

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Third Regular Session )

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SENATE  
Senate Resolution No. 831

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Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

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**RESOLUTION**  
**EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE TO URGE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO WORK COLLABORATIVELY FOR THE SUSTAINABLE PROTECTION OF THE PUERTO PRINCESA SUBTERRANEAN RIVER NATIONAL PARK IN LIGHT OF ITS SUCCESSFUL INCLUSION IN THE RAMSAR CONVENTION LIST OF WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE**

**WHEREAS**, Article II, Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution provides that 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;

**WHEREAS**, on 2 February 1971, the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, was agreed upon by representatives from eighteen (18) nations in the Iranian town of Ramsar, in a bid to protect the world's remaining marshlands and wetlands from rapid conversion due to pressures brought about by industrialization and human encroachment;

**WHEREAS**, coming into force on 21 December 1975, the Ramsar Convention is an intergovernmental treaty providing the "framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources";

**WHEREAS**, under Article II of the said Convention, the Philippines, being one of the current 162 contracting parties, is obliged to nominate suitable wetlands within its territory for inclusion in the Ramsar Convention's List of Wetlands of International Importance on the basis of their international significance in terms of ecology, botany, zoology, or hydrology;

**WHEREAS**, since the Convention came into force for the Philippines on 8 November 1994, the country now has four sites covering a total area of 132,032 hectares included in the said List--the Agusan Marsh Wild Sanctuary in Agusan del Sur, Naujan Lake National Park in Oriental Mindoro, Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Cebu, Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park in Palawan;

**WHEREAS**, on 16 December 2011, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) thru Resolution No. 11-432 expressed its support to the planned nomination by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources

of the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (PPSRNP) as a "Wetland of International Importance" as provided for under the terms of the Ramsar Convention;

**WHEREAS**, the PCSD also noted the significance and value of winning international recognition for the PPSRNP in order to "conserve its distinct features and natural beauty as well as to further its socio-economic benefits to both local and national communities";

**WHEREAS**, as highlighted in the World Wildlife Fund Global 200 report, the PPSRNP which currently serves as key habitat for more than a thousand plant and animal species—including five internationally threatened bird species namely the Philippine cockatoo, the Palawan peacock pheasant, the Blue-napped parrot, the Hill myna and the Palawan hornbill, has the "richest tree flora in Asia with high levels of regional and local endemism";

**WHEREAS**, following the deliberations of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP11) held in Bucharest, Romania from 6 to 13 July of this year, the Philippines was notified by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat of the PPSRNP's eventual inclusion in the said List;

**WHEREAS**, by successfully nominating the PPSRNP in the List of Wetlands of International Importance, the Philippine government commits to the international community its continued support for the sustainable use of its wetland resources;

**WHEREAS**, this impending recognition adds to the long list of accolades—like its 1995 inscription in the World Heritage List by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), its 2003 declaration as National Geological Monument by the National Committee on Geological Sciences, and its 2012 inclusion as one of the New 7 Wonders of Nature by the New7Wonders Foundation, awarded to the PPSRNP on account of its rich flora and fauna;

**WHEREAS**, this recognition highlights the need to safeguard the biodiversity and natural heritage of the underground river and its surrounding catchment areas and forests;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved, to express the sense of the Senate to urge government agencies to work collaboratively for the sustainable protection of the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park in light of its recent inclusion in the Ramsar Convention List of Wetlands of International Importance.

Adopted,

  
**LOREN LEGARDA**  
Senator