

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2632**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Introduced by AKBAYAN Representative Tomasito S. Villarín

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The general impression about Metro Manila is that Metro Manila is an urban jungle that is crowded by concrete structures ranging from highways, billboards, cramped population centers with industrial zones and business districts. With this general impression in mind, it comes as a surprise that we find a critical habitat in the southern part of the metro: the Las Piñas - Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA).

LPPCHEA is a natural habitat of migratory and endemic bird species comprising of a 175-wetland ecosystem along Manila Bay, covering Freedom Island and Long Island. Presently, it is home to around eight-two (82) bird species.

LPPCHEA also hosts the thickest and most diverse mangrove forest along the Manila Bay area. This mangrove forest serves as spawning ground, nursery, feeding and temporary shelter of different fish species and other forms of wildlife. It also protects the communities of Las Piñas City and Parañaque City against storm surges and high tides.

Its component mudflats are filled with mollusks and bottom-dwelling aquatic animals that serve as food for the birds. The salt marshes also play an important role in the aquatic food web, and are good indicators of the health of the coastal area.

The areas in the LPPCHEA provide a unique venue for scientific researches that determine the diversity of our ecosystem and help with its preservation, and may also contribute to the development new technologies that will protect the country from natural disasters.

Even the international community took notice of LPPCHEA's role in preserving global biodiversity on March 2013, the LPPCHEA made it to the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International importance. The Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, requires

"the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world."

LPPCHEA is the 6th Ramsar site in the Philippines; it joins the ranks of locally and internationally acclaimed habitats such as the Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park, Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary, Naujan Lake National Park, Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary, and the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park.

This bill seeks to promote and institutionalize the protection, preservation and management of the Las Piñas Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA). In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping 'S' followed by several vertical strokes and a final horizontal line.

TOMASITO S. VILLARIN

Republic of the Philippines
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House Bill No. 2632

Introduced by AKBAYAN Representative Tomasito S. Villarin

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE LAS PINAS-PARANAQUE CRITICAL HABITAT AND
ECOTOURISM AREA AS A WETLAND, ENSURING THE PROTECTION
THEREOF, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Short title.—This Act shall be known as the “*Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area Act of 2016*.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of policy.—Pursuant to Section 16, Article II (State Policies) of the *1987 Philippine Constitution* which makes it the obligation of the State to protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature, and to the policies of the *International Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands* (otherwise known as the “*Ramsar Convention*”), of which the Philippines is a signatory, relevant to the protection and sustainable development of foreshore areas, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect important and critical areas hosting, among others, waterfowl, and to preserve and sustain development of key biodiversity sites.

The comprising the lagoons of Paranaque and Las Pinas, which support populations of the globally threatened Chinese Egret and Philippine Duck along with at least twenty-five (25) species of other rare and uncommon species of waterfowl, is hereby declared as a wetland and an ecotourism area.

SECTION 3. Definition of terms.—As used in this Act:

- (a) “*Wetland*” shall refer to an area of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth

of which at low tide does not exceed six (6) meters. A *wetland* may incorporate riparian and coastal zones adjacent to wetlands, and islands or bodies of marine water deeper than six (6) meters at low tide lying within the *wetland*.

- (b) “*Ecotourism*” refers to a form of sustainable tourism within a natural and cultural heritage area where community participation, protection and management of natural resources, culture and indigenous knowledge and practices, environmental education and ethics as well as economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the enrichment of host communities and satisfaction of visitors. For this purpose, the definition of *ecotourism* in Administrative Order No. 2013-19 (issued on 01 July 2013) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is hereby adopted.
- (c) “*Protected Areas Systems*” 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 pursuant to Republic Act No. 7586 otherwise known as the *National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992*.

SECTION 4. The Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area.—The Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area is hereby established covering one hundred seventy-five thousand three hundred seven hectares (175,307 hectares) with technical description as follows:

Line	Bearing	Distance
1-2	S.20% % D28'W.	131.54 M.
2-3	S.73% % D56'E.	19.50 M.
3-4	S.02% % D15'W.	88.59 M.
4-5	2.26% % D02'E.	28.97 M.
5-6	S.13% % D48'W.	138.29 M.
6-7	S.20% %D08'W.	37.31 M.
7-8	S.14% %D56'W.	110.33 M.
8-9	S.16% %D31'W.	52.11 M.
9-10	S.16% %D32'W.	52.57 M.
10-11	S.18% %D41'W.	113.32 M.
11-12	S.24% %D42'W.	99.58 M.
12-13	S.25% %D37'W.	65.28 M.
13-14	S.29% %D06'W.	63.13 M.
14-15	S.30% %D34'W.	44.93 M.
15-16	S.31% %D28'W.	42.68 M.

