

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
QUEZON CITY

20th Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5006



Introduced by: **REP. MARK CHOLO I. VIOLAGO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution provides that: “The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.”

Republic Act no. 7586, otherwise known as the National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 as amended by Republic Act No. 11038 or the Expanded NIPAS Act of 2018 and its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (DAO 2019-05) recognizes that effective administration of protected areas is possible only through cooperation among the national government, local government and concerned private organizations.

The NIPAS Act created a Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) for each established protected area as a mechanism for multi-sectoral and participatory approach to protected area management. The PAMB as authorized in Section 11-A of DAO 2019-05 is mandated to oversee the management of protected Area, set and approve rules and regulations, and recommend appropriate policy changes to the DENR and other government authorities.

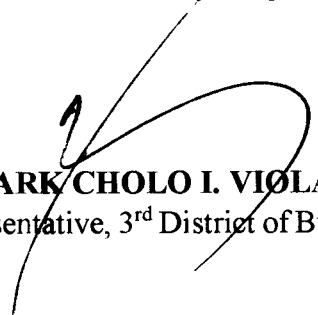
Biak Na Bato Natural Park is one of the protected karst areas in the Philippines. Limestone landscapes are known as areas of great biological importance due to high level of endemism of flora and fauna. Biak Na Bato Natural Park is the site of discovery of karst-obligate Biak Na Bato Limestone Frog considered as Vulnerable under DAO 2019-09 and Near Threatened under 2017.

The limestone karst landscape of Biak Na Bato Natural Park is also the habitat of numerous species of bats which serves as keystone species, an organism that helps define an entire ecosystem. This includes the Wrinkle-lipped Bat with a thriving colony at Bahay Paniki Cave estimating to more than one (1) million individuals though threatened and considered Vulnerable under DAO 2019-09.

Key Biodiversity Areas are nationally identified sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity, in terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems.

Biak Na Bato Natural Park is a proposed Key Biodiversity Area that is an area with exceptional ecological importance.

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



MARK CHOLO I. VIOLAGO
Representative, 3rd District of Bulacan

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

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session**

HOUSE BILL NO. 5006

Introduced by Representative Mark Cholo I. Violago

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL PARK (LOT A1 AND LOT A-2) AND MINERAL
RESERVATION (LOT B) OF PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION NO. 401, SERIES
OF 1989 SITUATED IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF SAN MIGUEL AND DOÑA
REMEDIOS TRINIDAD, PROVINCE OF BULACAN, AS A PROTECTED AREA
UNDER THE CATEGORY OF PROTECTED LANDSCAPE PURSUANT TO
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7586 AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT 11038, OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS THE EXPANDED NATIONAL INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS
SYSTEM (ENIPAS) ACT OF 2018, PROVIDING FOR ITS MANAGEMENT AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

**ARTICLE I.
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Biak-Na-Bato Protected Landscape Act of 2025”.

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – Cognizant of the profound impact of human activities on all components of the natural environment, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to secure for the Filipino people of present and future generations, the perpetual existence of all life forms through the declaration of protected areas under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) within the classification of the national park as provided for in the Constitution.

In recognition of the significant natural and cultural history of Biak-Na-Bato National Park (BNBNP) and its unique habitats and associated biodiversity, a parcel of land located in the Municipalities of San Miguel and Doña Remedios Trinidad in the Province of Bulacan, is hereby declared a Protected Area (PA) with the category of Protected Landscape, and shall hereinafter be referred to as the Biak-Na-Bato Protected Landscape (BNBPL). As such, the

State shall ensure the conservation, protection, management and rehabilitation of the area. It is likewise recognized that effective administration of this area is possible only through cooperation among national government, Local Government Units (LGUs), concerned Nongovernment Organizations (NGOs), private entities and local communities. The use and enjoyment of this area must be consistent with the principles of biological diversity and sustainable development.

