

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 903

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

AN ACT
DECLARING BARANGAY KAPATAGAN IN THE CITY OF DIGOS, PROVINCE
OF DAVAO DEL SUR, AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Dubbed as the “Baguio City of the South,” Davao del Sur is an ideal travel destination all year round because of its idyllic climate, giving anyone a relaxing experience and a respite from the noise of city life. Located in the province is Kapatagan, positioned at the foot of the prominent Mount Apo — a breathtaking volcano that has been the subject of many local and international publications. Kapatagan has been attracting tourists for years, with its cool weather, green luscious forests, and the different adventures it offers.

Imagine spending a day or two on the elevated land of Kapatagan where you will be enveloped in fog and mountain mist as you traverse through walkways lined with pines and indulge in the view of towering trees resting in a landscape of wild grass and vegetation.

In here, you will find a variety of flora and fauna such as the Cavendish banana and the Philippine eagle. In fact, Asian Palm Civets, red for producing the Civet Coffee, which is known as the one of the world’s most expensive and rare coffee can also be found in Kapatagan.

Lastly, because of its proximity to Mount Apo, the Philippines’ highest mountain peak, Kapatagan has become a major jump off points for mountaineers preparing to ascent the inactive volcano.

Ecotourism is a growing segment of the global tourism industry that is making significant positive contributions to the environmental, societal, cultural and economic well-being of destinations and local communities around the world. As such, there is a dire need to develop Kapatagan in Digos City, Davao Del Sur as one of the ecotourism sites in the Philippines not only to enhance its aesthetic value but also bring economic benefits to its people.

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. This bill has also 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. Barangay Kapatagan in the City of Digos, Province of Davao Del Sur, is hereby declared an ecotourism 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 ecotourism destinations.

SEC. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the city government of Digos 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 city government of Digos in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include Barangay Kapatagan Falls in its national and regional promotion programs.

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

SEC. 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the city government of Digos 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,