

Headline: Bill on conservation, protection of PH peatlands passes 3rd reading in House

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Published Date: 04:25 PM May 29, 2023

Section: newsinfo

Word Count: 1500

Content:

The plenary hall of the House of Representatives. (INQUIRER.net file photo) MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives on Monday passed on the third and final reading a bill to conserve and sustainably develop the Philippines' peatlands, as they were deemed natural solutions versus climate change.

The plenary hall of the House of Representatives. (INQUIRER.net file photo)

All 262 members voted yes.

House Bill 8204 defines peatlands as wetland ecosystems from accumulated decomposing plant materials in waterlogged conditions.

"The conservation and restoration of peatlands sought to be enhanced under this Act shall be aimed at enabling the country to manage peatlands sustainably, taking into account their value as natural solutions to address climate change such as by functioning as carbon sinks," said the bill.

The bill designates the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as the implementing agency of the bill should it become a law.

The proposal also moves for a National Peatland Conservation and Restoration Program within one year of its passage.

"The National Peatland Conservation and Restoration Program shall define national targets for the conservation and restoration of peatlands and the development of its national coordinating mechanism," said the bill.

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