



LEGAL EDUCATION BOARD

in partnership with



Developing Environmental
Law Champions
Strengthening the Capacity For Environmental and
Climate Change Laws in Asia and the Pacific



Environmental Law Teachers Online Training Program

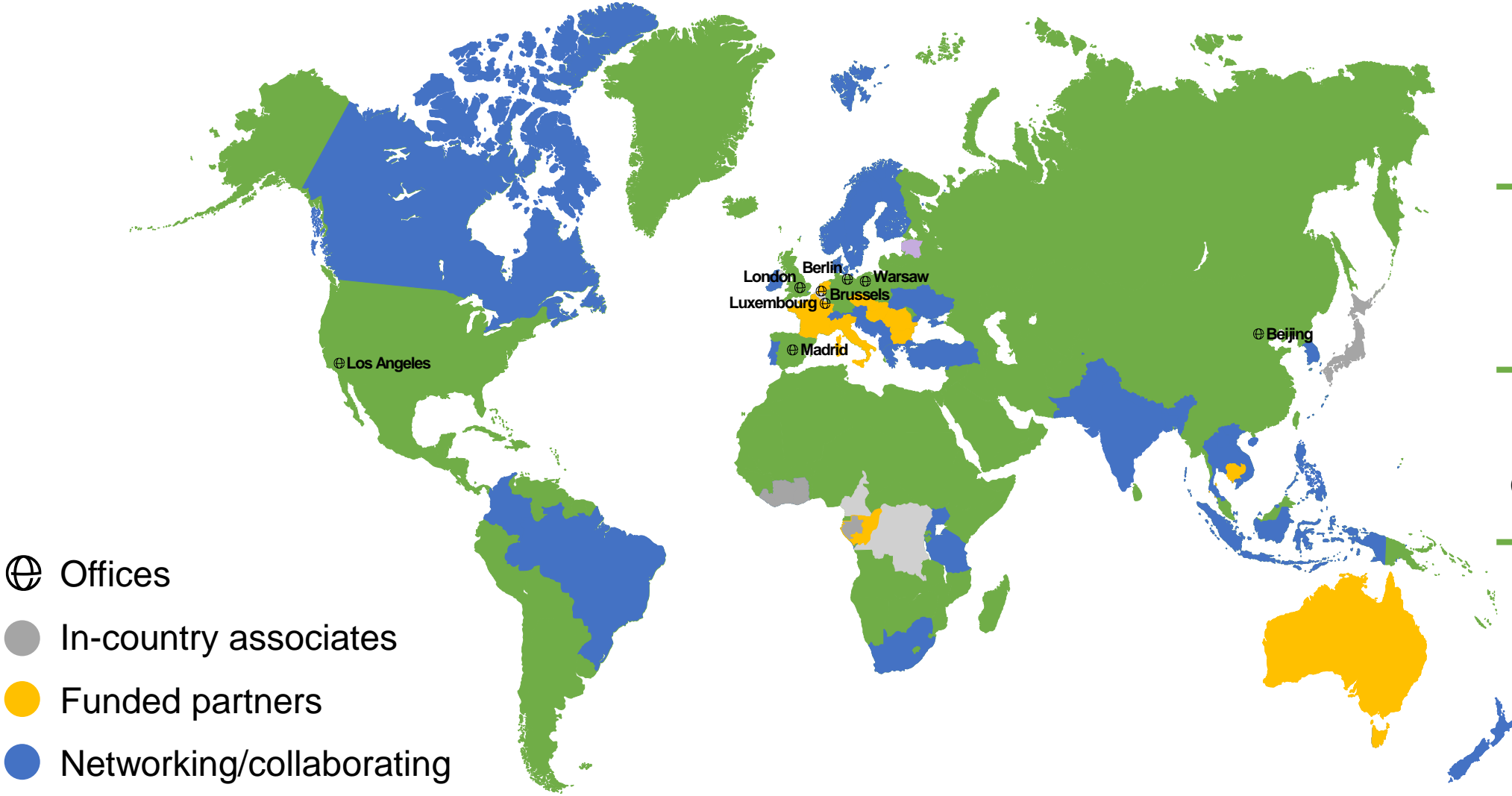
Environmental Law Clinics: challenges & opportunities

Joyce Melcar Tan

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ClientEarth

Where we work



- 🌐 Offices
- In-country associates
- Funded partners
- Networking/collaborating

200+ staff 

200+ partners 

50+ countries 

1 Fight climate change



2 Empower people and promote the rule of law



3 Protect the natural world



Challenges

- Complex issues: climate and nature crises
- Institutional level: lack of resources
 - Funding
 - Staff
- Individual level: catch-22
 - Financial security
 - Personal security
 - Lack of interest in environmental law specialization versus other areas of law
- Covid-19 hampering in-person collaboration

Opportunities

- Complex issues: climate and nature solutions
 - ✓ international, interdisciplinary communities
 - ✓ the Philippines has a lot of laws
- Institutional level: resources
 - ✓ LEB requirement – university resources
 - ✓ volunteer lawyers, students, networks
- Individual level: global communities of practice
 - ✓ [no-cost] partnerships with foreign clinics, firms and NGOs
 - ✓ fellowships (Bertha, CJF, FILE, CE (soon))
 - ✓ environmental defenders' initiatives, training (INCLO)
 - ✓ millennials' growing interest in climate and nature
- Covid-19 hampering in-person collaboration
 - ✓ But: has opened international virtual collaboration

