

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 990



Introduced by REP. TEDDY BRAWNER BAGUILAT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is the duty of the State to protect and safeguard major cultural and natural landmarks for the perpetuation of Filipino heritage and the enhancement of our national identity.

Hence, it is an obligation to maintain cultural heritage sites not merely as Filipinos but members of the world due to its value of illustrating to the world of the evolution of humanity and our interaction with the environment over the years.

The Ifugao Rice Terraces is one of these priceless legacies that the Philippines is showcasing to the world. It is a reflection of the Filipino ingenuity as it highlights one of *man's* best engineering achievements without forced labor, a feat that gave its recognition as one of UNESCO's World Heritage Site.

The Ifugao Rice Terraces also serves as a beacon of hope in the Philippines' fight against climate change. It highlights how the adoption of traditional conservation management regimes could allow such a balanced ecology.

The stark reality, however, is that the Ifugao Rice Terraces is increasingly deteriorating due to events caused by nature and man. Its state has continuously worsened and is at risk of being merely part of humanities history.

It is therefore necessary to safeguard and enhance the cultural, historical, and environmental value of the Ifugao Rice Terraces through a law that creates a long-term plan for this national treasure. This law shall ensure that in both the short-term and the long-term, the Ifugao Rice Terraces shall always be protected.

It is now, at this critical moment that we need to collectively act to save the Ifugao Rice Terraces.

For all the compelling reasons provided, this bill is most respectfully submitted and requested for early approval.


TEDDY BRAWNER BAGUILAT
Lone District of Ifugao

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HOUSE BILL NO. 990

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**AN ACT ADOPTING THE IFUGAO RICE TERRACES REHABILITATION AND
PRESERVATION PLAN, CREATING THE ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY FOR
ITS IMPLEMENTATION AND ITS SECRETARIAT, PROVIDING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 1 Title - This Act shall be known as the "**Ifugao Rice Terraces Rehabilitation and Preservation Act.**"

SEC. 2 Declaration of Policy – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect, develop and conserve its natural resources. Toward this end, it shall assist and support the implementation of plans; programs and projects formulated to safeguard and enhance the environment, and at the same time pursue the socio-economic development goals of the country.

It is further declared that is the duty of the State to protect, safeguard and promote the Nation's cultural heritage, its property and histories, and the ethnicity of local communities which is consistent with Indigenous Peoples Rights.

It shall support and promote the sustainable development goals for the provinces through proper conservation, utilization and development of natural resources to provide optimum yields on a continuing basis. It shall also adopt the necessary measures leading to the creation of institutional machinery including among others, fiscal and financial programs to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of environmental plans, programs and projects.

It shall also promote and encourage the involvement of all sectors of society and utilize the full and effective participation of all stakeholders in natural resource management, conservation and protection.

SEC. 3 Definition of Terms. - As used in this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (1) "Ifugao" refers to the Philippine province created under Republic Act No. 4695, otherwise known as the "Division Law of Mountain Province" and is part of the Cordillera Administrative Region.
- (2) "Ifugao Rice Terraces or IRT" refers to the Banaue, Hungduan, Kiangan, and Mayoyao Rice Terraces and other Terraces in Ifugao as may be determined by the Ifugao Council for Sustainable Development.
- (3) "Participatory processes" means the involvement of all the key sectors of development, from the grassroots to the policy-making bodies of the National Government, in providing the values and ideas from which strategic development and environmental protection action can come about;
- (4) "Conservation" refers to the measures adopted for the protection, preservation, management, or restoration of natural resources particularly of the Ifugao Rice Terraces.;
- (5) " Ifugao Rice Terraces Rehabilitation and Preservation Plan (IRTRPP)" refers to the Rehabilitation and Preservation Plan discussed in Section 4 of this Act;
- (6) "EMES" refers to the Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation System provided in Section 7 of this Act.

CHAPTER II

IFUGAO RICE TERRACES REHABILITATION AND PRESERVATION PLAN: ADOPTION, PHILOSOPHY AND LEGAL EFFECTS

SEC. 4 Ifugao Rice Terraces Rehabilitation and Preservation Plan (IRTRPP) – The IRTRPP is a comprehensive framework for the immediate rehabilitation of the Ifugao Rice Terraces and subsequent protection through participatory processes and actions. It also seeks to foster the sustainable development of the Ifugao Rice Terraces compatible with conserving and protecting the natural resources of the province. The already existing Ifugao Rice Terraces Conservation and Protection Master plan will be integrated herewith.

