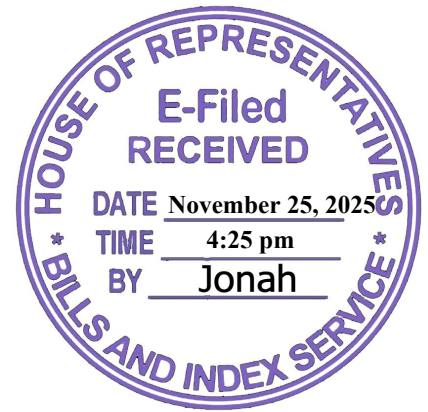


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6368



Introduced by Representative BELLA VANESSA B. SUANSING

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING CERTAIN COASTAL AND LAND AREAS LOCATED IN THE
MUNICIPALITIES OF KALAMANSIG, LEBAK, AND PALIMBANG IN THE
PROVINCE OF SULTAN KUDARAT, TO BE KNOWN AS THE “KALEPA
PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE,” AS A PROTECTED AREA UNDER
THE CATEGORY OF PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE, PROVIDING
FOR ITS MANAGEMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The Kalamansig, Lebak, and Palimbang Protected Landscape and Seascape (KALEPA PLS) possesses indispensable value for the broader marine and terrestrial biodiversity of the Philippines and the globe. The proposed KALEPA Protected Landscape and Seascape covers about eighty-three thousand seven hundred ninety-nine and eighty-five hundredths (83,799.85) hectares and is situated in the Municipalities of Kalamansig, Lebak, and Palimbang in the Province of Sultan Kudarat.

The KALEPA Protected Landscape and Seascape hosts species of international importance endemic to the area. Most notably, the area is the only known habitat for the *Kuphus polythalamia*, or Giant tubeworm, which has been featured in numerous publications, including studies from Harvard University, the American Museum of Natural History, and the University of Vienna. "Dual carbon fixation mechanisms enable tubeworm survival in harsh hydrothermal vent conditions," published by Harvard University, demonstrates that the Giant tubeworm's specialized metabolic pathways have created a breakthrough in global research on biological carbon capture, an incredibly consequential contribution to the global fight against the climate crisis. The KALEPA Protected Landscape and Seascape also hosts the vulnerable Large flying fox (*Pteropus vampyrus*) and the threatened Napoleon wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*).

The area also hosts the largest intact mangrove forest network in the Philippines, including mangrove species with conservation concerns: *Ceriops zippeliana* (Near Threatened), *Avicennia rumphiana* (Vulnerable), and *Camptostemon philippinensis*

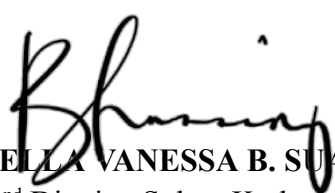
(Endangered). This ecosystem is an exemplary illustration of the biosymbiotic coalescence that occurs within extensive coral reef and mangrove forest networks as places of refuge for endangered, endemic organisms.

The protection of this area is of national importance, not only in conservation and knowledge production, but also for national and global action towards the climate crisis. As the largest intact mangrove forest network, the area has high carbon sequestration potential and could be immensely beneficial for advancing carbon credit initiatives in the Philippines. With increased clamor for nature-based solutions for disaster and flood mitigation, the network serves indispensable high-hazard mitigation function, especially in the KALEPA area, which is highly vulnerable to coastal flooding and storm surges. The area is critical to advancing progress in line with the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2028 and reducing the country's Nationally Determined Contribution.

Despite the importance of this area's conservation, no legislation has guaranteed its protection. Anthropogenic threats immediately endanger this critical environmental area. Indiscriminate over-exploitation of marine resources and dynamite fishing impede the proliferation of marine species. Mangrove forest networks are deforested to create fish ponds and fuel and wood products. Coral reef networks are destroyed by anthropogenic activities due to the incompatibility of maritime vessels and the vulnerability and fragility of species in coastal areas. Other anthropogenic threats, including irresponsible marine tourism and pollution, also destroy these ecosystems.

A prior 2020 Protected Area Suitability Assessment (PASA) conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources found that the KALEPA Protected Landscape and Seascape is suitable for inclusion in the Enhanced National Integrated Area Protection system. The KALEPA area is part of an already protected landscape and seascape network that includes the Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape, the Mt. Matutum Protected Landscape, and the Mt. Busa-Makima Protected Landscape. The KALEPA Protected Landscape and Seascape, along with its designated protection agencies, is well-suited and well-prepared for official designation as a protected area under the Expanded National Integrated Protected Area System Act of 2018. The protection of the KALEPA landscape and seascape area not only has national and international urgency but is also technically feasible.

In view of the constitutional right of the Filipino people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


HON. BELLA VANESSA B. SUANSING
2nd District, Sultan Kudarat

Republic of the Philippines
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HOUSE BILL NO. 6368

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING CERTAIN COASTAL AND LAND AREAS LOCATED IN
THE MUNICIPALITIES OF KALAMANSIG, LEBAK, AND PALIMBANG IN THE
PROVINCE OF SULTAN KUDARAT, TO BE KNOWN AS THE “KALEPA
PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE,” AS A PROTECTED AREA UNDER
THE CATEGORY OF PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE, PROVIDING
FOR ITS MANAGEMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*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 KALEPA Protected Landscape and Seascape Act of 2025.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - Cognizant of the profound impact of human activities on all components of the natural environment particularly the effect of increasing population, resource exploitation and industrial advancement, and recognizing the critical importance of protecting and maintaining the natural, biological, and physical diversities of the environment notably on areas with biologically unique features to sustain human life and development, as well as plant and animal life, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to secure for the Filipino people of present for future generations, the perpetual existence of all native plants and animals through the establishment of a comprehensive system of integrated protected areas within the classification of national park as provided for in the Constitution.

