

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)

6 JUL 26 1974

SENATE

P. S. R. No. 531

RECEIVED BY: JTY

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE
USE OF DYNAMITES BY FISHERMEN TO SCAVENGE FOR SCRAP METALS

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 16, 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";

WHEREAS, according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Philippines, in recent months, fishermen have resorted to dynamite blasting to salvage metal from shipwrecks surrounding the Babuyan Islands in Cagayan due to poor catch;

WHEREAS, the WWF team that arrived in Camiguin Island north of Cagayan province, for their annual humpback whale survey, has recorded as much as six blasts per hour almost everyday;

WHEREAS, the locals have admitted that about a gallon of dynamite is used for every trip; dynamites are planted in the shipwrecks, and steel that comes loose due to the explosion are then recovered;

WHEREAS, the scrap metals are sold in the island for about P4 per kilo; the dealer from the island then sells the scrap in Aparri or Cagayan for about P10 per kilo;

WHEREAS, there are at least five known shipwrecks surrounding Camiguin Island; all are located in the breeding ground of humpback whales that travel to the Babuyan Islands before proceeding to Alaska and Russia to feed;

WHEREAS, locals have been salvaging metals from the shipwrecks for about two years now; before they only use acetylene to recover loose scraps; they started using dynamites to get bigger pieces of metal;

WHEREAS, the shipwrecks, which are more than 20 years old, have become artificial reefs that serve as refuge and breeding ground for fish;

WHEREAS, dynamite blasting also destroys coral reefs in the Camiguin Islands; WWF-Philippines is still monitoring if the blasting scares away Pacific humpback whales that come to the Philippines during the summer to breed;

WHEREAS, the government should educate the fishermen about the hazardous effects of dynamite blasting, and provide alternative sources of livelihood to prevent the locals from engaging into this illegal method of salvaging shipwrecks;

WHEREAS, it is also the duty of the government to ensure the protection of marine ecosystems; now be it

RESOLVED, that the proper Senate committee shall conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the use of dynamites by fishermen to scavenge for scrap metals.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/gac