

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
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First Regular Session)

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SENATE

RECEIVED BY: _____

P.S. Res. No. 209

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE GOVERNMENT'S PREPAREDNESS FOR POSSIBLE DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN NORTHERN LUZON AND SOME AREAS OF THE VISAYAS IN THE COMING MONTHS DUE TO THE EL NIÑO PHENOMENON, WITH THE END VIEW OF RECOMMENDING POLICY MEASURES TO MITIGATE THE EL NIÑO'S DISASTROUS EFFECTS

WHEREAS, El Niño is an international phenomenon caused by an abnormal increase in temperature of the Pacific Ocean, extended drought, and a decline in the amount of rainfall over an extended period;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAG-ASA) said the provinces of Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Nueva Ecija, Quirino, Aurora, Palawan, Negros Oriental, Siquijor, Biliran, Bukidnon, Davao del Sur, South Cotabato, and Sarangani have experienced two (2) consecutive months of below normal rainfall and have the potential for drought conditions;

WHEREAS, the dry spell could destroy crops, dry up irrigation, reduce productivity and revenue for agriculture and fishery, cause forest or bush fires, reduce hydroelectric power, and cause an outbreak of plant, animal and human diseases;

WHEREAS, in the 1997 El Niño episode, rice production losses reached at least 1.8 metric tons valued at Twelve Million Pesos (P12,000,000.00) for a total area of 961,396 hectares. Losses in corn and other crops were even higher than that of rice;

WHEREAS, for the fisheries sector, total production dropped by 283,879 metric tons amounting to P7.24 billion pesos over a nine-month period (October 1997-June 1998);


WHEREAS, in 2002, some 646,500 hectares of basic food crops amounting to over Three Million Pesos (P 3,000,000.00) were damaged by long dry spells in the country. Forest fires, meanwhile, struck some 15,000 hectares in Quezon and Rizal in Palawan, and 200 hectares of the Pacific Cordillera Mountain Range in Davao del Norte;

WHEREAS, while the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) expects the El Niño weather pattern for 2005 to have a "minimal" impact on agriculture, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) expects the annual growth rate in agriculture, fishery, and forestry to decline from 4.9% in 2004 to 3.5% in 2005;

WHEREAS, the government needs to develop and implement effective set of actions to minimize the environmental, social, and economic impacts of El Niño. This includes the reactivation and strengthening of Task Force El Niño;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, to direct the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the government's preparedness for possible drought conditions in Northern Luzon and some areas of the Visayas in the coming months due to the El Niño phenomenon, with the end view of recommending policy measures to mitigate the El Niño's disastrous effects.

Adopted,


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.
Senator