It is hereby recognized that these areas, although distinct in features, possess common ecological values that may be incorporated into a holistic plan to conserve and protect our natural heritage; that effective administration of these areas is possible only through cooperation among the national government, local governments, concerned nongovernment organizations, private organizations, and local communities; that the use and enjoyment of these protected areas much be consistent with the principles of biological diversity and sustainable development.

To this end, the Kalamansig-Lebak-Palimbang Landscape and Seascape (KALEPA PLS) area is hereby established as a protected area under the Enhanced National Integrated

Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 2018. The area shall be recognized as a conservation area by local government units (LGUs), local communities and indigenous peoples (IPs).

The State shall ensure the full implementation of this Act, the mobilization of resources for the institutional mechanisms established herein, and the full scientific and technical support needed for the conservation of biodiversity and the integrity of ecosystems, culture and indigenous practices.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. - For the purpose of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- (a) Biological diversity or biodiversity refers to the variability among the living organisms from all sources, including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems;
- (b) Bioprospecting refers to the research, collection, and utilization of biological and genetic resources for purposes of applying the knowledge derived there from solely for commercial purposes;
- (c) 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;
- (d) By-products or derivatives refer to parts taken or substances extracted from wildlife, in raw or in processed form;
- (e) Collecting refers to the act of gathering or harvesting wildlife and its by-products or derivatives;
- (f) Conveyance refers to every kind of vessel, including motorized or non-motorized vehicles, non-displacement crafts and seaplanes that are used or may be used as a means of transportation on land or water. It shall include everything found therein except personal effects;
- (g) Delineation refers to the actual ground survey of the boundaries of Protected Areas and their buffer zones and management zones using the global positioning system (GPS), real-time kinematic (RTK) positioning or other applicable survey instruments and technologies, with the intention of producing a map of the area;
- (h) Demarcation refers to the establishment of the boundaries of protected areas and their buffer zones using visible markers, monuments, buoys in case of marine areas, and known natural features and landmarks, among others, as a result of the actual ground delineation;
- (i) Ecosystem goods and services refers to the multitude of material and nonmaterial provisions and benefits from healthy ecosystems necessary for human sustenance, well-being, and survival, including support processes, provisioning and environment regulating services, and cultural resource preservation services;
- (j) Endemic species refers to the species or subspecies of flora and fauna which are naturally occurring and found within specific areas in the country;

- (k) Exotic species refer to the species or subspecies of flora and fauna which do not naturally occur within the protected area at present or in historical time;
- (l) Exploration refers to the act of searching or prospecting for mineral resources, as defined by law, by geological, geochemical or geophysical surveys, remote sensing, test pitting, trenching, drilling, shaft sinking, tunneling, or any other means, for the purpose of determining the existence, extent, quantity, and quality of resources in an area, and the feasibility of utilizing these resources for profit;
- (m) Gear refers to any instrument or device and its accessories utilized in taking, catching gathering, killing, hunting, destroying, disturbing, removing, or possessing resources within the protected area;
- (n) Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) refers to any living organism that possesses a novel combination of genetic material through the use of modern biotechnology;
- (o) Hunting refers to the killing or catching of wild fauna for food and recreational purposes, with the use of weapons such as guns, bow and arrows, spears, traps and snares, and the like;
- (p) Indigenous Cultural Community (ICC)/Indigenous People (IP) refers to a group of people sharing common bonds of language, customs traditions, and other distinctive cultural traits, and who have, since time immemorial occupied, possessed and utilized a territory;
- (q) Integrated Protected Area Fund (IPAF) refers to the special account established for the purpose of financing projects of the NIPAS and individual protected areas;
- (r) Invasive alien species refers to species introduced deliberately or unintentionally outside their natural habitats where they have the ability to establish themselves, invade, outcompete native species, and take over the new environment;
- (s) Kaingin refers to the slash-and-burn cultivation of vegetated land in a protected area, whether occupied or not, shifting and permanent with little or no provision to prevent soil erosion;
- (t) Multiple-use zone refers to the area where settlement and 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;
- (u) National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) refers to the classification and administration of all designated protected areas to maintain essential ecological processes and life-support systems, to preserve genetic diversity, to ensure sustainable use of resources found therein, and to maintain their natural conditions to the greatest extent possible;
- (v) National park refers to the lands of the public domain classified as such in the Constitution which include all areas under the NIPAS pursuant to this Act, primarily designated for the conservation of native plants and animals, their associated habitats and cultural diversity;

