



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 9508

BY REPRESENTATIVES DY (F.), MADRONA, SUANSING (M.A.), CHAN (J.), SALVAME, ANGARA, ALVAREZ (J.), KHO (E.), TUAN, MIRAFLORES, HORIBATA, YAP (J.G.), AGYAO, ALANO, DALOG, MOMO, SINGSON (R.V.), CALDERON, YÑARES, CORVERA, REGENCIA, CASTRO, GONZALES (A.M.), TUPAS, PLEYTO, BANCORO, RODRIGUEZ (E.), BELTRAN, DAZA, DEL MAR, GUINTU, BARBA, CAGAS, CAYTON, COLLANTES, ROMAN, ROQUE, UMALI, SUAN AND ALBANO

AN ACT
DECLARING BARANGAY SAN MIGUEL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ECHAGUE,
PROVINCE OF ISABELA, AS AN ECOTOURISM ZONE

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 “San Miguel Ecotourism
2 Zone Act.”

3 **SEC. 2. *Barangay San Miguel as an Ecotourism Zone.*** – Barangay San Miguel in the
4 Municipality of Echague, Province of Isabela, is hereby declared an ecotourism zone. Pursuant
5 thereto, its development shall be prioritized and supported by the Department of Tourism
6 (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism zones.

7 **SEC. 3. *San Miguel Ecotourism Development Council.*** – The San Miguel Ecotourism
8 Development Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, is hereby created. It shall be
9 composed of ten (10) members, as follows:

1 (a) *Ex-Officio* Members

2 (1) DOT Regional Director for Region 2, as Chairperson;

3 (2) Mayor of the Municipality of Echague, as Co-Chairperson;

4 (3) Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Regional Director for
5 Region 2, or a duly authorized representative;

6 (4) Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Regional Director for
7 Region 2, or a duly authorized representative;

8 (5) Punong Barangay of Barangay San Miguel;

9 (6) Provincial Tourism Officer of the Province of Isabela; and

10 (7) Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer of the Province of Isabela.

11 (b) Sectoral Members

12 (1) One (1) representative from an academic institution, preferably from a university or
13 college in the Province of Isabela, with proven track record in or related to the
14 conservation of forests and wildlife;

15 (2) One (1) representative from the private sector, preferably a resident of the Province of
16 Isabela, who is distinguished in a profession or field of interest relevant to the
17 conservation of forests and wildlife or to ecotourism; and

18 (3) One (1) representative from either non-governmental organization (NGO) or people's
19 organization (PO), duly accredited both by the DENR and the Municipal Government
20 of Echague. The NGO or PO represented should have been in existence for at least
21 five (5) years with a track record in the conservation of forests and wildlife.

22 The *ex-officio* elective members of the Council shall serve for the duration of their
23 respective terms of office to which they are elected.

24 The *ex-officio* appointive members of the Council shall serve for the duration of the
25 period they hold the office to which they are appointed.

1 The sectoral members of the Council shall be selected by the Sangguniang Bayan of the
2 Municipality of Echague in a fair and transparent manner. They shall each serve a term of
3 three (3) years and may be reappointed for another term.

4 The members of the Council shall serve without compensation, but shall be authorized
5 to actual and necessary travel and subsistence expenses incurred in the performance of their
6 duties, either in their attendance in meetings of the Council or in connection with their official
7 functions authorized by a resolution of the Council, subject to existing rules and regulations.

8 Each member shall have the full capacity and accountability for decisions binding to the
9 member's sector.

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

- 11 (a) more than three (3) consecutive unexcused absences from regular meetings of
12 the Council;
- 13 (b) commission of acts prejudicial to the development and management of the
14 ecotourism zone;
- 15 (c) disassociation from the office or organization being represented;
- 16 (d) termination of relationship with the office or organization being represented; or
- 17 (e) conviction by final judgment of any criminal act.

18 The Municipal Government of Echague shall provide a Secretariat for the Council, to
19 be headed by the Municipal Tourism Officer, and provide funds to defray the expenses of the
20 Secretariat in line with the performance of its official functions and the conduct of the Council's
21 activities.

22 **SEC. 4. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Council.*** – The Council shall have the
23 following functions and responsibilities:

- 24 (a) Formulate and implement an ecotourism development and management plan in
25 consultation with the local residents, businesses, and other stakeholders;

1 (b) Assess and evaluate the potential impact of development plans and activities to the
2 environmental safety and well-being of the ecotourism zone, communities and
3 enterprises;

4 (c) Provide technical and financial assistance to the communities within and
5 surrounding the ecotourism zone;

6 (d) Formulate the rules and regulations in relation to the maintenance and security of
7 the ecotourism zone; and

8 (e) Perform other functions as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act.

9 **SEC. 5. *Formulation of Standards and Guidelines.*** – The DOT and the DENR shall
10 assist the Council in the formulation of local ecotourism standards and recommend guidelines
11 to ensure that biodiversity conservation and environmental protection are integrated in the
12 development and management of the ecotourism zone.

13 These local ecotourism standards shall:

14 (a) raise the capacity of all stakeholders and ensure that best ecotourism practices
15 are adopted;

16 (b) ensure optimal use of water and energy;

17 (c) reduce waste and pollution through environmentally-sound waste management
18 disposal schemes;

19 (d) encourage the use of local produce and services, and support the employment of
20 local people; and

21 (e) prevent vandalism in the ecotourism zone.

22 **SEC. 6. *Role of the DOT.*** – The DOT shall assist the Municipal Government of
23 Echague in the implementation of the ecotourism development and management plan by
24 providing technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include Barangay San
25 Miguel in its national and regional promotion programs.

1 **SEC. 7. *Coordination with National Agencies.*** – The Council shall coordinate with the
2 regional and provincial offices of the DOT, DENR, Department of Public Works and Highways,
3 Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Transportation, Department of
4 Agriculture, Department of Education, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of the
5 Interior and Local Government, Philippine National Police, and other concerned agencies of the
6 government in the implementation of this Act.

7 **SEC. 8. *Appropriations.*** – The funding for the implementation of this Act shall be
8 included in the annual budget of the Municipal of Government of Echague. The DOT may
9 augment such allocation with internally generated funds.

10 **SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days after the
11 effectivity of this Act, the Municipal Government of Echague shall, in consultation with the
12 DOT and concerned agencies of the government, promulgate the rules and regulations to
13 implement this Act.

14 **SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act shall be declared
15 unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain to be in full force
16 and effect.

17 **SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, rules, regulations, executive orders,
18 proclamations, presidential decrees, and other issuances inconsistent with any of the provisions
19 of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

20 **SEC. 12. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
21 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,