

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

23 FEB 27 P2 :20

SENATE

RECEIVED BY



P. S. RES. No. 500

Introduced by Senator **PIA S. CAYETANO**

RESOLUTION

URGING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION BY THE BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS (BUCOR) ON A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN THE PROTECTED AREA OF THE MASUNGI GEORESERVE

1 **WHEREAS**, Section 16, Article II of the Constitution provides that the State
2 shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology
3 in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature;

4 **WHEREAS**, Section 2 of Republic Act No. 11038, or the *National Integrated*
5 *Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act*, provides that it is the policy of the State to secure
6 for the present and future generations of Filipinos, the perpetual existence of all native
7 plants and animals through the establishment of a comprehensive system of
8 integrated protected areas;

9 **WHEREAS**, the Philippines is a party to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable
10 Development that adopted the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals
11 (SDGs), particularly SDG 13 on climate action - aiming to take urgent action to combat
12 climate change and its impacts, and SDG 15 on life on land - seeking to protect,
13 restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage
14 forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt
15 biodiversity loss;

1 **WHEREAS**, in 1977, the Masungi Georeserve, which is a parcel of land of public
2 domain located in the provinces of Bulacan, Rizal, Laguna, and Quezon, was declared
3 as a national park, wildlife sanctuary, and game preserve through Presidential
4 Proclamation No. 1636;¹

5 **WHEREAS**, in 1993, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources
6 issued Administrative Order No. 33, declaring the Masungi Georeserve as a Strict
7 Nature Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary, and that it is closed to mining, exploration,
8 development, exploitation, and other activities that might adversely affect its habitat
9 and ecological balance;²

10 **WHEREAS**, since 2015, the Masungi Georeserve Foundation, Inc. (MGFI) has
11 continuously advocated for the conservation of the Masungi Georeserve as a sanctuary
12 for the sustainable protection of biodiversity, rock formations, and flora and fauna;³

13
14 **WHEREAS**, based on news reports, in 2021, the MGFI's volunteers and
15 employees received various threats, intimidations, and harassment⁴ from groups
16 allegedly involved in illegal quarrying, logging, and land grabbing in the Masungi
17 Georeserve, which even led to the shooting of two (2) park rangers;⁵

18 **WHEREAS**, based on recent news reports, the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor)
19 is claiming that it is the registered owner of a 270-hectare land in Barangays
20 Kuyumbay, Layban, San Andres and Tinucan in Tanay, Rizal, located within the

¹ Proclamation No. 1636. (1977, April 18). *President of the Philippines*.

<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1977/04/18/proclamation-no-1636-s-1977/>

² Administrative Order No. 33. (1993, May 10). *Department of Environment and Natural Resources Philippines*. <http://policy.denr.gov.ph/1993/DAO1993-33.pdf>

³ Reyes, N. (2016, March 27). "A first-timer's guide to Masungi Georeserve, where adventure awaits." *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/life-and-style/travel/masungi-georeserve-rizal-guide-tips>

⁴ Masungi Georeserve. (2021, July 25). Two Forest Rangers at Bayog Ranger Station near GSB Resort. *Twitter*. <https://mobile.twitter.com/MasungiGeo/status/1418965099696562184>

⁵ Bordey, H. (2022, September 22). Senate probe into alleged incidents of violence, land grabbing in Masungi Georeserve sought. *GMA News*.

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/845713/senate-probe-into-alleged-incidents-of-violence-land-grabbing-in-masungi-georeserve-sought/story/>

1 Masungi Georeserve by virtue of a Transfer Certificate of Title issued last 28
2 September 2022;⁶

3 **WHEREAS**, the BuCor is planning to construct either (a) its headquarters, an
4 aqua-and-agri farm, and a residential area for its personnel,⁷ or (b) a prison for young
5 offenders or women offenders for the National Capital Region, within the Masungi
6 Georeserve;⁸

7 **WHEREAS**, according to a news report, the National Museum said that the
8 proposed construction will have “expensive consequences for the environment”,⁹ and
9 that building on the subject area, which is soluble and made of limestones, may be a
10 safety hazard that could trigger a sinkhole collapse;¹⁰

11 **WHEREAS**, based on the principle of intergenerational fairness, present
12 generations hold an obligation towards future generations not to pursue policies that
13 create benefits for themselves but impose costs on those who will live in the future;¹¹

⁶ Cabico, G. (2023, February 17). “Site of headquarter”: BuCor claims ownership of land within Masungi. *Philippine Star*. <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2023/02/17/2245650/site-headquarters-bucor-claims-ownership-land-within-masungi>

⁷ Cabico, G.K. (2023, February 20). What we know so far: BuCor's plan to relocate its headquarters to Masungi. *Inquirer*. <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2023/02/20/2246347/what-we-know-so-far-bucors-plan-relocate-its-headquarters-masungi>

⁸ Cabalza, D. & Lazaro, J. (2023, February 21). DOJ, BuCor: Development plans for Masungi will be pro-environment. *Inquirer*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1732574/doj-bucor-devt-plans-for-masungi-property-will-be-pro-environment>

⁹ Bolledo, J. (2023, February 17). BuCor says Masungi Georeserve will be used as its headquarters. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/bureau-corrections-says-masungi-georeserve-used-headquarters/>

¹⁰ Cabico, G.K. (2023, February 20). What we know so far: BuCor's plan to relocate its headquarters to Masungi. *Inquirer*. <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2023/02/20/2246347/what-we-know-so-far-bucors-plan-relocate-its-headquarters-masungi>

¹¹ School of International Futures. (n.d.). Intergenerational Fairness Observatory: Putting intergenerational fairness into practice. <https://soif.org.uk/igf/#:~:text=Intergenerationally%20fair%20policies%20and%20strategic,to%20meet%20their%20own%20needs.>

1 **WHEREAS**, the continued conservation of the Masungi Georeserve must be an
2 utmost priority, and that any development on the protected area that may pose as a
3 threat to its rich biodiversity should be thoroughly assessed and evaluated;

4 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, to urge the appropriate Senate
5 Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the proposed construction
6 by the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) on a parcel of land located in the protected area
7 of the Masungi Georeserve.

Adopted,


PIA S. CAYETANO 