- (w) Occupying refers to a continuous stay of individuals or groups within a protected area, whether residing or engaging in the cultivation of land or fishing for more than twenty-four (24) hours;
- (x) Poaching refers to gathering, collecting, or possessing products or natural resources from the protected area by any individual person, corporation or entity whether local or foreign; in the case of marine protected areas, operating any foreign fishing vessels by any person, corporation, or entity without a permit;
- (y) Protected area refers to identified portions of land and/or water set aside by reason of their unique physical and biological diversity and protected against destructive human exploitation;
- (z) Protected Area Occupants refers to persons who are residing, utilizing, and cultivating areas within the protected area. These include private owners, IPs, tenured migrants and informal settlers;
- (aa) Protected Area Retained Income Account refers to the trust fund maintained by any protected area and administered by the respective Protected Area Management Boards (PAMB) created pursuant to this Act representing the seventy-five percent (75%) of revenues generated from the protected area to support its operation and management;
- (bb) Protected landscapes and/or seascapes refer to areas of national significance which are characterized by the harmonious interaction of man, land and water while providing opportunities for public enjoyment through recreation, tourism, and other economic activities;
- (cc) Protected species refers to plants or animals declared protected under Philippine laws, rules, and regulations. These shall include all species listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and all its Annexes, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), those specified under the red-list categories of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, PAMB or any government agency may deem necessary for conservation and preservation in the protected area;
- (dd) Quarrying refers to the process of extracting, removing, and disposing of sand, gravel, guano, limestone, and all other resources used as building and construction materials that are found within the protected area;
- (ee) Resource reserve refers to an extensive, relatively isolated, and uninhabited area which is difficult to access and is designated to protect the natural resources of the area for future use and prevent or contain development activities that could affect the resources, pending the establishment of sustainable resources utilization goals which are based upon appropriate information and planning;
- (ff) Special Account in the General Fund (SAGF) refers to the trust fund deposited in the national treasury representing the twenty-five percent (25%) of the revenues generated from the operation of individual protected area and earmarked to support the NIPAS;
- (gg) Tenure migrants refer to protected area occupants who have been actually, continuously and presently occupying a portion of the protected area for five (5) years

before the proclamation or law establishing the same as a protected area, and are solely dependent therein for subsistence;

- (hh) Threatened species refer to species or subspecies considered critically endangered, vulnerable, or other accepted categories of wildlife whose population is at risk of extinction;
- (ii) Wildlife refers to the wild forms and varieties of flora and fauna, in all developmental stages, including those which are in captivity or are being bred, fed, or propagated; and
- (jj) Wildlife Sanctuary. - refers to an area which assures the natural conditions necessary to protect nationally significant species, groups of species, biotic communities, or physical features of the environment that may require specific human manipulations for their perpetuation.

SECTION 4. Scope and Coverage. - The KALEPA PLS shall cover certain landscape and seascape situated in the municipalities of Kalamansig, Lebak and Palimbang in the Province of Sultan Kudarat. The boundaries of KALEPA PLS, containing an area of 83,799.85 hectares, subject to demarcation are as follows:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

LONGITUDE	LATTITUDE	NUMBER
124.456	6.18008	0
124.488	6.17756	1
124.427	6.2053	2
124.397	6.20982	3
124.393	6.20724	4
124.389	6.20602	5
124.389	6.020276	6
124.39	6.2001	7
124.391	6.19866	8
124.391	6.19664	9
124.392	6.19298	10
124.39	6.18929	11
124.388	6.18721	12
124.385	6.18488	13
124.381	6.18144	14
124.38	6.17849	15
124.377	6.17254	16
124.377	6.16025	17
124.372	6.15249	18
124.373	6.14501	19
124.367	6.14088	20
124.369	6.13832	21
124.367	6.13656	22
124.372	6.13004	23
124.373	6.12726	24
124.378	6.1217	25

LONGITUDE	LATTITUDE	NUMBER
124.382	6.11755	26
124.384	6.11456	27
124.383	6.11301	28
124.376	6.11111	29
124.375	6.10878	30
124.38	6.10277	31
124.385	6.10183	32
124.389	6.09956	33
124.39	6.09782	34
124.39	6.09614	35
124.392	6.09413	36
124.393	6.09298	37
124.395	6.09217	38
124.397	6.09197	39
124.397	6.09365	40
124.398	6.10885	41
124.399	6.11026	42
124.438	6.11046	43
124.414	6.10531	44
124.415	6.10064	45
124.418	6.10031	46
124.421	6.10149	47
124.422	6.1032	48
124.429	6.1089	49
124.433	6.11353	50
124.445	6.11478	51
124.446	6.1067	52
124.44	6.09657	53
124.431	6.08372	54
124.445	6.07229	55
124.455	6.07558	56
124.451	6.08014	57
124.454	6.08892	58
124.472	6.09661	59
124.483	6.09576	60
124.489	6.08142	61
124.493	6.07509	62
124.51	6.06867	63
124.537	6.06929	64
124.553	6.05577	65
124.56	6.04057	66
124.566	6.02748	67
124.566	6.02111	68
124.568	6.0197	69
124.589	6.01692	70

LONGITUDE	LATTITUDE	NUMBER
124.603	6.02519	71
124.634	6.00938	72
124.641	5.99373	73
124.644	5.99235	74
124.658	5.99009	75
124.669	5.98907	76
124.69	5.97042	77
124.715	5.965627	78
124.73	5.96717	79
124.74	5.96019	80
124.749	5.95873	81
124.758	5.95212	82
124.76	5.94262	83
124.769	5.92715	84
124.782	5.93656	85
124.802	5.9154	86
124.813	5.9124	87
124.838	5.91202	88
124.834	5.90554	89
124.836	5.90133	90
124.841	5.89571	91
124.842	5.89345	92
124.848	5.89088	93
124.874	5.88172	94
124.891	5.88911	95
124.903	5.88185	96
124.912	5.86831	97
124.917	5.86571	98
124.923	5.89095	99
124.945	5.86638	100
124.958	5.87025	101
124.968	5.86805	102
124.981	5.86975	103
125.005	5.8869	104
125.011	5.87081	105
125.024	5.87581	106
125.031	5.862	107
125.031	5.85734	108
125.033	5.85498	109
125.038	5.85406	110
125.044	5.85607	111
125.053	5.86085	112
125.058	5.85713	113
125.06	5.85665	114
125.066	5.86082	115