Towards this end, the State shall ensure the full implementation of this Act, the mobilization of resources for the institutional mechanisms herein established, and the full scientific and technical support needed for the conservation and protection of biodiversity and cultural heritage.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms and phrases shall mean, as follows:

- a. *Buffer zones* refer to identified areas outside the boundaries of and immediately adjacent to designated protected areas that need special development control in order to avoid or minimize harm to the protected area;
- b. *Conservation* refers to any act or acts of preservation and sustainable utilization of wildlife or maintenance; restoration and enhancement of habitats;
- c. *LGUs* refers to the Local Government Units in BNBPL;
- d. *Protected Area* refers to identified portions of land and water set aside by reason of their unique physical and biological significance, managed to enhance biological diversity and protected against destructive human exploitation;
- e. *Protected Area Management Plan (PAMP)* refers to the fundamental management goals, strategies and activities which shall guide all activities relating to the BNBPL in order to attain the objectives of this Act;
- f. *PAMO* refers to the Protected Area Management Office of the BNBPL;
- g. *PASu* refers to the Protected Area Superintendent of the BNBPL;
- h. *National Park* refers to land of the public domain classified as such in the Constitution which include all areas under the NIPAS, primarily designated for the conservation of native plants and animals, their associated habitats and cultural diversity;
- i. *Multiple-use Zone* refer to the area where settlement, traditional and sustainable land use including agriculture, agroforestry, extraction activities, and income generating or livelihood activities may be allowed to the extent prescribed in the Protected Area Management Plan;
- j. *Protected Area* refers to an identified portion of land and water set aside by reason of its unique physical and biological significance, managed to enhance biological diversity and protected against destructive human exploitation;

- k. *Protected Area Occupants* refers to persons who are residing, utilizing, and cultivating areas within the protected area. These include private owners, Indigenous Peoples (IPs), tenured migrants and informal settlers;
- l. *Strict Protection Zones* refers to portions within protected areas that are closed to human activities by virtue of their significant biodiversity value, high susceptibility to geohazard, and identification as permanently dangerous. These areas may also include habitats of threatened species, or degraded areas that are designated for restoration and subsequent protection, regardless of their stages of regeneration.

SECTION 4. Classification as a National Park. – The BNBPL comprises a parcel of land of the public domain located in the Municipalities of San Miguel and Doña Remedios Trinidad in the Province of Bulacan. All lands of the public domain within the coverage and scope of the BNBPL shall fall under the classification of national park as provided for in Article XII, Section 3 of the Constitution.

SECTION 5. Scope and Coverage. – The Biak-na-Bato Protected Landscape shall cover the Municipalities of San Miguel and Doña Remedios Trinidad, Bulacan and shall have the following technical description with a total area of 1,600 hectares subject to delineation and demarcation on the ground:

LINES	BEARINGS	DISTANCES
BOUNDARY		
1-2	S 03°15'E.	352.57 M.
2-3	N.82°37'E.	272.26M.
3-4	S.00°26'E.	650.51M.
4-5	S.86°11'W.	230.53M.
5-6	S.02°11'E.	1,444.40M.
6-7	S.20°14'W.	491.83M.
7-8	S.08°21'E.	930.33M.
8-9	S.08°38'E.	1,362.53M.
9-10	S.16°04'W.	704.52M.
10-11	S.44°31'E.	521.24M.
11-12	S.10°26'W.	178.43M.
12-13	S.15°40'E.	685.46M.
13-14	S.21°41'W.	1,393.64M.
14-15	N.76°18'W.	1,573.61M.
15-16	N.71°10'W.	316.50M.
16-17	N.54°09'W.	270.67M.
17-18	N.60°57'W.	155.85M.
18-19	N.35°41'E.	25.58M.
19-20	N.45°25'W.	96.69M.
20-21	N.05°02'E.	384.64M.
21-22	N.41°11'W.	261.34M.
22-23	Due West	445.00M.
23-24	N.24°41'W.	203.62M.
24-25	N.66°29'W.	463.50M.
25-26	N.84°12'W.	1,414.93M.
26-27	S.84°12'W.	862.59M.
27-28	N.15°42'W.	1,680.74M.

