

## WHAT IF

by:

**Ethel Joyce T. Bartolome**

*Administrative Officer II, SDO Bataan*

In our current time, we are living in a world full of uncertainties. A world wherein at any moment the life of an individual may turn upside-down. From a beautiful majestic land form will become a land mass that took great number of innocent lives.

According to Global Forest Watch, "In 2010, Philippines had 13.2Mha of natural forest, extending over 62% of its land area. In 2021, it lost 37.7kha of natural forest, equivalent to 22.3Mt of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions." [1]. These figures shown above is somewhat very alarming and ticks off many reasons to be more vigilant in protecting our environment. As our planet Earth continuously changes its temperature in a not good way, and added with such large amount of pollution emitted from different industries and places around the world, disasters are inevitable as our planet tries to reset itself to become more conducive for life.

We can observe that there are disasters happening from different parts of our planet. As for example, seasons in the Philippines changed drastically. We now experience extreme dry season called El Niño, wherein the lands that are usually used for crops become so dried up that the land itself is flaking. On the other hand, too much water is also observed during the season of La Niña. Great number of innocent lives were taken during these seasons. Life that not only from human, but also of flora and fauna.

"The worst effects of climate change can only be averted over the next ten years."

Last year, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued the warning (IPCC). According to the Paris climate agreement, governments must immediately reduce

emissions significantly in order to prevent the Earth's temperature from rising by more than 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

The Earth's average surface temperature will increase over the ensuing decades. The melting of the ice will result in a rise in sea levels. These modifications will exacerbate existing issues and create new ones. People will flee the flooded and uninviting shores, while others will experience a protracted, severe drought. More dangerously hot weather than ever will be present all the time and everywhere. Earth won't be as pleasant to live on as it once was. If immediate action is not taken, the most vulnerable and underprivileged members of society will see their progress in development reversed, biodiversity will be lost, it will be harder to provide food and shelter, and entire nations may end up disappearing as a result of the effects of climate change.

Things will never be easy anymore. Never before has it been more obvious how the choices we make now will directly affect the next 100 years. It has never been more crucial to evaluate and change our decisions on a personal and cultural level. It has never been more important to view humanity's decisions and actions from a global and all-encompassing viewpoint.

Climate change is a horrible and complicated problem. However, human creativity has the capacity to anticipate, manage, thrive, and provide a change. Just imagine how amazing it is if we live in a place where everything is in order? Isn't it fulfilling if our next generation were able to see a world where they can see and interact with every living thing around them? What if we start the change, right here right now?

#### *References:*

[1]<https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/PHL/?category=summary&dashboardPrompts=eyJzaG93UHJvbXB0cyI6dHJ1ZSwicHJvbXB0c1ZpZXdlZCI6W10sInNldHRpbmdzIjp7Im9wZW4iOmZhbnHNILCJzdGVwSW5kZXgiOjAsInN0ZXBzS2V5IjoiIn0sIm9wZW4iOnRydWUsInN0ZXBzS2V5IjoiZG93bmxvYWREYXNoYm9hcmRTd>

