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**PPI SEMINAR WORKSHOP ON
ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING
WITH FOCUS ON VALUATION OF NATURAL CAPITAL
in partnership with NICKEL ASIA CORP.
The Legend Hotel Palawan
January 31 - February 3, 2017**

Theme: Taking Stock of Our Natural Capital (and the Role of the Press)

Rationale:

Economic progress is often measured in GDP terms. Often overlooked in policy making discussions, as well as media coverage, is the value of the benefits and services derived from the nation's natural assets, such as fresh water, timber, and forests. Such benefits, however, are often ignored. This kind of situation has significant implications on economic policies and consequent impacts on communities, especially those that are highly dependent on natural resources for their sustenance.

Relying on GDP alone as a gauge of development ignores the important role of natural capital in the economy and human well-being. Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz said: "Gross domestic product, the leading economic measurement, is outdated and misleading ... It's like grading a corporation based on one day's cash flow and forgetting to depreciate assets and other costs."

Including natural capital in economic performance measures helps to ensure the continued flow of the benefits and services derived from natural resources, including ecosystems, and stem the loss of such benefits through sound and inclusive policy making that translates, among others, into well-crafted conservation and rehabilitation programs.

The World Bank defines natural capital as "the resources that we easily recognize and measure, like minerals, energy, timber, agricultural land, fisheries and water. It also includes all the ecosystem services that are often 'invisible' to most people, such as air and water filtration, flood protection, carbon storage, pollination of crops, and habitats for wildlife.

"These values are not readily captured in markets, so we don't really know how much they contribute to the economy. We often take these services for granted and don't know what it would cost if we lost them."

Valuing natural capital — in physical and monetary terms — also helps ensure that the contributions of specific natural resources to livelihoods and the economy are visible and that economic policies account for natural wealth to foster sustainable development.

"Valuing natural capital enables governments to account for nature's role in the economy and human well-being. For businesses, it enables efficiency, sustainability, and managing risks in their supply chains," says Conservation International. "Natural capital accounting helps policymakers understand the dependence of economic development on natural resources, both for supplying materials and services as well as for absorbing waste and pollution."

“Including the value of the environment in wealth estimates and macroeconomic indicators helps governments to ensure that their development strategies deliver sustainable and inclusive growth,” says GLOBE International¹.

Valuation of natural capital assumes increased urgency amid the growing demand for ecosystem products and services, owing to a growing population and increasing human and economic activities, which have detrimental impacts on ecosystems.

While the concept of accounting for natural capital was adopted by the Philippine government more than three decades ago, little has been done to implement it, experts say.

Media’s Role

Media would do well to understand and appreciate the concept of natural capital (including ecosystem products and services) and its role in economic (not only in environmental management) planning and, overall, public governance. By doing so, they can help bring it into increased public and policy makers’ consciousness, and become instrumental in the formulation of better and more responsive policies, and more efficient management not only of the environment but also of the economy.

Media, by the very nature of their profession, are in a strategic position to help reframe discussions on natural resources as critical components of inclusive wealth, human well-being, and sustainability².

Objectives

In this light, the Philippine Press Institute will embark on media a seminar-workshop aimed to achieve the following:

1. To help media understand the concept of valuing natural capital, and its role in sound economic management
2. To expose the media participants to the environmental realities against the backdrop of natural capital valuation, thus forming the basis for other stories
3. To generate heightened media reportage on natural capital and ecosystem products and services
4. To help ramp up the generation of natural capital and ecosystem accounts by publishing media reports highlighting the urgent need to mainstream natural capital accounts into economic policy making and development planning

Highlights

Based on the foregoing objectives, PPI training participants will be introduced to the concept of valuing natural capital, and helped to understand why mainstreaming this tool into policy making and national economic accounts is vital to fostering sustainable growth.

For the media, understanding these tools is expected to inform their reporting on the environment, and inspire and challenge them to explore issues highlighting the link between the economy and the environment in ways that will help raise public awareness of the relevant issues, and better governance.

