

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 9953

BY REPRESENTATIVE FORTUNO, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1118

**AN ACT
DECLARING THE BUHI LAKE LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BUHI
AND THE BATO LAKE LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BATO, BOTH IN
THE PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR, AS ECOTOURISM ZONES, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 **SECTION 1.** The Buhi Lake located in the Municipality of Buhi and the Bato Lake
2 located in the Municipality of Bato, both in the Province of Camarines Sur, are hereby
3 declared as ecotourism zones. As such, their development shall be prioritized by the
4 Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the
5 development of ecotourism zones.

6 **SEC. 2.** Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT shall, in
7 coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the
8 municipal governments of Buhi and Bato and other concerned agencies of the government,
9 consolidate all tourism development plans for these ecotourism zones and prepare the
10 corresponding comprehensive ecotourism development plan for the aforesaid areas,
11 consistent with the national tourism master plan.

12 The development plans shall include the construction, installation and maintenance of
13 such appropriate facilities and infrastructure to enhance ecotourism in the areas: *Provided,*
14 That said development plans shall ensure the preservation of the cultural heritage of the areas

1 and the conservation of their biophysical assets, and incorporate strategies and programs to
2 promote sustainable economic opportunities for the respective local communities.

3 **SEC. 3.** The DOT shall incorporate the ecotourism development plans in the
4 National Tourism Development Plan, pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593, otherwise known
5 as the “Tourism Act of 2009”, and shall take immediate steps to implement the development
6 plans for the calendar year immediately succeeding the approval of this Act. It shall also
7 include the Buhi Lake and the Bato Lake in all its national, regional and local promotion
8 programs.

9 The DOT and its concerned attached agencies shall also provide the necessary
10 technical and financial assistance for the development of tourism infrastructure and the
11 conduct of training programs for the development of tourism-related skills in concerned local
12 government units and their respective communities.

13 **SEC. 4.** Upon the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Public Works and
14 Highways (DPWH), in coordination with the District Office of the Representative of the Fifth
15 District of the Province of Camarines Sur, shall implement and fast-track the construction and
16 improvement of roads, bridges and other infrastructure necessary in the development of the
17 ecotourism zones and shall prioritize the same in the DPWH’s infrastructure program.

18 The DOT, DPWH and the Department of Transportation shall promote the
19 progressive development of civil aviation, land and sea transportation infrastructure in the
20 areas to improve accessibility and connectivity of tourism destinations.

21 **SEC. 5.** The DOT, the municipal governments of Buhi and Bato, and concerned
22 agencies of the government shall ensure the involvement of the private sector, non-
23 government organizations and other interest groups in encouraging investment and
24 developing a culture of tourism in the areas.

1 **SEC. 6.** The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department's program the
2 implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General
3 Appropriations Act, and shall augment such allocation with internally generated funds of the
4 Department.

5 **SEC. 7.** Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT shall, in
6 consultation with the municipal governments of Buhi and Bato, promulgate the necessary
7 rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

8 **SEC. 8.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official*
9 *Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,