



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 9509

BY REPRESENTATIVES SUAN, 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, YNARES, CORVERA, REGENCIA, CASTRO, GONZALES (A.M.), TUPAS, PLEYTO, BANCORO, RODRIGUEZ (E.), BELTRAN, DAZA, DEL MAR, GUINTU, BARBA, CAGAS, CAYTON, COLLANTES, ROMAN, ROQUE AND UMALI

AN ACT

DECLARING THE MACAHAMBUS GORGE AND ITS IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS, LOCATED IN BARANGAY LUMBIA, CITY OF CAGAYAN DE ORO, PROVINCE OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL, 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 “Macahambus Gorge
2 Ecotourism Zone Act.”

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the policy of the State to promote a tourism
4 industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive,
5 economically viable, and equitably beneficial to local communities.

1 To this end, the State shall endeavor to provide the proper mechanisms and
2 infrastructure for sustainable tourism development. It shall develop and promote areas
3 and sites identified as tourism destinations in order to drive and propel inclusive growth
4 throughout the country.

5 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:

6 (a) *Ecotourism* refers to a form of sustainable tourism within a natural area where
7 community participation, protection and management of natural resources,
8 cultural and indigenous knowledge and practices, environmental education and
9 ethics, as well as economic benefits, are fostered and pursued for the
10 enrichment of host communities and satisfaction of visitors; and

11 (b) *Community-based ecotourism* refers to a form of tourism where the local
12 community and its residents have substantial control over the development and
13 management of the local tourism industry wherein the greater portion of the
14 economic gains remains within the community.

15 **SEC. 4. Scope and Coverage.** – This Act shall cover the Macahambus Gorge and
16 its immediate environs including the Macahambus cave, hill, and stream.

17 **SEC. 5. Macahambus Gorge Ecotourism Zone.** – The Macahambus Gorge and
18 its immediate environs, located in Barangay Lumbia, City of Cagayan de Oro, Province
19 of Misamis Oriental, are hereby declared as ecotourism zone. Pursuant thereto, the
20 development of the Macahambus Gorge and its immediate environs shall be prioritized
21 and supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations
22 governing the development of ecotourism zones.

1 The setting of the technical boundaries of the ecotourism zone shall be undertaken
2 by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other concerned
3 agencies of the government.

4 **SEC. 6. *Development Strategies.*** – To accomplish the development of the
5 Macahambus Gorge and its immediate environs as an ecotourism zone, the State shall:

6 (a) Develop and promote responsible, community-based ecotourism as the core
7 management strategy in the development of the ecotourism zone;

8 (b) Ensure the conservation of the biodiversity and the preservation of the said
9 ecotourism zone;

10 (c) Develop tourism products and programs that will generate employment and
11 livelihood for the local residents concerned, consistent with the preservation
12 and maintenance of the natural resources;

13 (d) Guarantee that the financial and economic benefits of the tourism industry are
14 equitably shared by and distributed among the local residents concerned by
15 giving preference and support to community- and home-based micro- and small
16 tourism enterprises, such as food and fruit stands, and other similar tourism-
17 oriented businesses and activities;

18 (e) Ensure that the quality of local tourism programs and activities are educational
19 and enriching for tourists and visitors through the provision of orientation,
20 educational and tour programs by local tour operators, non-governmental
21 organizations, concerned local government units (LGUs), DOT, and DENR;
22 and

1 (f) Guarantee that in the development and promotion of the local tourism industry,
2 the concerned LGUs shall ensure the adequate provision of water supply, food,
3 energy, and transportation for the needs of the local residents and
4 communities.

5 **SEC. 7. *Tourism Development Plan.*** – Within one (1) year after the approval of
6 this Act, the City Government of Cagayan de Oro shall, in coordination with the DOT,
7 DENR, and concerned agencies of the government, prepare a tourism development plan
8 that shall include the construction, installation, and maintenance of such appropriate
9 facilities and infrastructure to enhance tourism in the area: *Provided, That* said
10 development plan shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural beauty
11 and resources of the area: *Provided, further, That* the implementation of the tourism
12 development plan shall be included in the budget of the City Government of Cagayan
13 de Oro.

14 **SEC. 8. *Role of the DOT.*** – The DOT shall assist the City Government of
15 Cagayan de Oro in the implementation of the tourism development plan by providing
16 technical assistance in tourism capacity building. It shall also include the Macahambus
17 Gorge and its immediate environs in its national and regional promotion programs.

18 **SEC. 9. *Appropriations.*** – The funding for the implementation of this Act shall be
19 included in the annual budget of the City Government of Cagayan de Oro. The DOT may
20 augment such allocation with internally generated funds.

21 **SEC. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days after the
22 effectivity of this Act, the City Government of Cagayan de Oro shall, in consultation with

1 the DOT and concerned agencies of the government, promulgate the rules and
2 regulations to implement this Act.

3 **SEC. 11. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act shall be declared
4 unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full
5 force and effect.

6 **SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, rules, regulations, executive orders,
7 proclamations, presidential decrees, and other issuances inconsistent with any of the
8 provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

9 **SEC. 13. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
10 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,