

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL No. 2534

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JUMEL ANTHONY I. ESPINO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The downstream Agno River in the Municipalities of Urbiztondo, Mangatarem, Aguilar, Bugallon and Lingayen, Province of Pangasinan is an attraction for nature trippers and adventurers because of its historical value, natural beauty, unique attractions and economic importance. It is ideal for its tourism potentials and ecological significance.

However, so much is yet to be desired in terms of developing the site as a viable tourist destination without compromising its sustainability as an ecologically-sensitive natural site — a task that far exceeds the capabilities of the host LGUs.

It is, therefore, the objective of this bill to develop the Downstream Agno River to its maximum potential and promote it as one of the leading ecotourism destinations in Pangasinan and the country by declaring it as a national ecotourism zone. Doing so will certainly increase awareness and appreciation for the site and will foster both local and international interest and attention that may eventually increase eco-tourism activities in the host municipalities and promote the Downstream Agno River as a viable tourist destination.

In view of these premises, the prompt approval of this bill is earnestly sought and recommended.


HON. JUMEL ANTHONY I. ESPINO

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AN ACT
DECLARING THE DOWNSTREAM AGNO RIVER AS AN ECO-TOURISM
ZONE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Downstream Agno River Eco-Tourism Act."

SECTION 2. State Policy — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote sustainable tourism industry. Towards this end, the state shall rationalize all efforts pertaining to environmental protection and make the tourism industry a major source of livelihood and an avenue for the generation of employment. Henceforth, aggressive measures seeking to restore the country's share in the global tourism market shall be consistent with the preservation of the existing ecosystem and natural environment.

SECTION 3. Declaration of Policy — Pursuant to the declared policy of the State, the downstream Agno River located in the Municipalities of Urbiztondo, Mangatarem, Aguilar, Bugallon and Lingayen, in the Province of Pangasinan is hereby declared as an eco-tourism zone.

SECTION 4. Eco-Tourism Master Plan — The Provincial Government of Pangasinan, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Tourism and the Municipal Governments of Urbiztondo, Mangatarem, Aguilar, Bugallon and Lingayen shall jointly prepare an Eco-Tourism Master Plan for the

Downstream Agno River and promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to be implemented by the local government in coordination with concerned government agencies.

SECTION 5. Appropriations – The Department of Tourism shall include in the Department's programs the amount necessary for the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 6. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, rules or regulations, and issuances contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act shall be deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 7. Effectivity. - This Act shall be effective fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved