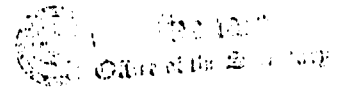


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



20 JUL 22 P 2:39

SENATE

S. No. 1712

RECEIVED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "C. Villar", is written over the "RECEIVED" stamp.

Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

AN ACT

DECLARING THE HINAKPAN MYSTICAL HILLS IN THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS ORIENTAL AS A PROTECTED AREA UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7586, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11038, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE EXPANDED NATIONAL INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM ACT OF 2018, PROVIDING FOR ITS MANAGEMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Under the 1987 Philippine Constitution, it is a declared state policy that the State "¹shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature." In line with safeguarding a healthful ecology, the Constitution likewise provides that Congress shall determine the national parks, which shall be conserved and may not be increased nor diminished, except by law.²

Pursuant to the said constitutional provisions, the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) was established by virtue of Republic Act (RA) No. 7586, as amended by RA No. 11038, otherwise known as the "Expanded NIPAS Act

¹ Article II, Section 16, 1987 Philippine Constitution

² Article XII, Sec. 3, 1987 Philippine Constitution

of 2018". Cognizant of the exacting impact of diverse human activities on all components of the natural environment, the NIPAS Act declared it the policy of the State "to secure for the Filipino people of present and future generations the perpetual existence of all native plants and animals through the establishment of a comprehensive system of integrated protected areas within the classification of national park as provided for in the Constitution." The system shall encompass ecologically rich, unique and biologically important areas that are habitats of threatened species of plants and animals, biogeographic zones and related ecosystems, whether terrestrial, wetland or marine, all of which shall be designated as 'protected areas'.³

Presently, there are already 107 protected areas in the Philippines that have been so declared through legislation. And yet, based on the records and various suitability assessments by the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), there are still numerous sites in the country that have to be given 'protected area' status, by legislative action, in order to ensure its conservation. One of these sites is the Hinakpan Mystical Hills found in the City of Guihulngan in the Province of Negros Oriental.

This bill seeks to establish the Hinakpan Mystical Hills as a natural monument and within the purview of protected areas under the NIPAS Act.

The Hinakpan Mystical Hills is a group of around 237 conical limestone peaks, in unique shapes and sizes, found in the highland of Guihulngan City. The hills are scattered in the village of Hinakpan, which is situated midway between the city proper of Guihulngan and the Municipality of Isabel, Negros Occidental. The Hinakpan Mystical Hills encompass a total area of 1,331.24 hectares. The name *Hinakpan* was derived after the "takpan" trees, which are abundant in the area.⁴ The Hinakpan Mystical Hills, closely resembling the Chocolate Hills of Bohol, present a stunning view to behold.

³ Section 2, RA No. 7586, as amended by RA 11038

⁴ <https://dumaguete.com/tourist-spots-in-guihulngan/>

Apart from its picturesque setting, the Hinakpan Mystical Hills carry unique biophysical attributes. It is home to various endemic flora species and wildlife, which add to the necessity of protecting the area.

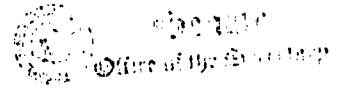
The bill declaring the Hinakpan Mystical Hills as a protected area with the category of a Natural Monument under the NIPAS Act, as amended will ensure that there will be adequate conservation measures and appropriate management schemes to safeguard its biodiversity. The legislation aims to enforce the needed mechanism for the long-term protection of the hills. It shall also prevent environmental degradation, which threatens the survival of the plant and animal species of the Hills and the ecotourism opportunities that may benefit the surrounding communities.

As the Chairperson of the Senate Committee of Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, I am pleased to file this bill, which is the Senate counterpart measure of House Bill No. 1775 authored by Hon. Jocelyn Sy Limkaichong, the Representative of the 1st District of Negros Oriental.

In view of the foregoing, I recommend the approval of this measure.


CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Hinakpan Mystical
2 Hills Natural Monument Act of 2020”.

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The Hinakpan Mystical Hills Natural Monument
4 is hereby declared to be included in the list of established protected areas under
5 Section 5 (a.1) of Republic Act No. 7586, as amended by Republic Act No. 11038,
6 categorized under ENIPAS as natural monument, defined under Section 4 (x) of the
7 same law, as “a relatively small area focused on the protection of small features to
8 protect or preserve nationally significant natural features on account of their special
9 interest or unique characteristics.”