Opportunities

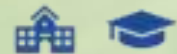
- Start small
 - 1 Lawyer
 - 4 trainees
 - 1 case
- Tap into networks
- Use available resources
 - ADB
 - IUCN
 - UNEP
 - ELAW
 - PILnet
 - ELF

Opportunities

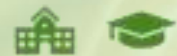
- Action does not require litigation
- Clinics can:
 - ✓ Help shape laws
 - ✓ Raise profile of environmental issues
 - ✓ national level: elections – ‘environmental wish list’
 - ✓ local level: ordinance reform and implementation
 - ✓ Help spot and correct environmental issues
 - ✓ Increase access to environmental justice
 - ✓ bring the law to the people
 - ✓ empower communities
- All lawyers can be environmental lawyers

Clinic design

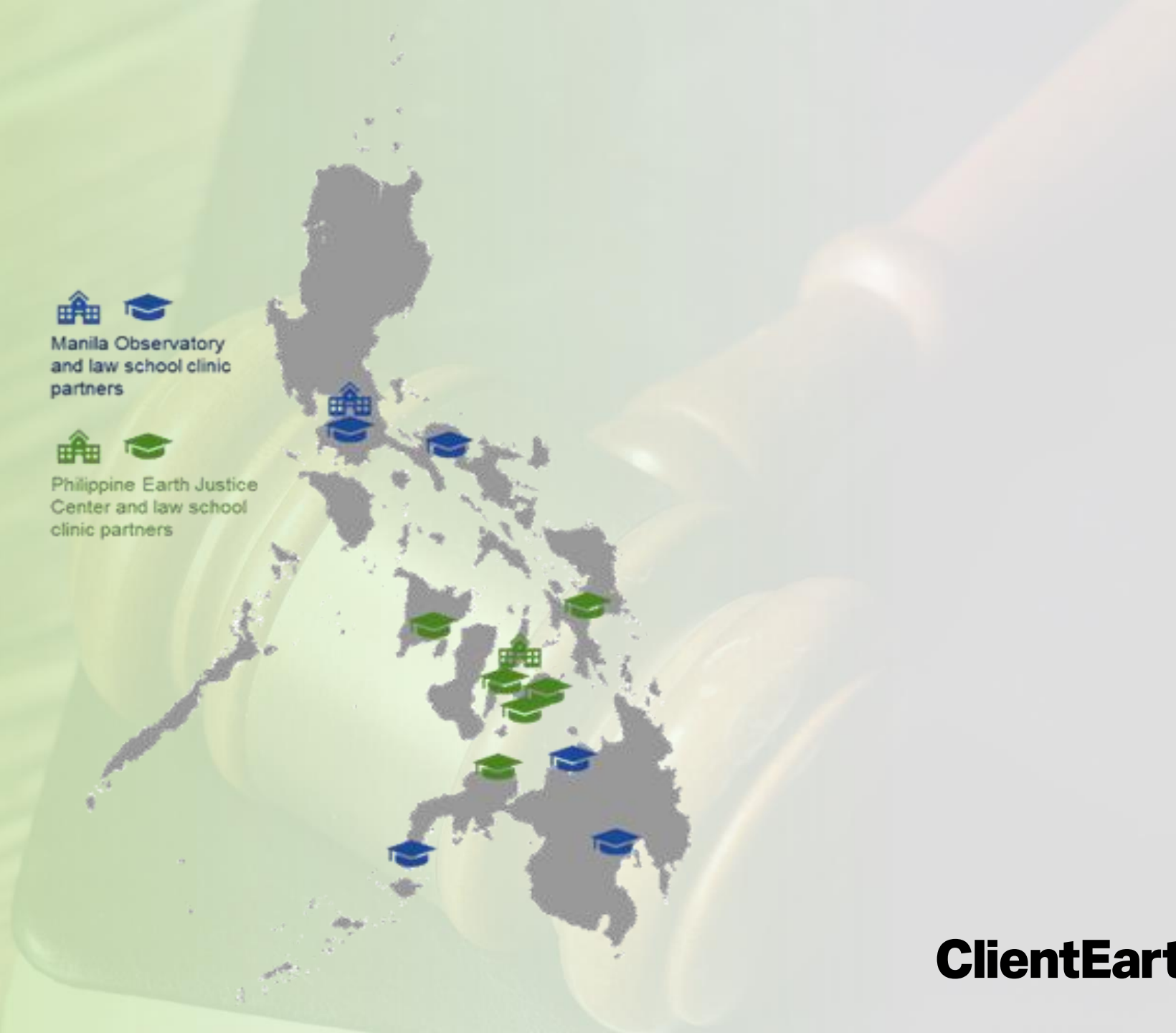
- Peer learning model – network of 5 law schools
- Connect with eNGOs and public interest lawyers
 - International (NYU)
 - National
- Filipino-led: respecting the agency and capacity of partners
- Case selection handbook
 - Case development – parties, venue, claim, ...
 - Resources required – available, needed
 - No-harm principle – communities, team, university



Manila Observatory
and law school clinic
partners



Philippine Earth Justice
Center and law school
clinic partners





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Thank you!
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