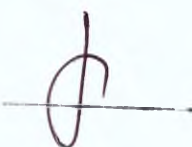


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



23 MAY -4 P 6 :35

SENATE
S. No. 2135

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Loren B. Legarda

**AN ACT
TO PROMOTE GREENING AND FORESTLAND REHABILITATION AND
PROTECTION AT THE BARANGAY LEVEL, SPURRING LOCAL CLIMATE
CHANGE ACTION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is known for its rich biodiversity and natural resources, but these have been under constant threat due to unsustainable human activities, deforestation, and climate change. As part of the State's policy, preventing and reducing the adverse impacts of climate change is a collective responsibility that requires the participation of national and local governments, businesses, nongovernment organizations, local communities, and the public.

This bill aims at promoting the rehabilitation, protection, and preservation of forest lands and the environment at the grassroots level. This proposed legislation seeks to empower barangays or local communities to become stewards of their environment by encouraging the planting of trees, rehabilitating degraded forests, and protecting natural habitats.

Moreover, this measure aims to promote sustainable and community-led initiatives to rehabilitate and protect forest lands and the environment. By empowering the barangays, we hope to foster a culture of environmental stewardship that will ensure the protection and preservation of our natural resources for future generations.

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



LOREN LEGARDA



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

1 Section 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Barangay Greening and Forest
2 Land Rehabilitation and Protection Act."

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - Recognizing the vulnerability of local communities
4 to the impact of climate change and the role of local governments as frontline agencies
5 in the formulation and implementation of climate change action, it is hereby declared
6 the policy of the State to advance climate change adaptation strategies from the
7 national to the barangay level and promote the right of people to enjoy the benefits of
8 a balanced and healthy ecology.

9 Further recognizing that environmental degradation aggravates the impact of
10 climate change, it is the policy of the State to advance greening and rehabilitation and
11 protection of forest lands as a priority adaptation strategy.

12 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act:

13 (a) *Adaptation* refers to the adjustment in natural or human systems in response to
14 actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or
15 exploits beneficial opportunities;

1 (b) *Climate Change* refers to a change in climate identified by changes in the mean
2 and/or variability of its properties that persists for an extended period,
3 typically decades or longer, whether due to natural variability or as a result of
4 human activity;

5 (c) *Forest lands* include the public forest, the permanent forest or forest reserves,
6 and forest reservations;

7 (d) *Forest land rehabilitation programs* shall include the conservation, management,
8 and development of forest resources and biodiversity; and

9 (e) *Forest resources* shall refer to any timber stands of half a hectare or more
10 regardless of land classification or ownership

11 (f) *Local greening programs* shall aim to build, develop, and maintain forest parks
12 in provincial, city, municipal, barangay parks, roads, elementary school
13 grounds, and other public open spaces, where appropriate and in private lands
14 where permitted or if such are left idle for at least 10 years.

15 Sec. 4. *Barangay Greening and Forest Land Rehabilitation and Protection* – Pursuant to
16 the pertinent provisions of Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code,
17 local government units (LGUs) shall share the responsibility in sustainable
18 management and utilization of forest resources within their territorial jurisdiction,
19 including those assigned by law to other government agencies. The Barangay
20 Environment Committee in the Barangay Council shall inventory forest resources in
21 public and private lands for the City or Municipality to consolidate in their
22 databases for planning purposes. These inventories should specify, as far as
23 possible, the dominant species in the timber stands.

24 Subject to vested rights, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources
25 (DENR) and LGUs in the provincial, city, municipal, and barangay level, in
26 consultation with other government agencies, local communities, non-government
27 organizations, academic and research institutions, and other sectors, shall jointly
28 undertake the planning, formulation and implementation of local greening and forest
29 land rehabilitation and protection programs.

1 Sec. 5. *Institutional Arrangements.* - Each province, city, and municipality shall
2 integrate the objectives of this Act in its policies, plans, and programs. Each city and
3 municipality shall mobilize all concerned local agencies and communities to ensure
4 prompt and effective implementation of this Act in every barangay. The LGUs shall
5 conduct information and advocacy drives to promote local greening and forest land
6 rehabilitation and protection programs, prioritizing native trees and if possible,
7 species of endangered trees..

8 The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall coordinate
9 with the LGUs to ensure prompt and effective implementation of this Act.

10 The Climate Change Commission (CCC), as the sole government agency
11 tasked to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate government programs and actions plans
12 relating to climate change, shall coordinate and synchronize programs on forest land
13 rehabilitation to ensure harmonization with national plans and programs and to
14 facilitate the provision of resources.

15 DENR shall provide assistance to LGUs in the identification, selection, and
16 allocation of sites for rehabilitation and local greening and in enhancing LGU
17 capability for the planting of the right species, especially in critical watersheds,
18 natural forests, and mangrove areas, the use of efficient reforestation technologies,
19 and the necessary steps to protect the remaining natural forests and national parks.
20 The DENR shall likewise assist in the planning and permitting to cull invasive tree
21 species and/or species that may impact vulnerable food chain elements such as but
22 not limited to African Tulips.

23 All concerned agencies shall undertake information and advocacy drives.

24 Sec. 6. *Coordination with Forestry, Natural Resources, Agricultural, and Fisheries*
25 *Schools.* - Subject to the rules and regulations, DENR, in consultation with the
26 Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education
27 (CHED), may promulgate forestry, natural resources, agricultural and fisheries
28 schools, both public and private, shall participate in the national and local
29 implementation and monitoring of this Act. The concerned national agencies shall
30 facilitate government or other financial assistance for such participation. The DENR
31 shall provide technical assistance for capacity building of participating educational
32 institutions, not only to ensure adequate, quality supply of planting materials, but

1 also to transfer and propagate appropriate technologies for local greening and forest
2 land rehabilitation and protection. The DENR shall likewise mobilize civil society to
3 assist in these tasks and help DENR with localized plans and inventories.

4 Fiscal and non-fiscal incentives shall be granted to participating institutions.

5 *Sec. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The DENR shall, in consultation
6 with CCC and DILG, promulgate the pertinent rules and regulations to fully
7 implement the objectives and purposes of this Act within a period not later than ninety
8 (90) days after the approval of this Act.

9 *Sec. 8. Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to initially implement the
10 provision of this Act shall be taken out of any funds in the National Treasury not
11 otherwise appropriated: *Provided,* that subsequent annual funding for the
12 implementation of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act:
13 *Provided, further,* that there shall be an equitable and proportionate annual
14 appropriation of funds, and access thereto, for this purpose for all barangays.

15 *Sec. 9. Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared
16 unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining
17 provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

18 *Sec. 10. Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree, issuance, executive
19 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or
20 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended
21 accordingly.

22 *Sec. 11. Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
23 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation
24 in the Philippines.

Approved,