A large majority (77 percent) of the public say the Philippines should use somewhat or much more renewable energy than it currently does.
- At the same time, the public is split when it comes to moving away from fossil fuels. 47 percent think the Philippines should use somewhat or much more coal, oil or gas than it does today versus 42 percent who feel it should be somewhat or much less.
- Concerns regarding the impact of a move away from fossil fuels on developing countries and energy prices were also part of the conversation in the media and on social media. Media reporting did include false solutions from carbon capture and storage to nuclear as a substitute and natural gas being a bridge fuel. green hydrogen and biomass were also referenced.
- The need for fossil fuel companies to transition to renewable energy as a reason why a Fossil Fuel Treaty is so critical resonated with all audiences except the climate base.



 **FOSSIL
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