



AUG 23 2021

**REP. ELPIDIO F. BARZAGA, JR**

Chairperson

Committee on Natural Resources

House of Representatives

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Dear **Congressman Barzaga, Jr.**,

This pertains to your letter inviting us to attend the online meeting and at the same time requesting for a position paper or comments on the two (2) draft House Bills: 1) **HB No. 4100**, entitled: "An Act Declaring the Month of May of Every Year as the "Marine Turtle Awareness Month," authored by Rep. Mujiv S. Hataman and Amihilda J. Sangcopan; and. 2) **HB No. 8299**, entitled: "An Act to Institutionalize the Tamaraw Conservation Program, Creating Its Administrative and Implementation Mechanism, Providing Funds Therefor and For Other Purposes," authored by Rep. Josephine Y. Ramirez-Sato.

In this regard, please be informed of the following:

- 1) On HB No. 4100 "An Act Declaring the Month of May of Every Year as the "Marine Turtle Awareness Month"

This Office fully support the passage of the Bill, however, we would like to suggest that the schedule of the event be moved to the month of June for the following reasons:

- a) World Sea Turtle (Marine Turtle) Day is celebrated every June 16, spearheaded by the Secretariat of the *Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and Their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia (IOSEA Marine Turtle MOU)*, concluded under the auspices of the Convention of the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CMS) on which the Philippines is a Party;
  - b) The World Sea Turtle Day is celebrated to highlight the importance of marine turtles and also to honor and commemorate the birthday of Dr. Archie Carr, the founder of Sea Turtle Conservancy and considered the "father of sea turtle conservation." Dr. Carr's advocacy and researches highlighted the threats that affected, and is still affecting, the plight of marine turtles all over the world. His works enhanced marine turtle conservation movement and actions all over the world to help provide a better habitat for marine turtles.
- 2) On House Bill 8299 "An Act to Institutionalize the Tamaraw Conservation Program, Creating Its Administrative and Implementation Mechanism, Providing Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes"

We fully support the proposed House Bill 8299 filed by Congresswoman Josephine Ramirez Sato. This proposed House Bill is indeed very timely and vital for the continuous and effective conservation of the Tamaraw in the Island of Mindoro, as well as for the welfare of the Tamaraw Rangers working with the Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP).

Tamaraw conservation is one of the priority programs being implemented by the DENR through DENR-MIMAROPA with technical support/assistance from this Office. Some of the programs and activities conducted to support tamaraw conservation are the following:

- a. The development of a 10-year "Tamaraw Conservation Management and Action Plan (TCMAP)". The TCMAP provides the following: strategies for the Management of Tamaraw Meta-Population; activities for "Coordination and Communication", and specific activities to strengthen the protection of Tamaraw and its habitat in MIBNP, Mt. Calavite Wildlife Sanctuary, Aruyan-Malati, and in Upper Amnay Range.
- b. This Bureau through, the United Nation Development Programme's Biodiversity Finance Initiative (UNDP – BIOFIN) Project has launched "#SuwagoSuko or #TogetherforTamaraw" in July 2020, a crowdfunding campaign to secure the allowances and food packages for the Mangyan rangers and wardens who are protecting the tamaraws and their natural habitats.
- c. Tamaraw conservation in the island of Mindoro will be strengthened further through the implementation of the UNDP Project entitled "Integrated Approach of the Major Biodiversity Corridors in the Philippines" with BMB as the Implementing Agency. Project activities in the said Island shall include tamaraw protection, implementation of biodiversity friendly enterprise to provide sustainable livelihood for the community, among others.

Attached are our specific inputs/recommendations on some provisions of HB 4100 and HB 8299, for your consideration.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

  
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Assistant Director  
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**HOUSE BILL 4100: AN ACT DECLARING THE MONTH OF MAY OF EVERY YEAR AS THE “MARINE TURTLE AWARENESS MONTH”**

- Section 2 of the draft House Bill should be read as “The Secretary of the **Department** of Environment and Natural Resources...”.
- The inclusion of the Department of Agriculture may be deleted since Section 4, Chapter 1 of Republic Act 9147, otherwise known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act provides that all turtles and tortoises will be under the jurisdiction of the DENR, not the DA. It is suggested that Section 2 be read as “The Secretary of the Environment and Natural Resources shall prepare, implement and coordinate with relevant National Government Agencies and Local Government Units the annual program of activities pursuant to the observance of the Marine Turtle Awareness Month.”