LONGITUDE	LATTITUDE	NUMBER
125.069	5.86215	116
125.071	5.86534	117
125.084	5.87709	118
125.083	5.8795	119
125.082	5.88045	120
125.081	5.88086	121
125.08	5.88191	122
125.075	5.88836	123
125.076	5.89417	124
125.077	5.89538	125
125.078	5.89753	126
125.078	5.89947	127
125.078	5.90063	128
125.078	5.9015	129
125.08	5.90203	130
125.08	5.9037	131
125.082	5.90593	132
125.083	5.90579	133
125.084	5.90699	134
125.086	5.90671	135
125.087	5.90743	136
125.087	5.90743	137
125.089	5.90929	138
125.092	5.91155	139
125.096	5.91303	140
125.096	5.91452	141
125.097	5.91659	142
125.098	5.9194	143
125.099	5.92114	144
125.098	5.92221	145
125.097	5.92277	146
125.095	5.92504	147
125.095	5.92504	148
125.094	5.92588	149
125.093	5.93292	150
125.096	5.94799	151
125.101	5.95476	152
125.096	5.95843	153
125.089	5.96037	154
125.084	5.96502	155
125.078	5.9658	156
125.072	5.96192	157
125.068	5.96502	158
125.064	5.96522	159
125.059	5.96464	160

LONGITUDE	LATTITUDE	NUMBER
125.055	5.9625	161
125.053	5.96347	162
125.054	6.07872	163
125.006	6.07834	164
125.006	6.07748	165
125.006	6.01834	166
124.825	6.01888	167
124.825	6.03656	168
124.764	6.06008	169
124.706	6.08224	170
124.639	6.11005	171
124.535	6.15711	172

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall appropriately mark the technical descriptions provided in this Act with clearly visible markers and shall prepare appropriate maps therefore. Any modification of the coverage of this Act due to such factors as changing ecological situations, new scientific or archaeological findings, or discovery of traditional boundaries not previously taken into account shall be made through an act of Congress, after consultation with the affected stakeholders and concerned government agencies.

All lands and waters comprising the KALEPA PLS shall fall under the classification of National Park as provided for in the Philippine Constitution subject to prior right.

SECTION 5. Management Plan. - Within one (1) year from the establishment of the KALEPA PLS, a comprehensive management plan shall be developed to serve as the long-term strategic framework for guiding its management, as well as for the formulation of its annual operations plan and budget.

The management plan shall, at the minimum, promote the adoption and implementation of innovative management techniques, including, when necessary, zoning, buffer zone management, habitat conservation and rehabilitation, diversity management, community organizing and development, socioeconomic and scientific researches, site-specific policy development, climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction and management, waste sewerage and septic management, and gender and development, among others.

The plan shall be harmonized with the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) required under Republic Act No. 8371, or "The Indigenous People's Right Act of 1997"; the respective Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs) of local governments required under Republic Act No. 7160, or the "Local Government Code of 1991"; and other local plans.

SECTION 6. Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) of KALEPA Protected Landscape and Seascape - Within three (3) months after the effectivity of this Act, a PAMB shall be created for KALEPA PLS. The Board shall be composed of the following:

- (a) The Regional Executive Director (RED) of DENR Region XII, as Chairperson;

- (b) The Provincial Governor of the Sultan Kudarat Province, or their authorized permanent representative;
- (c) District Representative of the 2nd District of Sultan Kudarat, or their authorized permanent representative, unless the District Representative declines membership in the PAMB;
- (d) Mayors of Kalamansig, Lebak, and Palimbang in the Province of Sultan Kudarat, or their authorized permanent representative/s;
- (e) Chairperson/s of all the *barangay*/s with jurisdiction of the KALEPA PLS;
- (f) Regional Directors of the following government agencies, namely: the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Economy, Planning and Development, the Department of Science and Technology, the Philippine National Police, Office of Civil Defense, the Department of Tourism, and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples;
- (g) Three (3) representatives from 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 a track record in or related to protected area management;
- (h) At least one (1) but not more than three (3) representatives from all the IPs/ICCs present in the area and recognized by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP);
- (i) One (1) representative from an academic institution, preferably from a university or college in Sultan Kudarat, with a proven track record in or related to the protected area management; and
- (j) One (1) representative from the private sector, preferably a resident of Sultan Kudarat, who is distinguished in a profession or field of interest relevant to the protected area management.

Ex officio members or members of the **PAMB** by virtue of their elective or appointive government positions as specified in the immediately preceding subparagraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g), shall serve for the duration of their respective terms of office in their respective elective or appointive government positions.

On the other hand, the members of the PAMB specified under subparagraphs (h), (i), (j), and (k) of this section shall be appointed by the DENR Secretary after the conduct of a transparent and fair selection process. They shall each serve a term of three (3) years and may be reappointed for another term.

The members of the PAMB shall serve without compensation, except for the actual and necessary traveling and subsistence expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, either in their attendance in meetings of the PAMB or in connection with other official business authorized through a resolution of the PAMB, subject to existing rules and regulations. Each member shall have the full capacity and accountability for decisions binding to the member's sector.

If feasible, at least forty percent (40%) of the PAMB members shall be women, pursuant to R.A. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women.

A member of the PAMB may be removed for any of the following grounds:

- “(1) More than three (3) consecutive unexcused absences from regular meetings of the management board;”
- “(2) Commission of acts prejudicial to the management of protected areas as embodied in Section 19 hereof and/or other existing rules and regulations governing protected areas;”
- “(3) Disassociation from the office or organization being represented;”
- “(4) Termination of relationship with the office or organization being represented; or”
- “(5) Conviction by final judgment of any criminal act.”

