

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5862

INTRODUCED BY: HONORABLE JOCELYN F. FORTUNO

EXPLANATORY NOTE


This bill seeks to declare the Buhi Lake and Bato Lake in the Municipalities of Buhi and Bato respectively in the Province of Camarines Sur as ecotourism zones.

The said municipalities are endowed with great natural resources, scenic beauty and other wonders of nature. It is also in the Municipality of Buhi where the locally known *sinarapan* (*Mistichthys luzones*), an endemic fish considered to be the smallest commercial fish in the world can be found.

The growth of tourism in these municipalities have not reached its full potential due mainly to lack of infrastructure facilities and road networks that would make them really accessible, the travel convenient and comfortable, and therefore very encouraging for tourists to visit.

The enactment of this bill into law will effectively fast-tracked the construction and improvement of roads and bridges, and other infrastructure projects necessary to make the area accessible and convenient to all, especially the tourists.

In view of the foregoing reasons, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


JOCELYN F. FORTUNO
Representative
Fifth District, Camarines Sur

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AN ACT
DECLARING BUHI LAKE AND BATO LAKE IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF BUHI
AND BATO RESPECTIVELY, IN THE PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR AS
ECOTOURISM ZONES

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

SECTION 1. The Buhi Lake and Bato Lake in the Municipalities of Buhi and Bato respectively, in the Province of Camarines Sur are hereby declared as ecotourism zones.

SEC. 2. The Department of Tourism (DOT), in coordination with concerned agencies of the government and local government units, shall update and consolidate all existing tourism development plans for the area or prepare an ecotourism development action plan consistent with the national tourism master plan. The plan shall include the construction, development and maintenance of facilities and infrastructure to enhance the tourism sites: *Provided*, that the interventions shall ensure biophysical conservation and cultural preservation in the area, while providing sustainable economic opportunities for the local communities.

SEC. 3. The DOT shall incorporate the ecotourism development action plan to the overall Philippine National Tourism Development Plan pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known as the "Tourism Act of 2009" and take immediate steps to implement the ecotourism development action plan and incorporate the same in its tourism development program for the ensuing calendar years.

The DOT and its concerned attached agencies shall also provide the necessary technical and financial assistance for the development of tourism infrastructure and the conduct of skills development in concerned local government units and their local communities while endeavoring, when practicable, to promote the tourism zones both domestically and internationally.

SEC. 4. The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), in coordination with PDA and the office of the district representative of the Fifth District of Camarines Sur, shall implement the fast-tracked construction and improvement of roads, bridges and other infrastructure necessary in the development of the area upon the promulgation of this Act and prioritize the same in its infrastructure program.

The DOT, DPWH and Department of Transportation (DOTR) shall promote the progressive development and aggressive spending in civil aviation, land and sea transportation infrastructure in the area to improve accessibility and connectivity of tourist destinations.

SEC. 5. The DOT and concerned agencies and local government units shall organize a forum by which the private sector, nongovernment organizations and other interest groups can interact with one another and create an atmosphere that shall encourage investment and develop a culture of tourism.

SEC. 6. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT, in consultation with local concerned government units, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its proper implementation.

SEC. 7. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,