The IRTRPP shall serve to guide the local government of Ifugao and the government agencies concerned in the formulation and implementation of plans, programs and projects affecting said province.

SEC. 5 Ifugao Rice Terraces Rehabilitation and Preservation Plan (IRTRPP) Philosophy. - The IRTRPP shall have as its general philosophy, the Rehabilitation and Preservation of the Ifugao Rice Terraces, which is the immediate restoration of the Ifugao Rice Terraces and its subsequent conservation, enhancement and protection. The implementation shall go hand in hand with the improvement of the quality of life of the people of Ifugao in the present and future generations by undertaking complementary activities of development and conservation that protect the Ifugao Rice Terraces while allowing the growth of human industries around it.

It shall have the following features:

(1) Ecological viability - The physical and biological cycles that maintain the productivity of natural ecosystems must always be kept intact.

(2) Social acceptability - The people themselves, through participatory process, should be fully committed to support sustainable development activities by fostering equity in access to resources and the benefits derived from them.

(3) Integrated approach - This allow for a holistic view of problems and issues obtaining in the environment as well as opportunities for coordination and sharing that will eventually provide the resources and political will to actually implement and sustain IRTIPP activities.

SEC. 6 Legal effects. - The IRTIPP shall serve as the framework to guide the government agencies concerned in the formulation and implementation of plans, programs and projects affecting the environment and natural resources of Ifugao. It shall therefore be incorporated in the Regional Development Plan of the Cordillera Administrative Region as part of said plan.

CHAPTER IV SUPPORT MECHANISM

SEC. 7 Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation System (EMES) – To measure the effectiveness of the IRTIPP, it shall establish an Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation System (EMES) which shall ensure a systematic and reliable means of data generation for the various concerns of the IRTIPP. It shall measure changes in geological and environmental status, identify adverse environmental trends and crisis areas, recommend solutions, assess the implementation of the IRTIPP, and suggest measures to make the IRTIPP more responsible to the changing needs.

An Annual Report shall then be provided to the Provincial Local Government Unit and will be available to the public.

SEC. 8 Environmental Research - The IRTIPP shall provide for a system of research so that additional information for accurate planning as well as data to solve arising problems in the implementation of the IRTIPP shall be supplied. As such, the IRTIPP's researches shall not be confined to the physical and biological features of the environment, achieved through surveys, monitoring, resource assessments and research into processes, but shall also extend to policies and socioeconomic questions.

SEC. 9 Environmental Education and Extension - The IRTIPP shall design environmental information and education designed to gradually wean the people away from destructive practices and shall recommend practical ways as an alternative. This practices and recommendations shall be determined by the Department of Agriculture.

Training programs for the non-governmental organizations (NGO's), business sector representatives and community leaders shall be organized. This may establish linkages between the NGOs, community leaders, sector representatives and the staff of line agencies development communication or public information section and at the same time, be used to plan out a comprehensive public information drive.

Simultaneously, community organizing shall be enhanced to reinforce non-formal approaches, complementing regular environment/science courses in the school.

CHAPTER V

ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ITRPP

SEC. 10 Ifugao Council for Sustainable Development. - The governance, implementation and policy direction of the Ifugao Rice Terraces Rehabilitation and Preservation Plan shall be exercised by the herein created Ifugao Council for Sustainable Development (ICSD), hereinafter referred to as the Council, which shall be under the Office of the President.

It shall be composed of the following:

- a. Members of the House of the Representatives representing the province of Ifugao;
- b. Deputy Director General of the National Economic and Development Authority;
- c. Undersecretary of Environment and Natural Resources;
- d. Undersecretary of the Department of Tourism
- e. Undersecretary for Special Concerns of the Department of Agriculture;
- f. Governor of Ifugao;
- g. Representative from the NCIP Provincial Office
- h. Local chief executives of the concerned municipalities
- i. Representatives from the farmer's organizations
- j. Representatives from the Indigenous Peoples Organizations from each heritage site
- k. Representative/s from NGOs involved in the safeguarding of the Ifugao Rice Terraces
- l. Executive Director of the Ifugao Council for Sustainable Development Secretariat as provided in Section 14 of this Act;
- m. Such other members from the public or private sectors as the majority of the Council may deem necessary.

