



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



House Bill No. 5436

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative
EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Tourism is a major driver of economic growth and employment in the country. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the sector contributed 8.9% to the country’s GDP in 2024 and generated 6.75 million jobs, reflecting a 6.1% increase from the previous year. Beyond its economic impact, tourism strengthens local economies, promotes cultural heritage, and fosters environmental awareness. As of the third quarter of 2023, Central Luzon—including the province of Bulacan—recorded 2.8 million tourist arrivals, with 2.6 million from domestic tourism and nearly 198,000 from foreign visitors, according to the Department of Tourism.

One of Bulacan’s emerging ecotourism gems is the Maramo section of the Angat River System in Barangay San Mateo, Municipality of Norzagaray. Dubbed the “Little Palawan of Bulacan,” the area features towering limestone cliffs, crystal-clear waters, and pristine forest surroundings. It has become a haven for hikers, campers, and eco-adventure seekers due to its accessibility from Metro Manila. At the same time, Norzagaray is evolving into a commercial and economic hub, with its tourism sector poised for further growth. However, Maramo remains underdeveloped and lacks formal infrastructure and management, leaving it vulnerable to unregulated use and environmental degradation.

This bill seeks to declare the Maramo section of the Angat River System as a protected ecotourism destination, to be officially known as the Maramo Nature Reserve. It mandates the formulation of a sustainable tourism development plan led by the Municipal Government of Norzagaray, in coordination with the Department of Tourism (DOT), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and other relevant agencies. The plan shall balance ecological preservation with tourism promotion, ensuring appropriate infrastructure, capacity building, and community participation.

Designating the Little Palawan of Bulacan as an ecotourism destination will not only protect its ecological integrity but also create livelihood opportunities, generate local revenue, and contribute to national economic growth. More importantly, it will

uplift the lives of Norzagaray's residents while instilling environmental stewardship among visitors and communities alike.

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


EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5436

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative
EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA

AN ACT DECLARING THE MARAMO SECTION OF THE ANGAT RIVER SYSTEM IN BARANGAY SAN MATEO, MUNICIPALITY OF NORZAGARAY, PROVINCE OF BULACAN, AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION, TO BE KNOWN AS THE MARAMO NATURE RESERVE

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Maramo Nature
2 Reserve Ecotourism Destination Act. "

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration as Ecotourism Zone** - The Maramo section of the Angat
5 River System in Barangay San Mateo, Municipality of Norzagaray, Province of
6 Bulacan, is hereby declared an ecotourism destination, and shall be known as the
7 "Maramo Nature Reserve." Pursuant thereto, the Department of Tourism (DOT) shall
8 support and prioritize the development of the area subject to the rules and regulations
9 governing the development of ecotourism zones.

10
11 **SEC. 3. Tourism Development Plan.** - Within one (1) year after the approval of
12 this Act, the Municipal Government of Norzagaray shall, in coordination with the DOT,
13 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other concerned
14 government agencies, prepare a tourism development plan which shall include the
15 construction, installation and maintenance of appropriate facilities and infrastructure
16 to enhance tourism in the area: Provided, That said development plan shall ensure the
17 preservation and conservation of the natural beauty and resources of the area:
18 Provided, further, That the implementation of the tourism development plan shall be
19 included in the budget of the Municipal Government of Norzagaray.

20
21 **SEC. 4. Assistance to the Local Government Unit.** - The DOT shall provide
22 technical assistance in tourism capacity building to the Municipal Government of
23 Norzagaray for the proper implementation of the tourism development plan. The DOT
24 shall also include the Municipality of Norzagaray in its national and regional promotion
25 programs.

1 **SEC. 5. Funding.** - The funding for the implementation of this Act shall be
2 included in the annual budget of the Municipal Government of Norzagaray. The DOT
3 may augment such allocation with internally generated funds.
4

5 **SEC. 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - Within sixty (60) days from
6 the effectivity of this Act, the Municipal Government of Norzagaray shall, in
7 consultation with the DOT, DENR and other concerned agencies of the government,
8 promulgate the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.
9

10 **SEC. 7. Separability Clause.** – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared
11 unconstitutional, the remainder hereof or any provisions not affected thereby shall
12 remain in force and effect.
13

14 **SEC. 8. Repealing Clause.** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
15 executive order, letter of instruction, rule, or regulation inconsistent with the provisions
16 of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

17 **SEC. 9. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete
18 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
19

20 *Approved,*