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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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SENATE
P.S. RES. NO. 472

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM TO EXAMINE THE
CREATION OF POLICY REFORMS AND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURES TO
DEVELOP THE PHILIPPINES' POTENTIAL TO BE THE LEADING COUNTRY IN
THE WORLD FOR SUSTAINABLE NATURE-BASED TOURISM (NBT)

1 WHEREAS, Section 2 (b) of Republic Act No. 9656, otherwise known as "the
2 Tourism Act of 2009", provides that the State should seek to "[r]ecognize sustainable
3 tourism development as integral to the national socioeconomic development efforts to
4 improve the quality of life of the Filipino people, providing the appropriate attention
5 and support for the growth of this industry,"

6 WHEREAS, Section 2 (c) of the same provides that the State should
7 also "[p]romote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible,
8 participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and ethically and socially
9 equitable for local communities,"

10 WHEREAS, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization
11 (UNWTO),¹ tourism has become a key driver of socio-economic progress as one of the
12 largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world;

13 WHEREAS, Nature-Based Tourism (NBT) is an emerging type of tourism that
14 "builds on the draw of nature" encompassing activities which include leisure travel
15 largely influenced by the purpose of enjoying natural attractions and engaging in a
16 variety of outdoor activities such as bird watching, hiking, fishing, and beachcombing;²

17 WHEREAS, according to a PLOS Biology study, NBT is one of the most rapidly
18 growing sectors in the world, with the world's terrestrial protected areas collectively
19 receiving about 8 billion visits annually, generating approximately 600 billion US dollars
20 in direct in-country expenditure a year;³

21 WHEREAS, the United Nations Environment Programme Convention on
22 Biological Diversity (UNEP-CBD) claims that biodiversity is at the heart of what drives
23 the tourism industry— stressing that it is a large part of what makes tourist
24 destinations such as tropical forests, beaches and national parks very appealing and
25 attractive;⁴

26 WHEREAS, the Philippines is one of the 17 megadiverse countries in the
27 world, which serves as the home of 5% of the world's flora, covering at least 25
28 genera of endemic plants and 49% of terrestrial wildlife;⁵

¹ <https://www.unwto.org/why-tourism>

² https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255960303_On_nature-based_tourism

³ <https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.1002074>

⁴ <https://eprints.glos.ac.uk/11426/1/11426-Jones-%282022%29-Tourism-and-biodiversity.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.biodiversitya-z.org/content/megadiverse-countries>

1 WHEREAS, the Verde Island Passage, located in between Batangas, Mindoro,
2 Marinduque, and Romblon is also the prime center of the Coral Triangle – the world's
3 epicenter of marine biodiversity which spans across 6 million km² of the richest marine
4 area on Earth, encompassing the seas of the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua
5 New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Timor Leste;

6 WHEREAS, our extremely rich Philippine biodiversity which is supported by
7 a large variety of ecosystems, landscapes, and habitats provides us with a
8 gargantuan opportunity to rise as one of the top tourism destinations for NBT;

9 WHEREAS, it should also bear great importance to recognize that in spite NBT's
10 promising positive effects in the economy, some of the sector's unregulated and
11 exploitative practices which cause pollution, exotic plant species invasion, habitat
12 changes and degradation, habitat loss, and wildlife disturbance,⁶ also threaten
13 our flourishing biodiversity;

14 WHEREAS, the UN Environment Programme recommended that
15 "*conservation efforts must concentrate heavily (but not exclusively) on those countries*
16 *richest in diversity and endemism and most severely threatened; resources invested*
17 *in them for conservation should be roughly proportional to their overall contribution*
18 *to global biodiversity;*"⁷

19 WHEREAS, to approach the Philippines' situation holistically, we must take
20 advantage of NBT's effect in raising awareness among tourists about the intrinsic
21 value of nature and providing local people with an income and an incentive to preserve
22 their natural environment;

23 WHEREAS, in promoting our rich and unique biodiversity, strategies aligned
24 with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Guidelines on Biodiversity and
25 Tourism Development must be adopted, and that legislative frameworks which
26 create incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources
27 must be strengthened for the long-term success of the industry;

28 WHEREAS, our NBT framework should appeal to engaged consumers –
29 tourists who care about their environmental footprint, lower operating costs in
30 the areas of resource procurement, usage and disposal, and observe sustainable
31 practices which attracts support from socially responsible investors, indigenous
32 and local communities as well as other stakeholders who have the shared
33 responsibility to manage tourism in a sustainable manner;

34 WHEREAS, in line with promoting and capitalizing on the diverse
35 environmental features and local biodiversity of our beautiful country, our natural
36 wealth which is critical to building a tourism sector that serves the interests of
37 visitors, local communities and future generations, should also be looked after;

38 RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the Senate
39 Committee on Tourism to examine the creation of policy reforms and budgetary
40 expenditures to develop the Philippines' potential to be the leading country in the
41 world for sustainable Nature-Based Tourism (NBT).

Adopted,


SONNY ANGARA
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⁶ <https://aip.scitation.org/doi/pdf/10.1063/1.5012708>

⁷ <https://journalsofindia.com/megadiverse-countries/>