Media participants during each regional leg of the training will go on a tour of relevant sites so they can observe the state of specific natural resources such as agricultural land, forests, and mining sites, and their impacts on communities. Field visits should also afford them the chance to engage select communities in discussions on the issues at hand, particularly on local government policies.

There will also be discussions with experts on relevant public policies and whether these are informed by the state of, and relevant data, if any, on, specific natural resources and ecosystem services, consistent with the principles of natural capital valuation.

² Global Environmental Change, www.elsevier.com/locate/gloenvcha

PROGRAM

Day 1 (January 31)

MORNING Arrival of Participants

AFTERNOON

12:00 pm LUNCH

2:30 - 3:30 pm Welcome Remarks, Ariel Sebellino, PPI Executive Director
Introduction to the Seminar, Tess Bacalla, PPI Training Director
Introduction of Participants

4:00 - 4:30 pm Findings: Local Media Coverage of the Environment
Ariel Sebellino, PPI Executive Director

4:30 - 5:30 pm Scanning (and Valuing) the Landscape (and Seascape):
Media Coverage of the Environment
Ryan D. Rosauero, News Correspondent, Philippine Daily Inquirer
and Chair, National Union of Journalists of the Philippines

6:00 pm DINNER

Day 2 (February 1)

MORNING

4:00 am Travel to Rio Tuba

AFTERNOON

1:00 pm Travel to Puerto Princesa (with stopover at Espanola)

Day 3 (February 2)

MORNING

6:00 - 7:00 am BREAKFAST

8:00 - 8:30 am Natural Capital: Counting It In
Dr. Allaine Baaco, Western Philippine University (WPU)

8:30 - 9:30 am Putting a Price Tag on Ecosystem Goods and Services
Ricky Nuñez, Country Director, Conservation International Philippines

9:30 - 10:00 am Piloting Ecosystem Accounts in Palawan: A Quick Glimpse for the Media
John Francisco Pontillas and May Lacao, Palawan Council for Sustainable
Development and Technical Working Group Members for Southern
Palawan (World Bank-led WAVES³ global partnership)

³ Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services, <https://www.wavespartnership.org>

- 10:00 - 11:00 am** Transforming Economic Policy through Natural Capital Valuation: Prospects for the Philippines
Dr. Gem Castillo, President, Resource and Environmental Economics Foundation of the Philippines, Inc., and National Expert, WAVES
- 11:00 - 11:20 am** Q&A
- 11:20 am - 12:00 pm** Forum with Indigenous Community Representatives on Oil Palm Plantations in Palawan

Motalib Kemil, President, Coalition Against Land Grabbing (CALG)
John Mart Salunday, President, Nagkakaisang Tribu ng Palawan (NATRIPAL)
- 12:00 - 12:15 pm** Q&A
- 12:15 - 1:15 pm** LUNCH
- AFTERNOON**
- 1:30 - 2:30 pm** State of the Environment in Palawan: Policy and Enforcement Issues⁴
Atty. Roberto Chan, Executive Director, Palawan NGO Network, Inc.
- 3:00 - 5:00 pm** Field Visit⁵ (Sta. Lourdes, Puerto Princesa)
- 6:00 pm** Back to Hotel / Dinner

Writeshop (Group Activity)⁶
- DAY 4 (February 3)**
- MORNING**
- 9:00 - 9:30 am** Quo Vadis Media?
Tess Bacalla, PPI Training Director
- 9:30 - 10:30 am** Presentation and Critique of Group Stories
- 10:30 - 11:30 am** Closing Remarks and Awarding of Certificates
- 12:00** LUNCH
- AFTERNOON** Free time for participants
- DAY 5 (February 4)** Departure

⁴ Venue is the Palawan Environmental Enforcement Museum, Puerto Princesa

⁵ Two areas will be visited in the same barangay: sanitary landfill and abandoned mine

⁶ Group stories due for submission at 11 pm