16-17	S.33% %D28'W.	38.23 M.
17-18	S.34% %D36'W.	50.93 M.
18-19	S.36% %D11'W.	41.39 M.
19-20	S.38% %D16'W.	67.80 M.
20-21	S.39% %D34'W.	31.81 M.
21-22	N.87% %D28'W.	216.46 M.
22-23	S.76% %D27'W.	7.94 M.
23-24	S.39% %D14'W.	121.05 M.
24-25	S.34% %D56'E.	54.28 M.
25-26	S.13% %D15'E.	130.81 M.
26-27	S.87% %D49'W.	8.95 M.
27-28	S.07% %D06'W.	11.74 M.
28-29	S.41% %D30'W.	67.77 M.
29-30	S.12% %D38'W.	27.25 M.
30-31	S.30% %D52'E.	16.97M.
31-32	S.09% %D42'W.	18.51M.
32-33	S.21% %D27'W.	74.80M.
33-34	S.21% %D41'W.	23.93M.
34-35	S.36% %D41'W.	32.71M.
35-36	S.34% %D15'W.	311.98M.
36-37	S.33% %D52'W.	243.49M.
38-39	S.36% %D02'W.	21.96M.
39-40	S.36% %D26'W.	20.34M.
41-42	S.37% %D28'W.	21.08M.
42-43	S.37% %D03'W.	10.34M.
43-44	S.40% %D02'W	29.60M.
44-45	S.40 % %D36'W	20.53M.
45-46	S.41 % %D15'W	19.81M.
46-47	S.41% %D31'W	20.32M.
47-48	S.43 % %D24'W	42.40M.
48-49	S. 44% %D16'W	20.86M.
50-51	S. 45% % D35'W.	21.66M.
51-52	S. 44% % D14'W.	19.48M.
52-53	S. 48% % D43'W.	20.97M.
53-54	S. 48% % D17'W.	21.91M.
54-55	S. 48% % D18'W.	21.60M.
55-56	S. 48% % D44'W.	519.66M.
56-57	N.67 % % D41'W	106.26M.
58-59	N. 24% % D14'W	31.90M.
59-60	N. 10% %	29.68M.

	D58'W	
60-61	N. 22% % D51'E	106.73M.
61-62	N. 26% % D37'E	139.26M.
62-63	N. 08% % D46'W	92.29M.
63-64	N. 73% % D23'W	9.93M.
64-65	N. 30% % D54'W	10.05M.
65-66	N. 00% % D47'W	20.57M.
66-67	N. 20% % D02'E	277.76M.
67-68	N. 27% % D16'E	99.63M.
68-69	N. 32% % D05'E	28.95M.
69-70	N. 19% % D00'E	33.55M.
70-71	N.06% % D40'W	15.17M.
71-72	N. 38% % D08'W	42.23M.
72-73	N. 29% % D16'E	154.46M.
73-74	N. 31% % D03'E	79.75M.
74-75	N. 35% % D10'E	149.23M.
75-76	N. 37 % % D54'E	137.34M.
76-77	N. 32% % D30'E	230.47M.
77-78	N. 38% % D01'E	237.39M.
78-79	N. 69% % D08'E	53.32M.
79-80	N. 89% % D55'E	60.09M.
80-81	N. 71% % D06'E	29.39M.
81-82	S. 86% % D10'E	57.19M.
82-83	N. 73% % D04'E	107.95M.
83-84	N. 55% % D27'E	41.22M.
84-85	N. 27% % D20'E	49.03M.
85-86	N. 13% % D48'E	53.77M.
86-87	N. 11% % D55'E	77.02M.
87-88	N. 00% % D35'E	229.70M.
88-89	N. 04% % D52'E	63.82M.
89-90	N. 12% % D12'E	101.37M.
90-91	N. 06% % D16'E	170.68M.
91-92	N. 09% % D06'W	111.21M.
92-93	N. 06% % D15'W	63.48M.
93-94	N. 16% % D19'W	53.23M.
94-95	N. 53% % D29'E	16.26M.
95-96	N. 88% % D08'E	26.44M.
96-97	S. 39% % D25'E	10.74M.
97-98	S. 83%%D28'E	16.72M.