The Council shall elect, from among its members, a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman.

SEC. 11 Quorum. - A majority of the members of the Council shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business.

SEC. 12 Compensation. - The members of the council shall be entitled to per diems and allowances in accordance with existing laws in the performance of their duties and in carrying out of the business of the Council. The per diems shall be in the amount of One Thousand Pesos (Php. 1,000) for every meeting; Provided, that the per diems collected do not exceed the equivalent of per diems for four (4) meetings in a month.

SEC. 13 Powers and Functions. - In order to successfully implement the provisions of this Act, the Council is hereby vested with the following powers and functions.

- a. Formulate plans and policies as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

- b. Recommend to concerned government agencies the restoration, maintenance and development of the rice terraces walls, irrigations, dikes, paddies, watersheds, access roads and view decks and assist in the monitoring thereafter;
- c. Coordinate with the local governments to ensure that the latter's plans, programs and projects are aligned with the plans, programs and policies of the ITRPP.
- d. Call on any department, bureau, office, agency or instrumentality of the Government, and on private entities and organizations for cooperation and assistance in the performance of its functions.
- e. Arrange, negotiate for, accept donations, grants, gifts, loans, and other fundings from domestic and foreign sources to carry out the activities and purposes of the ITRPP.
- f. Recommend to the Congress of the Philippines such matters that may require legislation in support of the objectives of the ITRPP.
- g. Delegate any or all of its powers and functions to its support staff, as hereinafter provided, except those which by provisions of law cannot be delegated;
- h. Establish policies and guidelines for employment on the basis of merit, technical competence and moral character and prescribe a compensation and staffing pattern;
- i. Adopt, amend and rescind such rules and regulations and impose penalties therefore for the effective implementation of the ITRPP and the other provisions of this Act.
- j. Enforce the provisions of this Act and other existing laws. Rules and regulations similar to or complementary with this Act;
- k. Perform related functions which shall promote the development, conservation, management, protection, and utilization of the natural resources of Ifugao; and
- l. Provide livelihood opportunities as an alternate employment for the constituents of these municipalities; and
- m. Perform such other powers and functions as may be necessary in carrying out its functions, powers, and the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 14 Council Secretariat - A technical secretariat to the Council headed by an Executive Director is likewise created. The Secretariat shall serve as the regular professional support staff of the Council and shall provide the machinery to coordinate the policy and functions, implement programs, and organize such services as may be required by the Council in the exercise of its functions. It shall be independent of any other department or agency of the Government other than the herein provided Council. All the applicable powers, functions, personnel, complement staff, appropriations, records, equipment, property, funds, and other assets of the Secretariat shall be

determined by the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the members of the Council. He shall also be ex officio member of the Council.

CHAPTER VI APPROPRIATION AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 15 Appropriations. - For the implementation of this Act, the amount of Fifty Million Pesos (P50,000,000.00) per year for five (5) years is hereby appropriated for the Ifugao Rice Terraces Rehabilitation and Preservation Plan effective upon approval of this Act. Said amount shall be funded from the gross income of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation and shall be directly remitted in four (4) quarterly installments to a special account of the Council. Also, Three Percent (3%) of the Travel Tax Collection shall be appropriated to the Council from the share to be taken from the annual allotment of the travel tax given to the Philippine Tourism Authority.

Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the operations of the Council shall be included in the General Appropriations Act. A supplementary appropriations in the amount of Thirty million pesos (P30,000,000.00) shall be provided to the Council from the President's Organizational Adjustment Fund upon approval of this Act.

The above appropriations shall be separate and distinct from the annual budget of the Council which shall be Two Percent (2%) of the Travel Tax Collection from the annual allotment of the travel tax given to the Philippine Tourism Authority.

Expenses for IRTRPP programs and technical support packages provided by the DSWD, DECS, DOH, DILG, DOLE, DA, DOJ, NEDA, and the NCCA shall be specified as separate line items in their respective annual budgets in the General Appropriations Act. Their annual IRTRPP workplans shall be the basis for these budgets and shall be released directly to their regional or provincial offices whenever applicable

SEC. 16 - Separability Clause. - If any of the provisions of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional, the other provisions of this Act shall remain valid.

SEC. 17 Repealing Clause. - All laws; decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 18 Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect upon its approval.