28-29	S.89°00'E.	285.03M.
29-30	Due South	369.99M.
30-31	S.33°41'E.	108.15M.
31-32	N.82°01'E.	287.80M.
32-33	Due North	618.0M.
33-34	S.43°47'W.	166.21M.
34-35	S.80°00'W.	172.63M.
35-36	N.02°23'E.	480.44M.
36-37	N.86°53'E.	1,562.33M.
37-38	N.10°12'E.	669.20M.
38-39	N.48°53'E.	400.39M.
39-40	N.64°43'E.	398.14M.
40-41	N.61°59'W.	728.42M.
41-42	N.01°08'W.	861.06M.
42-43	N.39°38'E.	415.47M.
43-44	N.09°21'E.	367.51M.
44-45	N.09°48'E.	1,057.90M.
45-41	Due East	648.00M.
TIE LINE: N.22°07'E., 7,621.30M.; From MBM 3, CAD 196 to corner "1":		

SECTION 6. *Establishment of Management Zones and Buffer Zone.* – Zoning shall be implemented in BNBPL as a strategy to effectively manage the ecosystems and landscapes/seascapes therein, in accordance with the objectives and principles of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. BNBPL shall be divided into Strict Protection Zone and Multiple Use Zone.

Buffer Zones. The DENR Secretary, upon the recommendation of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) created under Section 7 of this Act, may designate areas surrounding the BNBPL as buffer zones for the purpose of providing an extra layer of protection where restrictions may be applied: *Provided*, That in cases where the designated buffer zone would cover private lands, the owner thereof shall be required to design their development with due consideration to the protected area management plan. The Forest Reserve (Lot D) of Presidential Proclamation No. 401, Series of 1989, and established National Greening Program (NGP) plantation therein shall be included as BNBPL Buffer Zones.

ARTICLE II MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

SECTION 7. *Protected Area Management Board (PAMB).* – The existing PAMB shall continue to oversee the management of BNBPL and should be composed of the following:

- a. DENR Regional Executive Director for Region III, as Chairperson;
- b. Governor of the Province of Bulacan or his/her duly authorized representative/s;
- c. One (1) Senator of the Republic of the Philippines who is a duly registered resident of the Province of Bulacan or his/her duly authorized representative/s, unless the Senator declines membership in the PAMB;

- d. District Representative/s of Congressional District/s where BNBPL is located or their duly authorized representative/s, unless the District Representative/s declines membership in the PAMB;
- e. Mayors of the Municipalities of San Miguel and Doña Remedios Trinidad, Province of Bulacan or their duly authorized representative/s;
- f. Chairpersons of all the Barangays where BNBPL is located or their duly authorized representative/s;
- g. Regional Directors of the following government agencies namely; the Department of Agriculture (DA), the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Philippine National Police (PNP), and the Department of National Defense (DND);
- h. Three (3) representatives from either Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or People's Organizations (POs), duly accredited both by the DENR and the Provincial Government. The NGOs or POs represented should have been in existence for at least five (5) years and with track record in or related to protected area management;
- i. At least one (1) but not more than three (3) representatives from all the Indigenous Cultural Community (ICCs)/Indigenous People (IP) present in the area and recognized by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP);
- j. One (1) representative from an academic institution, preferably from a university or college in the Province of Bulacan, with proven track record in or related to the protected area management; and
- k. One (1) representative from the private sector, preferably a resident of the province of Bulacan, who is distinguished in a profession or field of interest relevant to the protected area management.

The terms of office of members of the PAMB, as well as the grounds for their removal shall be in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 7586, or the "National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992", as amended by Republic Act No. 11038, or the "Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 2018".

SECTION 8. Powers and Functions of the PAMB. – The PAMB shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. Oversee the management of BNBPL;
- b. Approve policies, plans, and programs, proposals, agreements, and other related documents for the management of BNBPL;
- c. Approve the management plan of BNBPL and ensure harmonization and integration with the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan, (ADSDPP), land use plan and other development plan, public or private, and its implementation;
- d. Adopt a manual of operations to include rules of procedures in the conduct of business, and the creation of committees and their respective terms of reference;