SECTION 7-A. Functions and Responsibilities of the PAMB - The PAMB shall have the following powers and functions:

- (a) Oversee the management of the protected area;
- (b) Approve policies, plans and programs, proposals, agreements, research studies and other related documents for the management of the protected areas;
- (c) Approve the management plan of the protected area and ensure its harmonization and integration with the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan, land use plan and other development plan public or private, and their sustainable 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 protected area;
- (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 the 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 governing authorities;
- (j) Monitor and assess the performance of the protected area personnel and compliance of partners with the 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 protected area: 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 Executive 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 7-B. The Protected Area Management Office (PAMO). - There is hereby established a Protected Area Management Office (PAMO) to be headed by a Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) with a permanent plantilla position who shall supervise the day management, protection, and administration of the protected area. A sufficient number of support staff with permanent plantilla positions shall be appointed by the DENR to assist the PASu in the management of the protected area.

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

- (a) Lead the preparation of 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 protected area 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, 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 the protected area. 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 on the implementation of management activities of KALEPA PLS;
- (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 KALEPA PLS;

- (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 the protected area: 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 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 8. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). - Considering that the KALEPA PLS is an environmentally critical areas, the proponent of development projects and activities with potentially significant adverse impacts as determined by the Environmental Management Bureaus (EMB), whether or not these projects or activities are included in the management plan, shall secure an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) in accordance with the Philippine Environment Impact Statement (EIS) System: Provided, That for development projects and activities that are not environmentally critical, an initial environmental examination (IEE) shall be undertaken instead of a full-blown EIA. No project or activity may be undertaken by any project proponent without prior clearance from the PAMB. The DENR shall require the submission of the PAMB clearance, among others, before issuing an ECC to a project proponent.

No actual implementation of such activities shall be allowed without the required ECC under the Philippine EIA System. Violations of environmental laws, rules and regulations, including those under the EIA System, shall be penalized accordingly.

SECTION 9. Ancestral Domain and Customary Rights. - Ancestral domains and customary rights shall be accorded due recognition.

As part of heritage preservation and pursuant to the need to conserve biologically significant areas, the territories and areas occupied and conserved for and by IPs and communities shall be recognized, respected, developed, and promoted.

The ICCs and IPs concerned shall have the responsibility to govern, maintain, develop, protect, and conserve such areas, in accordance with their indigenous knowledge systems and practices and customary law, with full and effective assistance from the NCIP, DENR, and other concerned government agencies.

A mechanism for coordination and complementation between the indigenous traditional leadership and governance structures and the NCIP, DENR, government agencies, concerned LGUs and civil society organizations shall be created.

SECTION 10. Energy Resources. - Consistent with the policies declared in Section 2 hereof, the exploration for energy sources may be allowed in KALEPA PLS only for the

purpose of gathering data and information and only if such activity is carried out with the least damage to surrounding areas.

Surveys for non-renewable energy projects shall be conducted only in accordance with a program approved by the DENR, and the results of such surveys shall be made available to the public and submitted to the President, who shall make the appropriate recommendations to Congress. The development and operation of nonrenewable energy projects are prohibited in areas categorized as strict nature reserves and natural parks.

Renewable energy projects may be allowed within the KALEPA PLS by the PAMB with the concurrence of the DENR Secretary: *Provided*, That renewable energy projects, which shall be located outside the strict protection zone, shall undergo the EIA as provided by law and shall adopt reduced impact technologies so as not to be detrimental to ecosystem functions, biodiversity, cultural practices, and traditions: *Provided*, That sufficient bond shall be remitted by the proponent to the DENR. The amount of which will be based on damage estimation upon decommissioning and the projected cost of rehabilitation. It shall be released to the depositor upon the satisfactory decommissioning of all equipment, structures, and improvements and the rehabilitation of the site according to the zones and objectives of the management plan as attested to by the PAMB.

SECTION 11. Integrated Protected Area Fund (IPAF). - There is hereby established a trust fund to be known as the Integrated Protected Area Fund (IPAF) for the purpose of financing the projects and sustaining the operations of KALEPA PLS. Income generated from the operation and management of KALEPA PLS shall accrue to the KALEPA PLS-IPAF. The income shall be derived from fees and charges from the use of resources and facilities of KALEPA PLS; contributions from industries and facilities directly benefiting from the KALEPA PLS; and such other fees and income derived from the operation of the KALEPA PLS.

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 disbursement out of such deposits shall be used solely for the protection, maintenance, administration, and management of the KALEPA PLS and implementation of duly approved projects of the PAMB.

Grants, donations, and endowments from various sources, domestic or foreign, shall be deposited in full in a special account in the National Treasury to be used for the purpose specified in the deeds and instruments covering them.

Voluntary or legislated payments for ecosystem goods and services, including fines, penalties, and compensation for damages from KALEPA PLS offenses, shall accrue fully to the PA-RIA and shall be managed by 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 System.

The use of the IPAF shall be in accordance with existing accounting, budgeting, and auditing rules and regulations: *Provided*, further, that the IPAF shall not be used to cover personal services expenditures.

The DENR shall submit to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Department of Finance (DOF) quarterly reports on the financial and physical accomplishments on the utilization of the IPAF and other documents as may be required by the DBM and shall furnish a copy of the same to the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance.

