

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1037

Introduced by Honorable Solomon R. Chungalao

EXPLANATORY NOTE

WHEREAS, the IFUGAO RICE TERRACES is known worldwide as the 8th Wonder of the World and is a primer tourist destination. It is one of the genuine tourist spots that the Philippines is proud of and in recognition thereto, the same is printed on the face of the One Thousand Philippine Peso Bill;

WHEREAS, under Proclamation No. 1522, the rice terraces in the municipalities of Banaue, Kiangnan, Mayoyao and Hungduan in the Province of Ifugao were declared tourist zone under the administration and control of the Philippine Tourism Authority pursuant to Section 5 (D) of P.D. No. 564;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Government as a State Party on August 28, 1985 ratified the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its seventeenth session in Paris on November 16, 1972 which came into force in 1975;

WHEREAS, State parties to the afore-said Convention committed and recognized that the identification, protection, conservation, and safeguarding of heritage located in their territory is their primary responsibility and agreed to do all they can, using their resources to do so as well as:

Adopt a general policy, which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programs;

Undertake appropriate legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures necessary for the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation of heritage properties;

Refrain from deliberate measures, which might damage, directly or indirectly, the cultural and natural heritage;

WHEREAS, recognizing the task to undertake measures to restore and preserve the Ifugao Rice Terraces and promote the acceleration of socio-economic development of the area consistent with the concept of sustainable development, President Fidel V. Ramos issued Executive Order No. 158 on February 18, 1994 creating the Ifugao Terraces Commission [ITC] followed by Executive Order No. 178 on May 23, 1994 expanding the coverage to include the other municipalities of Aguineldo, Asipulo, Hingyon, Lagawe, and Tinoc;

WHEREAS, the Ifugao Terraces Commission [ITC] was to act as an advisory body to the President on matters regarding the Ifugao Rice Terraces;

WHEREAS, on March 4, 1999, President Joseph E. Estrada signed Executive Order No. 77 to abolish the Ifugao Terraces Commission and established in lieu of it the Banaue Rice Terraces Task Force [BRTTF];

WHEREAS, the Banaue Rice Terraces Task Force [BRTTF] in terms of mandate became an implementing agency with obviously nothing to implement considering the lack of funding and adequate support from the government;

WHEREAS, it will be noted that the creation of the Ifugao Terraces Commission was a requirement towards the inscription of ther Ifugao Rice Terraces in the World Heritage List of the UNESCO and by virtue of it, the Ifugao Rice Terraces was inscribed in the World Heritage on December 5, 1995;

WHEREAS, in November 2000, the World Heritage Committee at its twenty fourth extraordinary session decided to send a joint IUCN/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Ifugao Rice Terraces, to assess progress and to help define the aims and scope of the “permanent agency to manage and conserve the aforementioned World Heritage, which mission took place on September 22 to 25, 2001;

WHEREAS, the findings of the Mission resulted to the following recommendations, to wit:

“Recommendations:

The mission believes that important changes are needed in the way in which the WH site is managed if the area is to retain (even recover) the outstanding universal values, which merited designation in the first place. It therefore makes six major recommendations for the consideration of the WH Committee:

- Institutional requirements: establish a permanent and effective body to co-ordinate and lead efforts to restore and protect the Ifugao Rice Terraces;

- Funding: put in place a short and long term strategy for support funding for the terraces;
- Short term work programme: identify and implement a prioritized programme of work to remedy the past neglect of the rice terraces and ensure the optimum prospects for future;
- Tourism: develop a sustainable tourism industry that supports the future conservation of the rice terraces;
- Planning: undertake a re-assessment of the master plan for the rice terraces in 2002;
- International Outreach: connect the WH site more to sites elsewhere outside the Philippines and to international activities.”

WHEREAS, in the first recommendation, the Mission went further to recommend the establishment of a permanent Ifugao Rice Terraces Administration in place of the current BRTTF with the following characteristics, to wit:

- significant degree of independence
- adequate staffing
- guarantee of permanence
- transparency in working
- guaranteed funding for core costs
- guaranteed programme support funding from other government departments
- a mandate to raise funds from elsewhere
- the ability to involve all key stakeholders.

WHEREAS, as a consequence of the Mission, the World Heritage Convention is apt to recommend the Ifugao Rice Terraces in the World Heritage Endangered List in the 25th Session of the World Heritage Committee Convention on December 11 to 16 at Helsinki, Finland;

WHEREAS, there is absolutely a need to create a permanent body with sufficient staffing and funding to address and undertake measures to restore and preserve the Ifugao Rice Terraces and promote the acceleration of socio-economic development of the area consistent with the concept of sustainable development in order that we will not lose a world heritage site and primer tourist destination for being the 8th Wonder of the World.

WHEREFORE, immediate passage of this bill is most earnestly requested.


SOLOMON R. CHUNGALAO

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House Bill No. 1037

Introduced by Representative Solomon R. Chungalao

AN ACT
CREATING THE IFUGAO RICE TERRACES AUTHORITY, DEFINING ITS
POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the
Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1 **SECTION 1. Title.** – This Act shall be known as “The Ifugao Rice
2 Terraces Authority Act of 2004”.