- e. Recommend the deputation of appropriate agencies and individuals for the enforcement of the laws, rules, and regulations governing the management of the BNBPL;
- f. Allocate financial resources for the implementation of the management plan and manage the Protected Area Retention Income Account and other funds in accordance with the accounting and budgeting rules and regulations;
- g. Set fees and charges in accordance with existing guidelines;
- h. Issue rules and regulations for the resolution of conflicts through appropriate and effective means;
- i. Recommend appropriate policy changes to the DENR and other government authorities;
- j. Monitor and assess the performance of the Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) and other protected area personnel and compliance of partners with terms and conditions of any undertaking, contract or agreement;
- k. Recommend from among a shortlist of qualified candidates, the designation or appointment of the PASu; and
- l. Assess the effectiveness of the management of the BNBPL: *Provided*, That the members of the management board representing the LGUs and national agencies in the PAMB shall inform their respective constituents, offices or sectors, of PAMB-approved or other relevant policies, rules, regulations, programs, and projects and shall ensure that the provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations are complied with, and used as reference and framework in their respective plans, policies, programs, and projects. Failure to comply with the foregoing shall be the basis for disciplinary action against such member according to administrative rules and regulations and such penalties as the PAMB may provide: *Provided*, further, That the DENR, through the Regional Director, shall ensure that the PAMB acts within the scope of its powers and functions. In case of conflict between the resolutions issued by the PAMB and the existing administrative orders of national application, the latter shall prevail.

SECTION 9. *Protected Area Management Office (PAMO)*. – There is hereby established a Protected Area Management Office (PAMO) to be headed by a Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) who shall supervise the day to day management, protection, and administration of the BNBPL. The PASu shall hold a permanent plantilla position and shall be appointed by the DENR Secretary. A sufficient number of support staff with permanent plantilla positions shall likewise be appointed by the DENR Secretary to assist the PASu in the management of the BNBPL.

The PASU shall be the primarily accountable to the PAMB and the DENR for the management and operations of the BNBPL. Pursuant thereto, the PASU shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- a. Prepare the management plan, in consultation with the stakeholders, including the annual work and financial plans and ensure its implementation;

- b. Ensure the integration of the BNBPL management plans, programs, projects, and policies with relevant national and LGUs' plans and programs;
- c. Provide secretariat services to the PAMB and its committees and ensure the availability of relevant and timely information for decision-making;
- d. Formulate and recommend to the PAMB proposed policies, rules, and regulations, and programs;
- e. Establish operate, and maintain a database management system which shall be an important basis for decision-making;
- f. Enforce the laws, rules and regulations relevant to BNBPL, commence and institute administrative and legal actions in collaboration with other government agencies or organizations, and assist in the prosecution of offenses committed in violation of this Act;
- g. Monitor, evaluate, and report the implementation of management activities of the protected area;
- h. Request for and receive any technical assistance, support or advice from any agency or instrumentality of the government as well as academic institutions, NGOs, and the private sector, as may be necessary for the effective management, protection and administration of the BNBPL;
- i. Issue permits and clearances for activities that implement the management plan and other permitted activities in accordance with terms, conditions, and criteria established by the PAMB: *Provided*, That all permits for extraction activities, including collection for research purposes, shall also continue to be issued by relevant authorities, subject to prior clearance from the PAMB, through the PASU, in accordance with the specific acts to be covered;
- j. Collect and/or receive pertinent fees, charges, donations, and other income for BNBPL: *Provided*, That such fees, charges, donations, and other income collected/received shall be reported regularly to the PAMB and the DENR in accordance with existing guidelines;
- k. Prepare and recommend to the PAMB approval of the annual work and financial plans of BNBPL based on the management plan; and
- l. Perform such other functions as the PAMB and the DENR may assign.

The PAMO may be augmented by the deputized local environment and natural resources officers upon the recommendation of the PAMB and approval of the DENR.

SECTION 10. *Mt. Mabio Biogeology Center (MMBC)*. – The Mt. Mabio Biogeology Center (MMBC) as approved by the PAMB through Management Board Resolution No. 02, Series of 2024 shall be established to conduct scientific research within BNBPL and will exist as a shared facility for academic institution, Government institutions and non-government institutions which are engaged to scientific and cultural research. The MMBC shall conduct comprehensive assessment of karst's biological, geological, economic and other values.

