

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session
House Bill No: **5230**



Introduced by REP. MERCEDES "DIDI" CAGAS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Dubbed as the "Baguio City of the South," Davao del Sur is an ideal travel destination all year round because of its idyllic climate, giving anyone a relaxing experience and a respite from the noise of city life.

Located in the province is Kapatagan, which is positioned at the foot of the prominent Mount Apo --- a breathtaking volcano that has been the subject of many local and international publications.

Kapatagan has been attracting tourists for years, with its cool weather, green luscious forests, and the different kinds of adventure it offers.

Imagine spending a day or two on the elevated land of Kapatagan where you will be enveloped in fog and mountain mist as you traverse through walkways lined with pines and indulge in the view of towering trees resting in a landscape of wild grass and vegetation.

In here, you will find a variety of flora and fauna such as the Cavendish banana and the Philippine eagle. In fact, Asian Palm Civets that is bred for producing the Civet Coffee, which is known as one of the world's most expensive and rare coffee can also be found in Kapatagan.

Lastly, because of its proximity to Mount Apo, the Philippines' highest mountain peak, Kapatagan has become a major jump of points for mountaineers preparing to ascent the inactive volcano.

Ecotourism is a growing segment of the global tourism industry that is making significant positive contributions to the environmental, social, cultural and economic well-being of destinations and local communities around the world. As such, there is a dire need to develop Kapatagan in Digos City, Davao Del Sur as one of the ecotourism sites in the Philippines not only to enhance its aesthetic value but also bring economic benefits to its people.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly urged.


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**AN ACT DECLARING KAPATAGAN IN DIGOS, DAVAO DEL SUR AS AN
ECOTOURISM SITE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as “Kapatagan Ecotourism Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and equitable for local communities.

SECTION 3. Kapatagan Valley Ecotourism Site. – Kapatagan in Digos, Davao Del Sur is hereby declared an ecotourism site. Its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism sites.

The DOT shall prepare a development plan that ensures the preservation and conservation of the natural resources of the area. The plan should also include construction and maintenance of necessary facilities to enhance the eco-agritourism area and ensure optimum utilization of assets and resources available.

SECTION 4. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – It shall be the responsibility of DOT to promote Barangay Balutakay as an eco-agritourism destination in all its national, regional and local promotion programs. DOT, in consultation with the province of Davao Del Sur and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 5. Appropriations. – The funding of this act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and internally generated funds of DOT, the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SECTION 6. Repealing Clause. – All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations, executive orders, proclamations and administrative regulations, or any part or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 7. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.