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NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

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SENATE
S.B. No. 2004

Introduced by **SENATOR IMEE R. MARCOS**

AN ACT
DECLARING PASSIG ISLET OF BARANGAY BATO IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF
STA. CRUZ, PROVINCE OF DAVAO DEL SUR AS AN AQUA-ECOTOURISM SITE
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 16 of Article II of the 1987 Philippine 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.*"

Ecotourism Philippines defines ecotourism as a form of sustainable tourism within a natural and cultural heritage area where community participation, protection and management of natural resources, culture and indigenous knowledge and practices, environmental education and ethics as well as economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the enrichment of host communities and satisfaction of visitors.

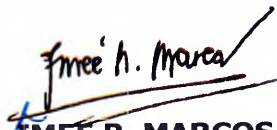
Passig Islet Aqua Eco Park is located in Barangay Bato, Municipality of Sta. Cruz, Province of Davao del Sur. From a sandbar, local residents turned it into an 800 square-meter islet by erecting perimeter buffer made of used truck tires, filled with concrete cement in the hollow. It is one of the most sought-after tourist destinations in the province because of its serene environment, clear water and white sand.

Currently, to reach the islet, visitors had to walk through a wooden bridge connecting the islet to the mainland. The walk to the end of the bridge is a great experience as it goes through thick lush mangrove trees leading to the area where pump boats await. The banca ride going to the islet is also a stunning experience as it gives a panoramic view of the sea, the islet, and the surrounding mountains. However,

there is still a need to enhance the facilities of the aqua-eco park resort as the cottages and bridge are already old.

Hence, this bill seeks to declare Passig Islet of Barangay Bato in the Municipality of Sta. Cruz, Province of Davao del Sur as an aqua-ecotourism site. Declaring the Passig Islet as an ecotourism site will generate not only community business opportunities but also job opportunities to the residents of the area. It will also ensure the sustainable use, development, management, protection, and conservation of the Passig Islet.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


IMEE R. MARCOS

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as *the "Passig Islet Aqua-*
2 *ecotourism Act"*.

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
5 promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative,
6 culturally sensitive, economically viable, and equitable for local communities.

7
8 **SEC. 3. Passig Islet Aqua-ecotourism Site.** – Passig Islet of Barangay Bato in the
9 Municipality of Sta. Cruz, Province of Davao del Sur is hereby declared an aqua-
10 ecotourism site. Its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism
11 (DOT) subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of the aqua-
12 tourism site.

13
14 The DOT shall prepare a development plan that ensures the preservation and
15 conservation of the natural resources of the area. The plan should also include
16 construction and maintenance of necessary facilities to enhance the aqua-ecotourism
17 area and ensure optimum utilization of assets and resources available.

18
19 **SEC. 4. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – It shall be the responsibilities of
20 the DOT to promote Passig Islet as an aqua-ecotourism destination in all its national,
21 regional, and local promotion programs. The DOT, in consultation with the province of
22 Davao del Sur and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA)

1 shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation
2 of this Act.

3
4 **SEC. 5. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the implementation of this
5 Act shall be charged against the annual General Appropriations Act and internally
6 generated funds of the DOT.

7
8 **SEC. 6. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this shall be held
9 unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in
10 full force and effect.

11
12 **SEC. 7. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations, executive
13 orders, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are repealed,
14 amended, or revised accordingly.

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

18
Approved,