SECTION 12. Tax Exemption. - All grants, bequests and endowments, donations, and contributions made to the protected area fund to be used actually, directly, and exclusively by the KALEPA PLS shall be exempted from donor's tax and shall be considered as an allowable deduction from the gross income of the donor for the purpose of computing the taxable income of the donor in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

SECTION 13. Special Prosecutors and Retained Counsel. - Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Justice (DOJ) shall appoint special prosecutors to prosecute violations of laws, rules and regulations in KALEPA PLS. The special prosecutors shall coordinate with the PAMB and the PASu in the performance of duties and assist in the training of wardens and rangers in arrest and criminal procedures. The PAMB may retain the services of counsel for the prosecution of cases under the direct control and supervision of the regular or special prosecutor. Said counsel shall also represent and defend the members of the PAMB, PASu and the staff, or any DENR-deputized individual and volunteer, against any legal action arising from the performance of their powers, functions, and responsibilities as provided in this Act.

SECTION 14. Prohibited Acts. - Except as may be allowed by the nature of their categories and pursuant to rules and regulations governing the same, the following acts are prohibited within KALEPA PLS:

- (a) Poaching, killing, destroying, or disturbing of any wildlife including in private lands within the KALEPA PLS;
- (b) Hunting, taking, collecting, or possessing of any wildlife, or by-products derived therefrom, including in private lands within KALEPA PLS without the necessary permit, authorization or exemption: Provided, That the PASu as authorization or exemption only for culling, scientific research, the exemptions provided under Section 27(a) of Republic Act No. 9147 (Wildlife Resources, Conservation and Protection Act) or harvests of non-protected species in multiple-use zones by tenured migrants and IPs;
- (c) Cutting, gathering, removing or collecting timber within KALEPA PLS including private lands therein, without the necessary permit, authorization, certification of planted trees or exemption such acts are done in accordance with the duly recognized practices of the IPs/ICCs for subsistence purposes;
- (d) Possessing or transporting outside KALEPA PLS any timber, forest products, wildlife, or by-products derived therefrom which are ascertained to have been taken from KALEPA PLS other than exotic species, the culling of which has been authorized under an appropriate permit;
- (e) Using any harvesting tool or any variation that destroys terrestrial habitat as may be determined by the DA or the DENR; Provided, that mere possession of such tools within KALEPA PLS shall be prima facie evidence of their use;

- (f) Dumping, throwing, using, or causing to be dumped into or places in KALEPA PLS of any toxic chemical, noxious or poisonous substance or non-biodegradable material; untreated sewage or animal waste or products whether in liquid, solid or gas state, including pesticides and other hazardous substances as defined under Republic Act No. 6969, otherwise known as the "Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990," detrimental to KALEPA PLS or to the plants and animals or inhabitants therein;
- (g) Operating any motorized conveyance within KALEPA PLS without a permit from the PAMB, except when the use of such motorized conveyance is the only practical means of transportation of IPs/ICC's in accessing their ancestral domain/land;
- (h) Altering, removing, destroying or defacing boundary marks or signs within KALEPA PLS;
- (i) Engaging in 'kaingin' or, any manner, causing forest fires inside KALEPA PLS;
- (j) Mutilating, defacing, destroying, excavating, vandalizing or, in any manner damaging any natural formation, religious, spiritual, historical sites, artifacts and other objects of natural beauty, scenic value or objects of interest to IPs/ICC's;
- (k) Damaging and leaving roads and trails in damaged condition;
- (l) Littering or depositing refuse or debris on the ground or in bodies of water/river systems;
- (m) Possessing or using blasting caps or explosives anywhere within KALEPA PLS;
- (n) Occupying or dwelling in any public land within KALEPA PLS without clearance from the PAMB;
- (o) Constructing, erecting, or maintaining any kind of structure, fence or enclosure, conducting any business enterprise within KALEPA PLS without prior clearance from the PAMB and permit from the DENR, or conducting these activities in a manner that is inconsistent with the management plan duly approved by the PAMB;
- (p) Undertaking mineral exploration or extraction within KALEPA PLS;
- (q) Engaging in commercial or large-scale quarrying within KALEPA PLS;
- (r) Establishing or introducing exotic species, including GMOs or invasive alien species, within KALEPA PLS;
- (s) Conducting bioprospecting within KALEPA PLS without prior PAMB clearance in accordance with existing guidelines: Provided, That in addition to the penalty provided herein, any commercial use of any substance derived from non-permitted bioprospecting within a protected area will not be allowed, and all revenue earned from illegal commercialization thereof shall be forfeited and deposited as part of the IPAF;
- (t) Prospecting, hunting or otherwise locating hidden treasure within KALEPA PLS;
- (u) Purchasing or selling, mortgaging or leasing lands or other portions of KALEPA PLS which are covered by any tenurial instrument; and

- (v) Constructing any permanent structure within the forty (40)-meter easement from any natural body of water (river) or issuing a permit for such construction pursuant to Article 51 of Presidential Decree No. 1067.

SECTION 15. Penalties. - Violation under this Act shall be subject to the following penalties:

