

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4009



Introduced by **Representative RAYMOND ADRIAN SALCEDA**

AN ACT
DECLARING THE BATONG LANGOYON LOCATED IN BARANGAY MAONON,
LIGAO CITY, PROVINCE OF ALBAY, AN ECOTOURISM SITE, PROVIDING
FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The coastal barangays of western Albay face the West Philippine Sea and host unique marine ecosystems that remain underutilized for sustainable tourism. One of the most promising among these is Batong Langoyon, a small offshore island and dive site located off Barangay Maonon in Ligao City. Known to local fisherfolk for its clear waters, coral beds, and marine life, Batong Langoyon is increasingly recognized as an emerging dive destination for adventure tourism in the Bicol Region.

At present, however, Batong Langoyon lacks a formal conservation and management framework. Without clear regulation, the area faces risks of unsupervised tourism, destructive fishing, and marine pollution. Experiences from other Philippine dive destinations, such as Tubbataha and Anilao, demonstrate that unmanaged visitor pressure and lack of enforcement can quickly degrade fragile coral ecosystems.

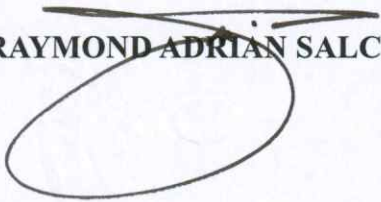
National policy strongly supports the designation of marine ecotourism sites. Republic Act No. 8550, or the Philippine Fisheries Code as amended, encourages the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources, while Executive Order No. 111 on the National Ecotourism Strategy directs government to balance biodiversity protection with local economic development. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Tourism have also issued guidelines on coastal ecotourism, emphasizing community participation, benefit-sharing, and strict adherence to carrying capacity.

This bill therefore seeks to declare Batong Langoyon in Barangay Maonon, Ligao City, Albay as an ecotourism site. The measure mandates the Department of Tourism, in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Bureau of Fisheries and

Aquatic Resources, the Provincial Government of Albay, and the City Government of Ligao, to prepare a sustainable ecotourism development and management plan for the island and surrounding marine area. This plan will establish zoning for dive and non-dive activities, regulate anchoring and waste disposal, provide for reef monitoring, and ensure that fisherfolk and coastal households in Maonon benefit directly through livelihood, training, and equitable revenue-sharing.

Formally declaring Batong Langoyon as an ecotourism site will integrate it into Ligao City's broader coastal development strategy and the western Albay tourism circuit, anchored on Pantao Port, the Quinale Plains, and Lake Danao. It will also signal national support for marine biodiversity protection while creating sustainable livelihoods in line with the province's goal of balancing tourism growth and ecological stewardship.

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


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

SECTION 1. *Title.* This Act shall be known as the “Batong Langoyon Ecotourism Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote sustainable tourism while conserving the country’s natural resources. The State shall ensure that the development of natural sites such as Batong Langoyon is consistent with the principles of environmental protection, cultural preservation, and community empowerment.

SEC. 3. *Ecotourism Site Declaration.* The Batong Langoyon, located in Barangay Maonon, Ligao City, Province of Albay, is hereby declared an ecotourism site.

SEC. 4. *Development and Management.* The Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Provincial Government of Albay, and the City Government of Ligao, shall prepare a sustainable ecotourism development and management plan for Batong Langoyon. The plan shall:

(a) protect and conserve the area’s natural features, including its rock formations, water systems, and biodiversity;

(b) provide for eco-friendly infrastructure such as access roads, sanitation facilities, and visitor centers consistent with carrying capacity;

(c) regulate and monitor tourism activities to prevent environmental degradation; and

(d) establish community-based livelihood and benefit-sharing mechanisms for local residents of Barangay Maonon and surrounding areas.

SEC. 5. *Prohibited Acts.* To safeguard the ecological integrity of Batong Langoyon, the following acts shall be prohibited within its declared boundaries:

- (a) dumping of waste or pollutants;
- (b) illegal quarrying, logging, or destructive extraction activities;
- (c) unregulated construction of resorts or commercial structures; and
- (d) any activity that endangers biodiversity, water quality, or geological features.

Violators shall be penalized under Republic Act No. 7586 (National Integrated Protected Areas System Act), Republic Act No. 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act), and other applicable environmental laws.

SEC. 6. *Funding.* The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The DOT, DENR, and concerned LGUs may also mobilize resources through ecotourism fees, partnerships, grants, or donations.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT, DENR, DPWH, the Provincial Government of Albay, and the City Government of Ligao shall jointly promulgate the necessary rules and regulations.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,