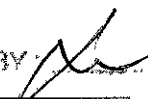


10 JUL 21 P3 04

**SENATE**

P. S. Res. No. 39

RECEIVED BY 

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Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES IN THE SENATE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE RAPID DEGRADATION OF OUR MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF PROVIDING PROACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS THAT WILL PRESERVE AND PROTECT OUR COUNTRY'S COASTAL AND MARINE ECOSYSTEMS**

*WHEREAS*, Article 2, 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*, being archipelagic in nature, our coastal and marine ecosystems play a significant role in our national economy. The country's coastal and marine ecosystems provide fish and other aquatic products and support other strategic economic activities such as transportation, recreation and tourism;

*WHEREAS*, our coral reefs, mangrove forests, and seagrass beds contribute to the richness, diversity and productivity of coastal and marine fisheries. These resources attract tourists, creating local business opportunities, generating income and employment.

*WHEREAS*, the country's marine and coastal ecosystems are presently plagued with resource depletion and environmental degradation. The increasing population pressure, urbanization and industrialization have put greater demands on the coastal and marine ecosystems due to over-fishing;

*WHEREAS*, one of the major problems in our country's marine and coastal ecosystems is the degradation of our seagrass. These seagrass support a large number of epiphytic algae which, in turn, support fisheries. Seagrass support a rich diversity of species and serve as a refuge for both economically and ecologically important organisms. Studies indicate that there used to be about 5,000,000 hectares of seagrass beds in the country;

*WHEREAS*, on a per square kilometer and per year basis, seagrass beds in the Philippines have the potential to generate more than 20 tons of biomass of fish, invertebrates and seaweeds. This significant productivity of seagrass beds is lost when the resource is seriously degraded;

**WHEREAS**, recent data further indicate that about 60 to 90 percent of the seagrass beds in Southeast Luzon are in poor condition. The man-made causes of seagrass degradation are coastal mining activities, coastal land conversion, run-offs due to deforestation, and destructive fishing methods;

**WHEREAS**, another problem in our marine and coastal ecosystem is the destruction of coral reefs. The national coral reef area is estimated at about 27,000 square kilometers and contributes at least 10 to 15 percent of the total marine production. Out of the 742 coral reef sites surveyed by DENR, 5.3% were in excellent condition while 30.5 % of our coral reefs are in poor condition. The destruction of coral reefs is attributed to siltation, mine tailings, pollution, coastal development, over fishing and destructive fishing practices like the use of cyanide and dynamites; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a need for the government to formulate a proactive and sustainable coastal and marine ecosystem management in order to preserve and protect our country's rapidly degrading marine and coastal ecosystems.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the Senate of the Philippines direct the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and other appropriate Committees in the Senate to conduct an inquiry, *In Aid of Legislation*, into the rapid degradation of our marine and coastal ecosystems, with the end in view of providing proactive and sustainable policies, programs and interventions that will preserve and protect our country's coastal and marine ecosystems.

**Adopted,**

  
**MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID**  
Senator 