- (a) A fine of not less than Two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000) but not more than One million pesos (P1,000,000) or imprisonment from one (1) year but not more than six (6) years, or both, plus damages of triple the value of the said resources, or both, shall be imposed upon any person who violates paragraphs (a) to (e) of Section 14 of this Act;
- (b) A fine of not less than Two hundred thousand pesos (200,000) but not more than One million pesos (P1,000,000) or imprisonment from one (1) year but not more than six (6) years, or both, shall be imposed upon any person who violates paragraphs (f) to (p) of Section 14 of this Act;
- (c) A fine of not less than One million pesos (P1,000,000) but not more than Five million pesos (P5,000,000) or imprisonment from six (6) years but not more than twelve (12) years, or both, shall be imposed upon any person who violates paragraphs (o) to (v) of Section 14 herein;
- (d) A fine of fifty thousand pesos (P50,000) daily shall be imposed on the owner of existing facilities within a protected area under Section 19 of this Act if the existence of the same and its future plans and operations will be detrimental to KALEPA PLS. For every continuing violation, or if the violation continues to be committed for thirty (30) days and upon reaching a total fine of Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000), the PAMB through the PASu and other deputized government entities, shall cause the cessation of operation and either forfeit in favor of the PAMO or demolish the facility at the cost of its owner. If the facility is government-owned, the agency in charge shall submit a plan for a substitute facility that complies with the protected area standards and, within one (1) year, execute the approved protected area management plan;
- (e) Administrative fines of not less Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000), but not exceeding Five million pesos (P5,000,000), shall be imposed by the DENR Secretary for the violation of any rule, regulation, or provision of any agreement reached with the PAMB: Provided, That if an area which has sustained damage from any activity conducted therein requires rehabilitation or restoration as determined by the court, the offender shall be required to restore or pay compensation for damage, which payment shall accrue to the IPAF.

On the basis of a court order, the DENR shall cause the eviction of an offender from the KALEPA PLS: Provided that in cases of emergency, the DENR Secretary may order the immediate exit or departure of the offender from KALEPA PLS. The DENR Secretary may call on other enforcement agencies to assist in executing the order to vacate.

An emergency occurs when there is a demonstrated impending threat to human life and biodiversity or to species found within the ecosystem of the KALEPA PLS.

All minerals, timber, or species collected or removed from the KALEPA PLS, including all equipment, devices, conveyances, and firearms used in connection therewith,

shall be forfeited in favor of the government, and any construction or improvement made thereon by the offender shall be subject to confiscation by the PAMO, subject to the application of due process.

The conveyance, equipment, paraphernalia, implements, tools, and similar devices used in the commission of the crime shall be dealt with in accordance with Part 4, Rule 12 (Custody and Disposition of Seized Items, Equipment, Paraphernalia, Conveyance, and Instruments) of Administrative Matter No. 09-6-8-SC (Rules of Procedures for Environmental Cases) issued by the Supreme Court. However, in no case shall any confiscated or rescued protected animal species be sold or in any manner disposed of but shall be immediately turned over to the PAMO for rehabilitation and release to its natural habitat, subject to existing regulations. Valuation of the damages shall take into account biodiversity and conservation considerations as well as aesthetic and scenic value. The valuation and assessment by the DENR, in coordination with other concerned government agencies, shall be presumed regular, unless otherwise proven by the preponderance of evidence.

If the offender is an association or corporation, the president or manager, who is proven to have participated in or have actual knowledge of any violation against the provisions of this Act shall be directly liable for the act of the employees and laborers: Provided, finally, That the DENR may impose administrative fines and penalties consistent with this Act.

Any person who shall induce another or conspire to commit any of the acts prohibited in this Act, or force their workers to commit any of the same, shall be liable as principal.

The penalties specified in this section shall be in addition to the penalties provided in Republic Act No. 9072, or the National Caves and Cave Resources Management and Protection Act; Republic Act No. 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act; Republic Act No. 8550, or the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998; and other related laws.

The conviction of a public officer of the law, whether from the LGU or any national government agency, for any violation of the provisions of this Act shall carry the accessory penalty of perpetual disqualification from public office.

SECTION 16. Existing Rights. - All property and private rights within the KALEPA PLS and its buffer zones already existing and/or vested upon the effectivity of this 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 this Act. Notwithstanding this Act, all existing rights, contracts, or agreements entered into by the government for utilization of natural resources within KALEPA PLS shall continue to be recognized and governed by Philippine laws.

The renewal of permits, contracts, and agreements shall be subject to the provisions of this Act. If the permits, contracts, and agreements are not renewed, such areas shall be rehabilitated or restored by the permit holders within the period provided by the pertinent laws and shall revert to the National Parks classification. As such, all holders of permits, contracts, and agreements are required to prepare and submit a rehabilitation plan to the PAMB: Provided, That upon renewal, a sufficient bond shall be remitted by the proponent to the DENR to be released to the depository bank in the event of damage by a closure of the

establishment after satisfactory rehabilitation according to the zones and objectives of the management plan as attested to by the PAMB.

The occupation of the LGUs and communities within the KALEPA PLS shall be respected. Within ninety (90) days after the creation of the PAMB, the Board shall assess the physical occupation of said LGUs and communities within KALEPA PLS and recommend to proper authorities measures to ensure the protection of their well-being. Municipalities with existing townships and town centers within the KALEPA PLS shall continue to occupy such townships and town centers: Provided, That in the development of their CLUPs and barangay development plans, due consideration shall be given to the intended for conservation and biodiversity as well as the objectives for KALEPA PLS to keep human habitation and environmental conservation in harmony.

SECTION 17. Tenure Migrants and Other KALEPA PLS Occupants. - Tenure migrants shall be eligible to become stewards portions of lands within multiple-use zones. The PAMB shall identify, verify, and review all tenurial instruments, land claims, and issuances of permits for resource use within the KALEPA PLS and recommend the issuance of the appropriate tenure instrument consistent with the zoning provided in the management plan and the provisions of this Act.

Should areas occupied by tenured migrants be designated as zones in which no occupation or other activities are allowed pursuant to the attainment of sustainable development, the provision for the transfer of the tenure migrants to multiple-use zones or buffer zones shall be accomplished through just and humane means: Provided, that KALEPA PLS occupants who are not qualified as tenured migrants shall be resettled outside the KALEPA PLS.