98-99	N. 82°%D12'E	38.05M.
99-100	N. 66°%D43'E	46.48M.
100-101	N. 42°%D04'E	44.98M.
101-102	N. 66°%D11'E	56.78M.
102-103	N. 57°%D25'E	59.13M.
103-104	N. 46°%D35'E	37.21M.
104-105	N. 57°%D54'E	7.00M.
105-106	S. 58°%D15'E	7.83M.
106-107	S. 46°%D39'E	89.13M.
107-108	N. 79°%D55'E	18.23M.
108-109	S. 85°%D37'E	33.91M.
109-110	S. 69°%D52'E	33.52M.
110-111	S. 66°%D33'E	45.08M.
111-112	S. 81°%D36'E	62.71M.
112-113	N. 64°%D36'E	11.45M.
113-1	S. 83°%D30'E	221.52M.

SECTION 5. Effects of declaration.—All relevant departments and instrumentalities of the State shall cooperate to undertake the following:

- (a) Include the area specified in Section 4 of this Act, hereafter to be known as the “Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area,” as a component of the National Integrated Protected Areas Systems under Republic Act No. 7586 otherwise known as the *National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992*.
- (b) Enforce Republic Act No. 9147 otherwise known as the *Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act* in the Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area.
- (c) Prohibit the reclamation of the “Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area,” and the immediate periphery so as not to impeded the ecological function of the lagoons and its small islands mangroves, salt

marshes and tidal areas as breeding, feeding and roosting place for marine and terrestrial wildlife.

- (d) Ensure that existing mangrove, mudflats and ecosystems are preserved and/or not built over, and are kept in a condition that will support natural growth of indigenous and or naturally occurring wetland plants critical to the survival of wildlife and natural ecological functions.
- (e) Ensure that the biodiversity component is included and strengthened in all Environmental Impact Assessments and Environmental Risk Assessment Processes for development projects under Administrative Order No. 42 series of 2002.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources shall ensure spearhead the efforts for the maintenance, protection and establishment of the Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area.

SECTION 6. Creation of the Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetlands and Ecotourism Area Management Council.—There is hereby created a Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area Management Council which shall be convened by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. It shall be composed of the following:

- (a) The Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources as Chairperson;
- (b) The city mayors of Las Pinas and Paranaque, both as Vice-Chairpersons;
- (c) The Chairman of the Philippine Reclamation Authority as Member;
- (d) Two (2) representatives from non-governmental organizations with technical capacity and proven ecological biodiversity management capability and track record in the area as Members;
- (e) The Secretary of the Department of Tourism as Member; and
- (f) Two (2) representatives from the people's organizations with a direct stake in the area as Members.

SECTION 7. The Management Council shall have the following tasks:

- (a) Prepare and cause the implementation of a Wetland Management Plan, approved by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary, which will include a master plan to establish criteria and guide development in and around the area according to universally established and scientific principles to ensure protection of critical bird habitats and an ecotourism business plan to ensure sustainable and education in the area;
- (b) Ensure integrated and sustainable management of the area for the protection of all waterbirds wintering, foraging, breeding, roosting, and nestling, within the Las Las Pinas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area;

- (c) Ensure strict compliance with this Act through the incorporation and consideration of the requirements herein in the design of any future development projects, and in the master and development plans of the local governments and other concerned agencies.

SECTION 8. Funding.—The initial amount of five million Philippine pesos (PhP5,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be allotted for the initial funding for the implementation of this Act. Subsequent appropriations shall be included in the budget of the Philippine Reclamation Authority and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

SECTION 9. Separability clause.—If any part, section or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 10. Repealing clause.—All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or other issuances, particularly of Republic Act No. 7586 (*National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992*), Republic Act No. 9147 (*Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act*) and Administrative Order No. 42 series of 2002, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly. Proclamation No. 1412 series of 2007, and Proclamation No. 1412-A series of 2008 are repealed.

SECTION 11. Effectivity.—This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after the completion of its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,