

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5886**



Introduced by **Congressman Leopoldo N. Bataoil**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

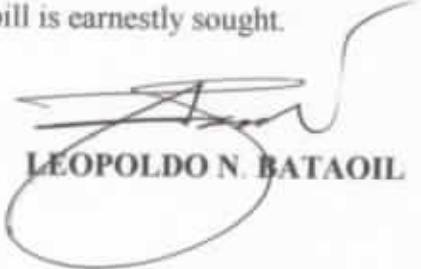
This bill seeks to declare the Mapita Tribal Community in the Municipality of Aguilar, Province of Pangasinan as a ecotourism zone.

Sitio Mapita is located in Barangay Laoag in the Municipality of Aguilar, Province of Pangasinan. The village, where some 1,000 indigenous residents belonging to the Kankanaey, Ibaloy and Bago Tribes had settled in the 1960s, is nestled in a 496-hectare rolling terrain of the Pangasinan-Zambales mountain ranges, about 15 kilometers from the town of Aguilar. The villagers cultivate some 150 hectares of land surrounding the settlement, planting fruit trees, root crops, vegetables, rice and other agricultural products. Forest trees are also grown within the community such as mahogany, narra, gemelina, teak, ylang-ylang and many more.

For 35 years, villagers from the upland community of Mapita would set up makeshift stalls at the public market in Aguilar three times a week to sell tomatoes, bell peppers and other agricultural products harvested from their farm. In 2011, vegetable farmers in the village now deliver their harvest to the Jollibee Foods Corp. (JFC) commissary in the town of Canlubang, Province of Laguna.

Developing Mapita Tribal Community as an ecotourism zone will create more income and business opportunities to the members of the community. Facilities will be constructed and the lack of public transportation and other amenities will be addressed. This will attract tourists, both local and foreign.

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


LEOPOLDO N. BATAOIL

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AN ACT
DECLARING THE MAPITA TRIBAL COMMUNITY IN THE
MUNICIPALITY OF AGUILAR, PROVINCE OF PANGASINAN AS A
ECOTOURISM ZONE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

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

SECTION 1. Mapita Tribal Community in the Municipality of Aguilar, Province of Pangasinan are hereby declared as an ecotourism zone. As such, priority development of Mapita Tribal Community shall be made by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of tourist zone.

SEC. 2. The DOT, in coordination with the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority and other concerned agencies of the government, shall, within six (6) months after the approval of this Act, prepare the development plan involving the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities which shall enhance tourism in the area: Provided, that said development plan shall ensure the preservation of the natural beauty and historical significance thereof.

SEC. 3. The Secretary of Tourism shall take immediate steps to implement the said development plan and incorporate the same in the overall tourism development program of the Department for the ensuing calendar year.

SEC. 4. The Secretary of Tourism shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 5. The amount needed for the immediate implementation of this Act is hereby appropriated from the funds of the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated. Thereafter, such sum as maybe needed for the continued implementation, operation and maintenance of Mapita Tribal Community shall be included in the annual General Appropriation Act.

SEC. 6. This act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,