

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 488



Introduced by **HON. TSUYOSHI ANTHONY "HORI" G. HORIBATA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This measure proposes to declare the Mangrove Forest in Barangay San Rafael in the Municipality of Ragay, Camarines Sur, as an Ecotourism Site.

The Mangrove Forest in San Rafael was officially listed in the Guinness Book of World Records by adjudicator Seyda Subasi Gemici on March 8, 2012, for the "Most Mangrove Trees Planted by a Team in One Hour" during the "El Verde Movement" led by the then Camarines Sur Governor and incumbent Second District Representative Luis Raymund "Lray" Villafuerte, together with 7,000 volunteers.^[1]

The 7,000-volunteer-led El Verde Movement team, composed of citizens from San Rafael, Camarines Sur, planted a total of 1,009,029 bakawan (mangrove) saplings within one hour in a 30-hectare land.^[2] The trees planted aim to help prevent flooding, improve air quality, and enhance the greenery within the area.

Through the passage of this measure and the designation of the Mangrove Forest in San Rafael as an Ecotourism Site, the site's conservation, maintenance, protection, and promotion will be ensured. This designation will also provide financial benefits to the local community, contributing to its economic development. The approval of this bill will significantly enhance the holistic progress of Barangay San Rafael, fostering community growth and advancing the environmental stewardship not only of the local community but also of the whole First District of Camarines Sur.

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


TSUYOSHI ANTHONY "HORI" G. HORIBATA
First District, Camarines Sur

¹<https://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/101647-most-mangrove-trees-planted-within-one-hour-team#:~:text=The%20most%20mangrove%20trees%20planted,Philippines%2C%20on%208%20March%202012>

²<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2012/03/10/785156/camarines-sur-bags-guinness-mangrove-planting>

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**AN ACT DECLARING THE MANGROVE FOREST IN BARANGAY SAN RAFAEL, MUNICIPALITY
OF RAGAY, CAMARINES SUR, AS AN ECOTOURISM SITE**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – *This Act shall be known as the "San Rafael Mangrove Forest Ecotourism Act of 2025."*

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – *The 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates that the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.*

Accordingly, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote an ecologically sustainable and effective tourist industry that will enhance environmental preservation and support socio-economic development.

SECTION 3. The San Rafael Mangrove Forest Ecotourism Site. – *The San Rafael Mangrove Forest in the Barangay San Rafael, in the Municipality of Ragay, Province of Camarines Sur is hereby declared as 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, in coordination with the concerned local government units as well as with the other concerned government agencies, shall prepare a tourism development plan for the San Rafael Mangrove Forest which shall be incorporated in the overall National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP), pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as "The Tourism Act of 2009", and which shall also include the construction and maintenance of infrastructure and facilities in the area; Provided, That the development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the scenery and resources of the area.

SECTION 4. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – *Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of DOT, in consultation with the concerned local government units,*

the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), and other agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 5. Appropriations. – *The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act and internally generated funds of the DOT.*

SECTION 6. Repealing Clause. – *All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations, executive orders or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.*

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

Approved,