The MMBC will comprise Landscape Ecology Division, Cave and Karst Archaeology Division, Landscape and Geology Division, Landscape Geography Division and Anthropogenic Landscape and History Division, each having the following specific objectives:

- a. The Landscape Ecology Division is focused on identifying biological relationships among flora and fauna species within the area of BNBPL and the dynamic interconnectedness of every life form contributing to the natural evolution and adaptation of the physical landscape that may have significant impact in the community;
- b. The Cave and Karst Archaeology Division primary objective is to determine archaeological sites within the area of BNBPL and analyze and record artefacts/biofacts that can be used as a proxy data to reconstruct paleoenvironment to understand the evolution of landscape across time period;
- c. The Landscape and Geology Division objective is to map geological formation within the BNBPL and analyze significant mineral signature contributing to the development of speleogenesis in the karst area that can directly affect the continuous natural landscape formation;
- d. The Landscape Geography Division primary objective is to analyze geographically generated high resolution and accurate maps related to forest, karst and presence of human settlement within the BNBPL and nearby areas in the context of geography; and
- e. The Anthropogenic Landscape and History Division main focus is to conduct research in cultural or livelihood practices of the community within BNBPL and nearby areas in order to identify anthropogenic activities that may be harmful or helpful in the overall status of the natural landscape of BNBPL.

Appropriate funding shall be allocated for its establishment and continuous operation.

SECTION 11. *Existing Rights.* – All property and private rights within the protected area and its buffer zones already existing and/or vested upon the effectivity of the NIPAS Act shall be protected and respected in accordance with existing laws: Provided, That the exercise of such property and private rights shall be harmonized, as far as practicable, with the provisions of NIPAS Act and the PAMP of BNBPL. Notwithstanding the NIPAS Act, all legitimate existing rights, contracts, or agreements entered into by government for the utilization of natural resources within protected areas shall continue to be recognized and governed by the Philippines laws.

Existing rights issued while Presidential Proclamation No. 223 Series of 1937, which established the Biak-Na-Bato National Park, was still existing are deemed invalid and shall be revoked and reverted back to the National Park.

ARTICLE III PROCEEDS AND FEES

SECTION 12. *The Biak-Na-Bato Protected Landscape Integrated Protected Area Fund.* - There is hereby established a trust fund to be known as the Biak-na-Bato Protected Landscape Integrated Protected Area Fund (BNBPL-IPAF) for purposes of financing projects of the BNBPL and the NIPAS. All income generated from the operation of the system or the management of wild flora and fauna in the BNBPL shall accrue to the fund. The income shall be derived from entrances, facilities user fee, commercial documentation fee, fees from permitted sale and export of flora and fauna and other resources from BNBPL, proceeds from lease of multiple-use areas, contributions from industries and facilities directly benefiting from the BNBPL, and such other fees and income derived from the operation of the BNBPL.

The PAMB shall retain seventy-five percent (75%) of all revenues raised through the above means, which shall be deposited in the Protected Area-Retained Income Account (PA-RIA) in any authorized government depository bank within the locality: *Provided*, That disbursements out of such deposits shall be used solely for the protection, maintenance, administration, and management of the protected area and implementation of duly approved projects of the PAMB. The remaining twenty-five percent (25%) of revenues shall be deposited as a special account in the general fund in the National Treasury for purposes of financing the projects of the NIPAS.

The fund may be augmented by grants, donations, and endowment from various sources, domestic or foreign: *Provided*, That the fund shall be deposited in full as a special account in the National Treasury and disbursements therefrom shall be made solely for the protection, maintenance, administration and management of the NIPAS and duly approved projects endorsed by the PAMB in accordance with existing accounting, budgeting, and auditing rules and regulations: *Provided, further*, That the fund shall not be used to cover personal services expenditures.

The LGUs shall continue to impose and collect all other fees not enumerated herein which they have traditionally collected, such as business permits, property tax and rentals of LGUs' facilities.

ARTICLE IV TRANSITORY AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SECTION 13. *Appropriations.* - The Secretary of the DENR shall immediately include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 14. *Suppletory Application of the NIPAS Law.* - The provisions of Republic Act No. 7586, as amended by Republic Act No.11038, shall have suppletory application to this Act.

SECTION 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DENR shall, in consultation with the local governments located within the area of the BNBPL, and concerned national government agencies, issue the corresponding rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 16. *Separability Clause.* – If any section or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining sections or provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 17. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 18. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,