



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 9005

---

BY REPRESENTATIVE VILLA, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 872

---

AN ACT  
DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF SIQUIJOR A RESPONSIBLE, COMMUNITY-  
BASED CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ECOTOURISM ZONE

*Be enacted by the Senate and House of Representative of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1           **SECTION 1. Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Siquijor Responsible Tourism  
2 Act".

3           **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - The State recognizes, respects and protects the rights  
4 of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and  
5 institutions, and considers these rights in the formulation of national plans and policies.

6           The State is further mandated to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically  
7 sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable and equitable  
8 for local communities.

9           **SEC 3. Province of Siquijor as Cultural Heritage & Ecotourism Zone.** - The Province  
10 of Siquijor is hereby declared a cultural heritage and ecotourism zone. As such, its development  
11 shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations  
12 governing the development of cultural heritage and ecotourism zones.

13           The promotion of the inherent values and characteristics which influence the  
14 uniqueness of the Siquijor culture and the beauty of the Province of Siquijor shall be pursued  
15 in the development and management of the tourism industry in the Province, such as: (a) the

1 integrity of its ecology and environment; (b) the richness of its natural and cultural heritage;  
2 and (c) the resilience of its indigenous social institutions, as applicable.

3 **SEC. 4. Objectives.** – Pursuant to the above declaration of policy, the State shall  
4 endeavor to accomplish the following objectives:

5 (a) Develop and promote responsible, community-based ecological-cultural tourism as  
6 the core management strategy in the development and growth of the Province of  
7 Siquijor;

8 (b) Ensure the conservation of the biodiversity and the preservation of the unique  
9 heritage and culture of the Province;

10 (c) Develop tourism products and programs that will generate employment and  
11 livelihood for the local residents consistent with the preservation and maintenance  
12 of local heritage and culture;

13 (d) Guarantee that the financial and economic benefits of the tourism industry are  
14 equitably shared by and distributed among the Siquijudnons and local residents, by  
15 giving preference and support to community- and home-based tourism enterprises,  
16 such as micro and small businesses like local inns, lodges and homestays,  
17 restaurants, foods and fruits stands, arts and craft shops, and other similar tourism-  
18 oriented industries and businesses;

19 (e) Ensure that the quality of local tourism programs and activities are educational and  
20 enriching for tourists and visitors through the provision of orientation, educational  
21 and tour programs by local tour operators, non-government organizations (NGOs),  
22 local government units (LGUs) and the DOT; and

23 (f) Guarantee that in the development and promotion of the local tourism industry, the  
24 concerned LGUs shall ensure the adequate provision of water supply, food, energy  
25 and transportation for the needs of local residents and communities.

26 **SEC. 5. Provincial Tourism Development Plan.** - The DOT, in coordination with the

1 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the National Commission on  
2 Indigenous People (NCIP), and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA),  
3 shall assist the provincial government of Siquijor in the formulation of the Provincial Tourism  
4 Development Plan that shall be complemented by a set of guidelines and standards for a  
5 responsible, community-based ecotourism.

6 The tourism development plan shall ensure the preservation of the natural sites, the  
7 cultural and historic significance of identified tourist attractions, and respect for Siquijudnon  
8 culture and traditions, and shall include the following considerations:

- 9 (a) Carrying capacity of sites;
- 10 (b) Specific site assessments;
- 11 (c) Identification of strategic priorities;
- 12 (d) Product development for local income generation;
- 13 (e) Capacity-building for local communities so residents therein can ably manage  
14 economically viable and responsible, community-based ecotourism business  
15 enterprises;
- 16 (f) Support for the formation of local production groups and networks, including the  
17 marketing strategies and pricing of products;
- 18 (g) Marketing strategies that reflect the natural, cultural, social and environmental  
19 integrity of the Province of Siquijor;
- 20 (h) Support for the conservation and maintenance of relevant cultural heritage  
21 properties; and
- 22 (i) Implementation of culture-based tourism and education per Sections 16 and 32 (a)  
23 of Republic Act No. 10066.

24 The process of formulating the Provincial Tourism Development Plan shall be  
25 participatory, with the framework to be provided by the DOT, DENR, NCIP and the NCCA,  
26 in consultation with the provincial and municipal governments.

1           **SEC. 6. *Formulation of Guidelines and Standards.*** - The concerned Protected Area  
2 Management Board of the DENR, NCIP and the local tourism council, in coordination with  
3 the LGUs, shall assist in the formulation of local tourism standards in the context of  
4 environment stability, as well as recommend guidelines to ensure that biodiversity conservation  
5 and environmental protection are integrated in the development of heritage and ecotourism  
6 plans. The local tourism standards shall:

7           (a) raise the capacity of all stakeholders and ensure that best practices are followed;

8           (b) ensure optimal use of water and energy;

9           (c) reduce waste and pollution through the encouragement of recycling and  
10 environmentally-sound waste management disposal schemes, with a principle of  
11 taking as much waste away from the site as possible; and

12           (d) encourage the use of local produce and services, and support the employment of  
13 local people.

14           **SEC. 7. *Coordination with National Agencies.*** - The DOT shall closely coordinate  
15 with the provincial and municipal governments of the Province of Siquijor, as well as with the  
16 regional and provincial offices of all relevant national government agencies, such as DENR,  
17 NCIP, NCCA, National Historical Commission of the Philippines, National Museum,  
18 Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Public Works and Highways,  
19 Department of Transportation, Department of Information and Communications Technology,  
20 Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Education,  
21 Department of Trade and Industry, Department of the Interior and Local Government,  
22 Philippine National Police, Maritime Industry Authority and the Philippine Ports Authority in  
23 the implementation of this Act.

24           **SEC. 8. *Review of Provincial Tourism Development Plan.*** - The review of Provincial  
25 Tourism Development Plan shall be initiated by mere notice coming from the Provincial  
26 Governor. The review shall in no way be initiated earlier than the lapse of a quarter-portion of

1 the timeframe as identified by the Provincial Tourism Development Plan.

2       **SEC. 9. *Implementation Rules and Regulations.*** - Within sixty (60) days after the  
3 effectivity of this Act, the DOT, DENR, NCIP and the NCCA, in consultation with the  
4 provincial and municipal governments of the Province of Siquijor and concerned government  
5 agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper  
6 implementation of this Act.

7       **SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision of this Act shall be declared  
8 unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force  
9 and effect.

10       **SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, rules, regulations, executive orders,  
11 proclamations, presidential decrees and other issuances inconsistent with any of the provisions  
12 of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

13       **SEC. 12. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication  
14 in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general publication

Approved,