

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 901

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

AN ACT
DECLARING MABANOG FALLS, LOCATED IN BARANGAY DARAPUAY,
MUNICIPALITY OF BANSALAN, PROVINCE OF DAVAO DEL SUR, AN
ECOTOURISM SITE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare Mabanog Falls in Brgy. Darapuay, Municipality of Bansalan in Davao del Sur an ecotourism site.

Mabanog Falls is a part of the Mt. Apo Natural Park Protected (MANP), which is considered one of the most popular nature-based tourism sites in the country. The MANP spans the provinces of North Cotabato, Davao del Sur and Davao City. It is also the home to several indigenous peoples, who consider the park sacred and a burial ground of their forefathers. Similarly, it boasts of its abundant flora and fauna and the provision of various services, including being a source of water and energy.

Sadly, in a report by the USAID titled, "Baseline Assessment: Environmental Law Enforcement in the Seven Program Sites", it was found that in Sitio Mabanog, Barangay Darapuay, illegal logging is present. Unfortunately, the balance between sustaining the economic needs and environmental protection is a challenge.

Declaring Mabanog Falls as an ecotourism site shall pave the way for funding, its development and eventually, may be a source of livelihood for the people in the area, with a minimal impact to the environment. This bill has passed third reading at the lower house during the 19th 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. The Mabanog Falls, located in Barangay Darapuay, Municipality of Bansalan, Province of Davao Del Sur, is hereby declared an ecotourism site. 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 ecotourism site.

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 Environment and Natural Resources, and concerned agencies of the government, prepare a tourism 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 through the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), if necessary, may include the allocation in the TIEZA's program.

SEC. 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the municipal government of Bansalan shall, in consultation with the DOT 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,