The rights of the tenured migrants may be transferred only to the spouse or one of their direct descendants listed at the time of the survey. In the event of termination of a tenurial instrument for cause or by voluntary surrender of rights, the PASu shall take immediate steps to rehabilitate the area.

Following the protected area occupants survey required under Section 5(c)(1) of the NIPAS Act as amended, the DENR Regional Executive Director shall submit to the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) within two (2) years from the passage of this Act, the final list of tenured migrants, which shall be the basis for tenured migrants' recognition and issuance of tenurial instruments. Within the two (2)-year period, the DENR Regional Executive Director shall submit an accomplishment report every six (6) months.

The DENR through the BMB shall issue guidelines for the determination of the reckoning period for the recognition of the tenured migrants.

SECTION 18. Existing Facilities within the KALEPA PLS. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, an inventory of all existing facilities such as roads, buildings and structures, water systems, transmission lines, communication facilities, heavy equipment, and irrigation facilities, among others, within KALEPA PLS shall be conducted.

The DENR Regional Executive Director shall submit the inventory of the facilities with corresponding descriptions and an assessment report containing the appropriate recommendations to the DENR Secretary through the BMB.

The PAMB, with the assistance of the DENR, may impose conditions for the continuous operation of a facility found to be detrimental to the KALEPA PLS until its

eventual relocation. If the conditions are violated, the owner of the facility shall be made liable pursuant to Section 21 (d) NIPAS Act as amended.

Existing facilities allowed to remain within the KALEPA PLS shall be charged a reasonable fee by the PAMB based on existing guidelines. Structures found within the forty (40)-meter easement shall be demolished unless proven necessary to protect the river and mitigate habitat destruction. The PAMB shall levy a reasonable fee for the use of such easement for their continued operations.

SECTION 19. Special Uses within Protected Area. - Consistent with Section 2 hereof, special uses may be allowed within KALEPA PLS except in strict protection zones. The PAMB may recommend the issuance of tenurial instrument subject to compliance to ECC and payment of corresponding user fee equivalent to five percent (5%) of the zonal value of commercial land within the nearest barangay or municipality where the project is located multiplied by the area of development plus one percent (1%) value of improvement as premium: Provided, that the activity shall not be detrimental to ecosystem functions and biodiversity and cultural practices and traditions.

A sufficient bond shall be remitted by the proponent to the DENR to be released to the depository bank in the event of damage by or closure of the establishment after the satisfactory rehabilitation according to the zones and objectives of the management plan as attested by the PAMB.

SECTION 20. Local Government Units. (LGUs). - The LGUs within KALEPA PLS shall participate in its management through representation in the PAMB as provided for in ENIPAS Act as amended. Said LGUs may appropriate portions of their share from the annual internal revenue allotment and other income for use of the KALEPA PLS: Provided, that all funds directly coming from the LGUs shall be exempted from the twenty-five percent (25%) remittance requirement for the IPAF under Section 16 of NIPAS Act as amended.

The LGUs shall continue to impose and collect other fees not enumerated under Section 16 of NIPAS Act as amended, which they have traditionally collected, such as business permits and rentals of LGU facilities: Provided, That the LGUs shall not impose property tax on properties owned by the government nor issue any tax declarations for areas covered by the protected area. Furthermore, LGUs may charge add-ons to fees imposed by the PAMB: Provided that such add-ons shall be based on the contribution of the LGUs in the maintenance and protection of KALEPA PLS.

LGUs with territory in KALEPA PLS shall align their Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs), local development plans, disaster risk reduction management plans, and other required plans according to the objectives specified herein and in the protected area management plans. Within six (6) months from the approval of the protected area management plan, the PAMB and the PASu shall collaborate with the LGU concerned in the formulation of the CLUP and other local plans and in the enforcement thereof. The concerned LGU official shall be held administratively and criminally liable for failure to enforce and/or implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 21. Reporting Responsibility. - The PASu, through the PAMB, shall submit an annual accomplishment report of KALEPA PLS to the Secretary of DENR through the BMB. A report on the conditions and benefits of the biological resources and ecosystem services of KALEPA PLS shall also be submitted by the PASu, through channels, to the Secretary of the DENR every five (5) years. Consequently, the BMB shall likewise prepare a

National State of Protected Areas (NSPAs) report every five (5) years and shall submit the same to the President, the Senate, and the House of Representatives.

SECTION 22. Appropriations. - The Secretary of the DENR shall immediately include in the DENR's program the implementation of KALEPA PLS Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act of the DENR.

SECTION 23. Construction and Interpretation. The provisions of this Act shall be construed liberally in favor of the protection and rehabilitation of KALEPA PLS and the conservation and restoration of biological diversity taking into account the needs and interests of qualified tenured migrants, vested rights, IPs and local communities, and the benefits from ecosystem services and functions of KALEPA PLS for present and future generations: Provided, That nothing in this Act shall be construed as a diminution of local autonomy or in derogation of ancestral domain rights under the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997.

SECTION 24. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the DENR shall prepare the IRR of this Act.

SECTION 25. Transitory Provision. - In order to enhance biological diversity and to develop sustainable livelihood opportunities for tenure migrants, the DENR shall henceforth cease to issue concessions, licenses, permits, clearances, compliance documents, or other instruments that allow utilization of resources within the KALEPA PLS until the management plan shall have been put into effect.

All existing land use and resource use permits issued for purposes which are authorized within the KALEPA PLS shall be reviewed and shall not be renewed upon their expiration unless consistent with the management plan and approved by the PAMB."

SECTION 26. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 27. 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 28. 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,