1 **Sec. 3. Scope and Coverage.** – The boundaries of the Hinakpan Mystical Hill
2 Natural Monument, which falls under the category of natural monument in the City
3 of Guihulngan in the Province of Negros Oriental, are as follows:

4 Beginning at a point marked "1" which is N 83°48'26" E, 7,226.09 meters
5 from BLLM 1, PLS-266 with geographic coordinates of 10°9'42.338" North and
6 123°11'9.32" East,

7	thence	N 85° 9' 43" W	1717.00	meters to corner	2;
8	thence	N 74° 40' 7" W	1836.60	meters to corner	3;
9	thence	N 24° 0' 30" W	538.65	meters to corner	4;
10	thence	N 13° 0' 11" E	598.11	meters to corner	5;
11	thence	N 55° 48' 21" E	560.59	meters to corner	6;
12	thence	N 14° 41' 58" W	982.60	meters to corner	7;
13	thence	N 53° 17' 19" E	780.51	meters to corner	8;
14	thence	N 34° 56' 16" E	795.04	meters to corner	9;
15	thence	S 87° 22' 45" E	1018.02	meters to corner	10;
16	thence	S 54° 43' 52" E	823.25	meters to corner	11;
17	thence	S 32° 10' 32" E	3460.99	meters to corner	12;
18	thence	S 63° 10' 12" W	1412.89	meters to corner	1;

19 the point of beginning containing a total area of one thousand three hundred thirty-
20 one and 24/100 (1,331.24) hectares, more or less, subject to ground survey and
21 verification to be conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural
22 Resources, through the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority
23 (NAMRIA), within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act.

24 The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall
25 appropriately mark on the ground the technical descriptions provided in this Act with
26 clearly visible markers and shall prepare appropriate maps therefor. Any modification
27 of the coverage of this Act due to such factors as changing ecological situations, new
28 scientific or archeological findings, or discovery of traditional boundaries not

1 previously taken into account shall be made through an act of Congress, after
2 consultation with the affected public and concerned government agencies.

3 **Sec. 4. Buffer Zone.** – Buffer zone surrounding the Hinakpan Mystical Hill
4 Natural Monument is hereby established with the following boundaries:

5 Beginning at a point marked '1" on plan which is N 83°48'26" E, 7,226.09
6 meters from BLLM 1, PLS-266 with geographic coordinates of 10°9'42.338" North
7 and 123°11'9.32" East,

8	thence	S 10° 31' 43" E	41.65	meters to corner 2;
9	thence	N 85° 9' 25" W	1731.52	meters to corner 3;
10	thence	N 74° 40' 12" W	1859.32	meters to corner 4;
11	thence	N 24° 00' 24" W	570.77	meters to corner 5;
12	thence	N 12° 58' 28" E	627.07	meters to corner 6;
13	thence	N 55° 47' 36" E	548.28	meters to corner 7;
14	thence	N 14° 41' 45" W	981.36	meters to corner 8;
15	thence	N 53° 17' 29" E	800.95	meters to corner 9;
16	thence	N 34° 56' 31" E	810.63	meters to corner 10;
17	thence	S 87° 23' 30" E	1052.28	meters to corner 11;
18	thence	S 54° 42' 36" E	843.01	meters to corner 12;
19	thence	S 32° 10' 37" E	3512.59	meters to corner 13;
20	thence	S 63° 10' 16" W	1468.91	meters to corner 14;
21	thence	N 10° 31' 43" W	41.65	meters to corner 15;
22	thence	S 63° 10' 12" W	1412.89	meters to corner 16;
23	thence	S 32° 10' 32" E	3460.99	meters to corner 17;
24	thence	S 54° 43' 52" E	823.25	meters to corner 18;
25	thence	S 87° 22' 45" E	1018.02	meters to corner 19;
26	thence	N 34° 56' 16" E	795.04	meters to corner 20;
27	thence	N 53° 17' 19" E	780.51	meters to corner 21;
28	thence	N 14° 41' 58" W	982.60	meters to corner 22;
29	thence	N 55° 48' 21" E	560.59	meters to corner 23;
30	thence	N 13° 00' 11" E	598.11	meters to corner 24;

1 thence N 24° 00' 30" W 538.65 meters to corner 25;
2 thence N 74° 40' 07" W 1836.60 meters to corner 26;
3 thence N 85° 9' 43" W 1717.00 meters to corner 1;
4 the point of beginning containing a total area of fifty-eight and 83/100 (58.83)
5 hectares, more or less.

6 **Sec. 5. *Management and Institutional Mechanisms.*** – The Hinakpan Mystical
7 Hills as a protected area shall be managed in accordance with Republic Act No.
8 7586, as amended by Republic Act No. 11038, under the supervision of the
9 Protected Area Management Board (PAMB). A Protected Area Management Office
10 (PAMO) shall be established and headed by the Protected Area Superintendent
11 (PASu) in conformity with Section 11 of the same law, as amended.

12 **Sec. 6. *Promulgation of Rules and Regulations.*** – The DENR, in consultation
13 with relevant government agencies and other stakeholders, shall promulgate the
14 necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

15 **Sec. 7. *Appropriations.*** – The Secretary of the DENR shall immediately include
16 in the Department's Program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which
17 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

18 **Sec. 8. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is declared
19 unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof not affected thereby shall
20 continue to be in full force and effect.

21 **Sec. 9. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
22 regulations or parts thereof which are contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are
23 hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

24 **Sec. 10. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
25 its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a national newspaper of general
26 circulation.

Approved,