

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10093



Introduced by Representative Mercedes “Didi” C. Cagas

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING AND DETERMINING A COMMUNITY FOREST IN THE
MUNICIPALITY OF STA. CRUZ, PROVINCE OF DAVAO DEL SUR, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In a span of 20 years the Province of Davao Del Sur has lost 17.2 hectares of tree cover from 2001 to 2020 due to several man-made activities and natural phenomenon. This data was recorded by the Global Forest Watch, an international organization that provides data and tools for monitoring forests using cutting-edge technology and presents near real-time information via an online platform.

To mitigate the increasing deforestation and forest degradation and to help improve the Province’s forest cover, this representation proposes the establishment of a community forest in the Municipality of Malalag, Province of Davao Del Sur. A community forest is tract of land set aside by the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the use of the residents of a city, municipality, or barangay from which the residents may plant, replant, collect and remove forest products for their personal use in accordance with existing laws and regulations.

Generally, community forestry is beneficial to an LGU because it can generate income from the planting and re-planting of trees and plants and the harvesting of timber and non-timber forest products while at the same time promoting sustainability and regulating the ecosystem. It has been considered one of the most promising options of combining forest conservation with rural development and community empowerment and poverty reduction objectives.

It is for the foregoing reason that the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


MERCEDES “DIDI” C. CAGAS

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

SECTION 1. There shall be established, under the supervision of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), a community forest in the Municipality of Sta. Cruz, Province of Davao Del Sur.

The DENR shall determine the size and specific forest limits of the established community forest within the Municipality.

SEC. 2. The DENR shall, within two (2) years after the establishment and determination of the community forest, transfer the management of the same to the local government unit concerned through a memorandum of agreement. It shall implement a training and phasing-in program for local government personnel on the management, utilization and conservation of the community forest.

The DENR shall, in coordination with the concerned LGU, undertake a forest resource inventory and determine the sustainable level of forest resource utilization and provide the LGU technical assistance in all facets of forest management planning to ensure sustainable development. The management plan should include provision for replanting by communities and the LGUs of the community forests to ensure sustainability.

SEC. 3. The Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources shall include in the Department’s program the establishment of the community forest in the Municipality of Sta. Cruz, Province

of Davao Del Sur, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

The local government unit concerned shall set aside funds from any available local revenue in an amount deemed appropriate for the management, utilization and conservation of the community forest.

SEC. 4. Within sixty (60) days from the passage of this Act, the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources shall issue the rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,