**HOUSE BILL 8299: AN ACT TO INSTITUTIONALIZE THE TAMARAW CONSERVATION PROGRAM, CREATING ITS ADMINISTRATIVE AND IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

DRAFT HB 8299	INPUTS/RECOMMENDATION
<b>On Explanatory Note:</b>  <b>1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, last sentence</b> - <i>Bubalus Mindorensis</i>  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph</b> - 3 <sup>rd</sup> sentence	- Change to <i>Bubalus mindorensis</i>  - In 1969, the population was estimated to be at 100 <b>individuals</b> .  - Insert a sentence “Based on DENR Administrative Order No. 2019-09 “Updated National List of Threatened Philippine Fauna and Their Categories”, tamaraw is classified under the category of critically endangered.”
<b>On Section 3. Creation of the Tamaraw Conservation Coordinating Council</b>  <b>1<sup>st</sup> paragraph</b>	- The Tamaraw Conservation Coordinating Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, shall exercise the function of governance, implementation and policy direction

<p>2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph</p> <p>4<sup>th</sup> paragraph</p>	<p>body on <b>tamaraw conservation and management in the Island of Mindoro.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Secretary can designate the Regional Executive Director of <b>DENR-MIMAROPA Region</b> as his/her permanent representative. The Assistant Regional Director for Technical Service of <b>said Region</b> will serve as Co-Chairperson.</li> <li>- Change CENRO's to <b>CENROs</b></li> <li>- The Chairperson of the Council shall also invite representatives from the following key stakeholders of tamaraw conservation, to form part of the Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Provincial Government offices of Occidental and Oriental Mindoro;</b></li> <li>2. <b>Concerned Municipal Local Government Units;</b></li> <li>3. <b>Members of the House of Representatives (of the Congressional Districts of Mindoro)</b></li> <li>4. <b>National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), Occidental Mindoro/Oriental Mindoro provincial office;</b></li> <li>5. <b>Indigenous Peoples tribal groups (one representative each from Buhid, Tau-Buid, Iraya, Bangon, and Alangan tribes);</b></li> <li>6. <b>At least one (1) from the Academe in Oriental and Occidental Mindoro;</b></li> <li>7. <b>Not more than three (3) locally-based conservation Non-Government Organizations; and,</b></li> <li>8. <b>Local chamber of commerce</b></li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 4. Powers and Functions of the Tamaraw Conservation Coordinating Council</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On No. 2 powers and functions, include the <b>Ancestral Domains Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP)</b> as one of the examples of the plans/framework</li> <li>- On No. 3. <b>Monitor, review, and provide recommendations to facilitate the implementation of the TCMAP</b></li> <li>- Include as one of the powers and functions: <b>"Decide on matters, issues, and concerns on tamaraw conservation, in close coordination</b></li> </ul>

	<p><b>with the Protected Area Management Board, if within a protected area”.</b></p>
<p><b>Section 5. The Tamaraw Conservation Advisory Group</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suggested text:</li> </ul> <p><b>To ensure science-based interventions and decisions on the conservation of the Tamaraw, the Council, through its Chairperson shall create a Tamaraw Conservation Technical Advisory Group to be composed of representatives from the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include the <b>Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB)</b> as among the offices that may be engaged to give guidance and technical advice on tamaraw conservation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 6. The Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On TCPO function No. 3. Assist in the mobilization of resources to augment government resource <b>in financing the activities under the TCMAP</b></li> <li>- On function No. 8. Initiate coordination ..... harmonization of TCMAP <b>in the management plan</b> of concerned protected areas.</li> <li>- On function No. 9. Manage the Tamaraw Gene Pool Farm/<b>Tamaraw Conservation and Research Center (TCRC)</b> in coordination with the <b>Protected Area Management Office (PAMO)</b> of Mts. Iglit-Baco Natural Park (MIBNP).</li> <li>- On function No. 10. Perform other duties that may be assigned by the <b>Council</b>.</li> <li>- Insert the following as one of the functions of the TCPO: <p><i>Take lead in the implementation of the TCP WFP in coordination with stakeholders, e.g. local governments, Protected Area Management Board/Protected Area Superintendents concerned;</i></p> <p><i>Prepare and submit quarterly and annual reports on the conservation of the Tamaraw to the DENR Secretary</i></p> </li> </ul>

	<i>through the Biodiversity Management Bureau.</i>
<b>Section 7. Organizational Structure of Tamaraw Conservation Program Office</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The TCPO will be under the supervision of the <b>DENR MIMAROPA Region through</b> the PENRO Occidental Mindoro pursuant to DENR Administrative Order No. 2005-26. ....</li> </ul>
<b>Section 8. Establishment of Tamaraw Conservation and Research Center (TCRC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On NO. 2. Promote conservation and research for <b>other</b> endemic species of Mindoro Island;</li> <li>- On 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph. The TCRC shall be one (1) of the components of the <b>TCPO and the latter shall manage the operation of the facility.</b> As a .....</li> </ul>
<b>Section 9. Tamaraw Conservation in Protected Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concerned PAMB <b>through the Protected Area Management Office (PAMO)</b> shall actively manage Tamaraw populations <b>found</b> within their respective protected areas ensuring <b>that</b> adequate measures and interventions for the conservation of the species as identified in the TCMAP <b>are integrated with the Protected Area Management Plan.</b> Further, consider Tamaraw as among the <b>priority species</b> for monitoring and as <b>an</b> indicator for effective protected area management. The PAMB through the <b>PAMO</b>, shall maintain close collaboration with the <b>TCPO</b> in carrying out tamaraw conservation activities within protected areas in accordance with set standards and guidelines.</li> </ul>