

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 900

Introduced by **HON. JOHN TRACY F. CAGAS**

AN ACT
DECLARING BARANGAY MANAGA IN SITIO BALUTAKAY, MUNICIPALITY
OF BANSALAN, PROVINCE OF DAVAO DEL SUR, A FARM TOURISM
DESTINATION

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Whereas Batangas had been labelled as the coffee capital of the Philippines, there are a lot of areas in the Philippines with high coffee production potentials, and one of which is Barangay Managa, Sitio Balutakay in Bansalan Davao del Sur.

Barangay Managa, Sitio Balutakay, located 400 to 1,000 meters above sea level at the foothills of Mt. Apo, has a micro-climate that favors coffee-growing efforts.

In addition, the volcanic soil of Barangay Managa, Sitio Balutakay gives the coffee a distinct flavor and quality. Despite these potentials, the coffee farmers of the Barangay are still met with some challenges brought by the lack of local market demand.

Reports from MindaNews said that at present, around 60 farmers are engaged in coffee farming, with at least 50 hectares estimated to have been planted with Arabica coffee trees. Each hectare has around 1,800 to 2,000 trees. Harvest peaks between October to January, with around 10 to 20 metric tons of dried coffee beans.

Declaring Balutakay as a tourism site would not only assist the farmers with their livelihood but also promote the growing coffee plantation in the area and create lasting solutions to the challenges experienced by the farmers. Coffee production also provides a diverse habitat for native species, allows the soil to replenish nutrients and provides natural pest control.

In addition, Barangay Managa, Sitio Balutakay was home to Salinta Monon, who was touted to be the "last Bagobo weaver" and a National Manlilikha awardee. Salinta built a solid reputation for her weaves of traditional Bagobo-Tagabawa textiles. Unfortunately, she passed away in 2009, which leaves us with few remaining weavers in barangay Balutakay.

Endangered not only for lack of proponents, the art, which is considered the last links to a colorful tradition of their tribe is also endangered because of the declining cultivation of abaca plant to make the distinctive cloth, *inabel*. The ancestral land of Salinta Monon no longer yields enough produce to sustain the materials, making life for the remaining weavers a constant struggle.

This declaration will promote the preservation of the knowledge and technique of weaving the traditional Bagobo-Tagabawa textiles, which has been enduring the verge of extinction for years.

It is the policy of State to accord priority status to sustainable, vibrant and profitable tourism development as one of the engines of socio-economic growth, cultural affirmation to generate investment, foreign exchange and employment.

This bill has been previously approved in the House of Representatives during the 18th Congress as filed by Hon. Mercedes "Didi" C. Cagas and was transmitted to the Senate but was not taken up due to the advent of the COVID 19 pandemic. It was again passed on third reading during the 19th Congress but was only read on first reading at the upper chamber of Congress.

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


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

SECTION 1. Barangay Managa in Sitio Balutakay, Municipality of Bansalan, Province of Davao del Sur, is hereby declared a farm tourism destination. Pursuant thereto, its development shall be prioritized and supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of farm tourism destinations in accordance with Republic Act No. 10816, otherwise known as the "Farm Tourism Development Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the municipal government of Bansalan shall, in coordination with the DOT, Department of Agriculture (DA) and concerned agencies of the government, prepare a development plan that shall include the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate infrastructure and facilities to enhance tourism in the area : *Provided*, That said development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural beauty and resources of the area; *Provided, further*, That the implementation of the tourism development plan shall be included in the budget of the municipal government of Bansalan.

SEC. 3. The DOT shall assist the municipal government of Bansalan in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include the Mabanog Falls in all its regional and national promotion programs.

SEC. 4. The funding for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the municipal government of Bansalan. The DOT may augment such allocation with internally-generated funds.

SEC. 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the municipal government of Bansalan shall, in consultation with the DOT, DA and concerned agencies of the government, promulgate the rules and regulations to implement this Act.

SEC. 6. If any provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 7. All laws, rules, regulations, presidential decrees, and other issuances inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,