

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

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **5985**



Introduced by MAGDALO Party-List Representative
HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

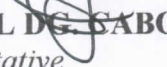
Article II, Section 16 of the Philippine Constitution provides, "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature." Further, Article XII, Section 2 of our Constitution mandates the State to protect the nation's marine wealth in its archipelagic waters, territorial sea and exclusive economic zone and reserve its use and enjoyment exclusively for Filipino citizens.

Pag-Asa Island is an island-barangay and the political seat of power of Palawan's Municipality of Kalayaan. It is situated in the West Philippine Sea and is located west of Palawan. The Municipality of Kalayaan covers an approximate area of sixty-four thousand nine hundred seventy six (64,976) square miles of water and total land area of two hundred ninety (290) square kilometers. Based on NAMRIA, there are a total of ninety five (95) islands, cays, shoals and reefs within the area covered by PD 1596.

The Kalayaan Island Group is endowed with rich and diverse natural resources, most especially its marine ecosystem. Recent study shows that the waters around Pag-Asa remains a potential fishery ground, in terms of fishery resources, and offers superb diving environment, which is worthy of conservation in order to sustain the long term benefit that we are supposed to gain from it.

In recognition of the importance that the Pag-Asa Island and its adjoining islands of Parola, Kota, and Panata provide with regard to biodiversity in the Municipality of Kalayaan in Palawan, this proposed measure seeks to declare the aforementioned areas as an ecological tourism area. This bill creates the Pag-Asa Island Ecotourism Cluster Governing Board which shall rationalize all efforts pertaining to environmental protection and making the tourism industry a major source of livelihood and an avenue for the generation of employment.

For the foregoing reasons, the expeditious approval of this bill is earnestly requested.


MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III
Representative
Magdalo Para Sa Pilipino Party-List

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

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

5985

House Bill No. _____

Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representatives**
HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

AN ACT

DECLARING PAG-ASA ISLAND AND ITS ADJOINING ISLANDS OF PAROLA, KOTA AND PANATA IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KALAYAAN, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AS ECOTOURISM DESTINATIONS AND PROTECTED AREAS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
2 promote a sustainable ecotourism industry to attract local and foreign tourists to secure the
3 country's share in the world tourism market and to make it an avenue for generation of
4 employment while ensuring the environmental protection and preservation of the area.

5
6 **SEC. 2. The Pag-asa Island Ecotourism Cluster.** – The Pag-asa Island and its
7 adjoining islands of Parola, Kota and Panata, which shall be known as the Pag-asa Island
8 Ecotourism Cluster, are hereby declared ecotourism destinations and protected areas under
9 the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS).

10
11 Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, the Department of Environment
12 and Natural Resources (DENR) make an inventory of the existing flora and fauna in Pag-asa
13 Island Ecotourism Cluster that shall serve as the basis for the creation of the development
14 plan as provided in this Act.

15
16 As used in this Act, ecotourism shall refer to a form of sustainable tourism within a
17 natural and cultural heritage area where community participation, protection and management
18 of natural resources, culture and indigenous knowledge and practices, environmental
19 education and ethics, and economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the enrichment of
20 host communities and satisfaction of visitors.

21
22 **SEC. 3. Pag-asa Island Ecotourism Cluster Governing Board.** – An ecotourism
23 governing board, to be known as the Pag-asa Island Ecotourism Cluster Governing Board,
24 hereinafter referred to as the Board, is hereby created. The Board shall be composed of the
25 following:

- 26 (a) Governor of Palawan, as Chairperson;
27 (b) Congressional Representative of the First District of Palawan, as Co-Chairperson;
28 (c) DENR Regional Executive Director for Region IV-B, as Vice Chairperson;

- 1 (d) Department of Tourism (DOT) Regional Director for Region IV-B, as Co-Vice
2 Chairperson;
3 (e) Mayor of the Municipality of Kalayaan;
4 (f) Barangay Chairperson of Pag-asa Island;
5 (g) Armed Forces of the Philippines Western Command Commander;
6 (h) One (1) member of a nongovernment organization whose advocacy is environmental
7 preservation;
8 (i) One (1) member of the academe;
9 (j) One (1) representative of the business sector; and
10 (k) One (1) representative of the private sector.
11

12 The provincial government of Palawan shall provide a Secretariat for the Board
13 including the funding necessary to cover the expenses for the performance of its official
14 functions and activities.
15

16 The Board shall prepare the rules and regulations necessary for the full
17 implementation by the concerned local government unit of the provisions of this Act and
18 shall, as the need arises, amend, modify or revise such rules and regulations to meet the needs
19 of changing times.
20

21 **SEC. 4. *Pag-asa Island Cluster Ecotourism Cluster Development Plan.*** – Within
22 one hundred twenty (120) days from approval of this Act, the Board, in coordination with the
23 Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), shall prepare, develop and
24 implement a development plan to be approved by the President of the Republic of the
25 Philippines.
26

27 **SEC. 5. *Appropriations.*** – The Secretaries of the DOT, DENR and the Chief
28 Operating Officer of the TIEZA shall include in their respective programs the implementation
29 of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act
30 and internally generated funds of the DOT.
31

32 **SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.*** – If any section or provision of this Act or any part
33 hereof be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the same shall not affect the remaining
34 sections and/or provisions otherwise considered as valid and legal.
35

36 **SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, rules, regulations, executive orders,
37 presidential decrees or other issuances contrary to or inconsistent with any of the provisions
38 of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or modified accordingly.
39

40 **SEC. 8. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete
41 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,