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of
4 the State to identify, protect and conserve all cultural and natural heritage
5 within its territory. Towards this end, the State shall undertake appropriate
6 measures that would ensure the protection, conservation, rehabilitation and
7 preservation of the Ifugao rice terraces as part of its terrestrial domain, and
8 to integrate the same into the national development plans and programs.

9 **SEC. 3. Purposes and Objectives.** – The Authority shall have the
10 following purposes and objectives:

1 (a) Develop plans and programs that would enhance the tourism,
2 environmental, agricultural, industrial and economic potentials of the rice
3 terraces and the areas within its territorial jurisdiction;

4 (b) Adopt a system of consultation with concerned local government
5 units and all interest groups in the area to ensure that their needs, concerns
6 and ideas are considered in the formulation and implementation of the
7 Authority's plans and programs;

8 (c) Formulate new policies and review the existing ones to further
9 promote environmental protection, poverty alleviation, local autonomy, eco-
10 tourism, and sustainable development in the area; and

11 (d) Recommend to the Congress of the Philippines the enactment of
12 appropriate laws, or to the legislative councils of local government units
13 concerned the passage of ordinances and other measures, which may be
14 necessary to attain the purposes and objectives of this Act.

15 **SEC. 4. *Creation of the Ifugao Rice Terraces Authority.*** – To carry
16 out the above declared policy, there is hereby created a body corporate to
17 be known as the Ifugao Rice Terraces Authority, hereinafter referred to as
18 the "Authority", which shall be under the direct supervision and control of the
19 Office of the President of the Philippines.

20 **SEC. 5. *Territorial Jurisdiction.*** – The Authority shall cover the Ifugao
21 rice terraces and its adjoining areas, and the entire Ifugao Province.

1 **SEC. 6. *Principal Office and Term.*** – The principal office of the
2 Authority shall be in Banaue, Ifugao Province. It may however establish
3 such offices or agencies as its operations would require and its Board of
4 Directors would determine. The Authority shall have a corporate term of fifty
5 (50) years from the effectivity hereof, renewable for the same period, unless
6 otherwise provided for by law.

7 **SEC. 7. *Powers and Functions.*** – In addition to the usual corporate
8 powers, the Authority shall be charged and vested with the following powers
9 and functions:

10 (a) To implement a master plan for the restoration and preservation
11 of the Ifugao rice terraces, including the rehabilitation of old-age irrigation
12 systems and the construction of new ones and the provision of other
13 infrastructure facilities, with the view of protecting the ecological balance
14 and the enhancement of its environment;

15 (b) To adopt measures that will regulate the construction of
16 unusually tall structures obscuring public view of the natural beauty of the
17 rice terraces and its surroundings, subject to pertinent laws and the zoning
18 ordinances of the local government units concerned;

19 (c) To engage or retain and pay for the services of financial,
20 management, technical and/or project consultants from the private or
21 government sector subject to existing laws, rules and regulations;

1 (d) To make, adopt, promulgate, and enforce such rules and
2 regulations as may necessary to execute the powers, duties and functions
3 of the Authority as well as such regulations that will govern the proper use
4 by private parties of any or all of the Authority's properties, and to impose or
5 collect fees or tolls for the use thereof;

6 (e) To engage or invest on, or enter into joint venture with Filipino or
7 foreign investors in such projects within the Province of Ifugao as it may
8 deem proper and necessary or contributory to the achievement and/or
9 implementation of any or all of the purposes and objectives of this Act;

10 (f) When essential to the proper administration of its corporate
11 affairs or when necessary for the transaction of its business or for carrying
12 out the purposes of this Act, to contract indebtedness and to issue bonds
13 subject to existing laws, rules and regulations;

14 (g) To exercise the right of eminent domain as may be necessary for
15 the purpose for which the Authority is created;

16 (h) To call upon any particular government agency, office or bureau
17 for assistance in the discharge of, and form committees to facilitate the
18 performance of its functions and responsibilities. Likewise, the Authority is
19 hereby empowered to impose sanctions on member agencies and local
20 government units as well as individuals and/or entities within its territorial
21 jurisdiction implementing projects that are not culturally appropriate and not
22 environmentally friendly; and

1 (i) To do any and all acts and things and to exercise all powers
2 which may be necessary to the accomplishment of the purposes and
3 objectives of this Act.

4 **SEC. 8. Capitalization.** – The Authority shall have an authorized
5 capital stock of One Hundred Million Pesos (P100,000,000.00) which shall
6 be subscribed by the National Government (NG) and Local Government
7 Units (LGUs) within the Province of Ifugao and other government owned
8 and/or controlled corporations (GOCCs)/instrumentalities within the
9 framework of their respective charters.

10 **SEC. 9. Operating Expenses.** – The operating expenses of the
11 Authority shall be funded from the following:

12 (a) Proceeds from all fees and other charges, as well as rentals and
13 other income which the Authority is authorized to impose, collect and/or
14 earn under this Act, and other existing or subsequent laws; and

15 (b) Drawings upon the capital of the Authority if necessary.

16 **SEC. 10. Board of Directors.** – The affairs and business of the
17 Authority shall be directed and its properties managed and preserved by a
18 Board of Directors to be composed of the Secretary of the Department of
19 Agriculture as the *ex-officio* Chairman, and the following as Members:

20 (a) The Administrator of the Authority;

21 (b) The Presidential Assistant for Northern Luzon, as *ex-officio*
22 Member;