

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 489



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

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Ragay River, located in Barangay Pangitayan, Ragay, Camarines Sur, presents significant potential for development into a community-centered eco-tourism destination. With its strategic location near the Ragay Bridge and rich natural environment, the river area offers a viable site for recreational, environmental, and livelihood initiatives under a sustainable ecotourism framework.

The successful implementation of similar river eco-park projects in the Philippines underscores the feasibility of this proposal. In Camarines Sur itself, the Camaligan River Park has revitalized the Bicol River through infrastructure, community involvement, and eco-cruising activities. Initiated with support from the Department of Tourism (DOT) through the Bottom-UP Budgeting Program, the project became a model for how local government units can integrate river conservation with tourism development.<sup>[1]</sup>

Likewise, in Ladena, the Panguil Eco-Park has demonstrated that responsible eco-tourism can yield both environmental and economic benefits. Operated by the local government, the park generated approximately 1.75 million pesos in tourism revenue within six months, proving that eco-parks can sustain operations and contribute to local income.<sup>[2]</sup>

This bill seeks to declare the Ragay River in Barangay Panitayan as a priority eco-tourism site, with its development to be led by the DOT in collaboration with concerned local and national agencies. It supports the objectives of the National Ecotourism Strategy and fulfills the State's mandate under Article II, Sections 15 and 16 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution to promote health, ecology, and sustainable development.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> <https://dateline-ibalon.com/2024/03/cruising-and-saving-a-river-doods-m-santos>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2011/03/30/philippines-conserving-nature-creating-economic-opportunities-poor>

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**AN ACT DECLARING THE RAGAY RIVER LOCATED IN BARANGAY PANGITAYAN, MUNICIPALITY OF RAGAY, PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR AS A PRIORITY ECOTOURISM SITE AND MANDATING ITS DEVELOPMENT AS AN ECOPARK, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

*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 "Ragay River Eco-Park Development Act of 2025."*

**SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** – *It is the policy of the State, pursuant to Article II, Sections 15 and 16 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, to promote sustainable development and protect the people's right to a balanced and healthful ecology. The State shall likewise encourage eco-tourism as a means to conserve natural resources, promote environmental education, and support local socio-economic development.*

**SECTION 3. Declaration as an Eco-Tourism Site.** – *The Ragay River, particularly the stretch located in Barangay Pangitayan, Ragay, Camarines Sur, is hereby declared a priority eco-tourism site. Its development into an eco-park shall be undertaken in accordance with the principles of environmental sustainability, community participation, and cultural preservation.*

**SECTION 4. Tourism Development Plan.** – *The Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Ragay, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and other relevant agencies, shall formulate a Tourism Development Plan for the area. The plan shall include provisions for environmental protection, infrastructure support (e.g., pathways, recreational zones, visitor facilities), waste management systems, and community-based tourism programs.*

**SECTION 5. Appropriations.** – *The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current budget of the DOT. Thereafter, such as may be necessary for the continuous implementation, shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) and may also be sourced from TIEZA (Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority) or other applicable funds.*

**SECTION 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – *Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT, in consultation with the LGU of Ragay, DENR, and relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.*

**SECTION 7. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 8. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*