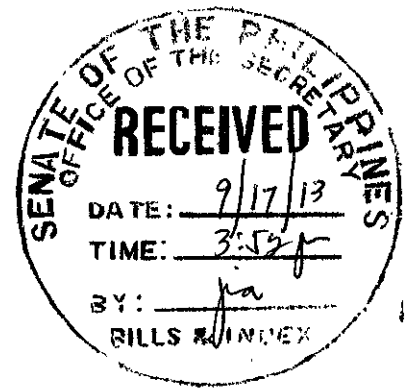


SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



SENATE  
S. No. 1697

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

It has long been recognized that tourism is an indispensable element of the national economy and an industry of national interest and importance. It has been reported that the current administration has identified the tourism industry as a key engine of economic growth, and has put in a lot of effort to position the Philippines as a global destination of choice through aggressive marketing campaigns and the continued implementation of several infrastructure projects over the years.

Yet, it is an industry built upon the most fragile of natural and cultural environments, where the most inconsequential and innocent of human gestures can easily wreak havoc on the site's resources. The country realizes that, it must conserve, protect and strengthen the cultural, historical and natural resources upon which the Philippines draws its unique competitive advantages (Alampay, *Sustainable Tourism: Challenges for the Philippines*). In 2009, Republic Act 9593, known as the Tourism Act of 2009 was passed. In that law, it was declared a policy of the state to "promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and ethically and socially equitable for local communities."

The Philippines is not the only country that has seen the need to adopt new approaches in order to come up with tourist products that do not result in environmental degradation or are exploitative of the local communities. In fact, there is currently a

global movement towards the transformation of the tourism industry to what is now called “responsible tourism.”

In 2002, members of tourism enterprises and government agencies, from all over the world, converged in South Africa to attend the Cape Town Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations. This resulted in what is known as the Cape Town Declaration; a statement in which delegates committed themselves to pursuing the principles of Responsible Tourism and called on governments to include these principles in their development agenda.

Responsible tourism is an approach to the management of tourism, aimed at maximizing economic, social and environmental benefits and minimizing costs to destinations. Simply put, Responsible tourism is tourism ‘that creates better places for people to live in, and better places to visit’. A responsible tourism approach aims to achieve the triple-bottom line outcomes of sustainable development, i.e. economic growth, environmental integrity and social justice.

Responsible tourism and sustainable tourism have an identical goal, that of sustainable development. The major difference between the two is that, in responsible tourism, individuals, organizations and businesses are asked to take responsibility for their actions and the impacts of their actions. This shift in emphasis has taken place because not much progress has been made on realizing sustainable tourism since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992.

This bill is meant to supplement the mandate given the Department of Tourism, under R.A. 9593 by establishing the Center for Responsible Tourism which shall create a program for the promotion of responsible tourism.

*Miriam Defensor Santiago*  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO



- Is culturally sensitive, encourages respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence.

SECTION 2. *Establishment of a Center for Responsible Tourism.* –The Center for Responsible Tourism, to be referred to in this Act as the “Center”, is hereby established under the supervision of the Department of Tourism. The Center is mandated to do the following:

- (A) Develop a nationwide program to promote responsible tourism;
- (B) Create and maintain a databank on information on best practices, resources and technology that promote responsible tourism;
- (C) Maintain a website intended to facilitate the dissemination and exchange of ideas to tourism and hospitality professionals and other interested parties on how to start or expand a responsible tourism program;
- (D) Conduct training of tourism and hospitality professionals on how to integrate responsible tourism strategies and practices in management and operations;
- (E) Extend assistance to local government units in the establishment of local responsible tourism programs.

SECTION 4. *Responsible Tourism Program.* – The program to be developed by the Center shall be based on the principles of economic, social and environmental responsibility as defined in the Cape Town Declaration and explained below:

(A) Principles of Economic Responsibility:

- 1) Assess economic impacts before developing tourism and exercise preference for those forms of development that benefit local communities and minimize negative impacts on local livelihoods (for example through loss of access to resources), recognising that tourism may not always be the most appropriate form of local economic development.

- 1           2) Maximize local economic benefits by increasing linkages and reducing  
2           leakages, by ensuring that communities are involved in, and benefit from,  
3           tourism. Wherever possible use tourism to assist in poverty reduction by  
4           adopting pro-poor strategies.
- 5           3) Develop quality products that reflect, complement, and enhance the  
6           destination.
- 7           4) Market tourism in ways which reflect the natural, cultural and social  
8           integrity of the destination, and which encourage appropriate forms of  
9           tourism.
- 10          5) Adopt equitable business practices, pay and charge fair prices, and build  
11          partnerships in ways in which risk is minimized and shared, and recruit and  
12          employ staff recognizing international labor standards.
- 13          6) Provide appropriate and sufficient support to small, medium and micro  
14          enterprises to ensure tourism-related enterprises thrive and are sustainable.

15          (B) Principles of Social Responsibility

- 16          1) Actively involve the local community in planning and decision-making and  
17          provide capacity-building to make this a reality.
- 18          2) Assess social impacts throughout the life cycle of the operation – including  
19          the planning and design phases of projects - in order to minimize negative  
20          impacts and maximize positive ones.
- 21          3) Endeavour to make tourism an inclusive social experience and to ensure  
22          that there is access for all, in particular vulnerable and disadvantaged  
23          communities and individuals.
- 24          4) Combat the sexual exploitation of human beings, particularly the  
25          exploitation of children.

1           5) Be sensitive to the host culture, maintaining and encouraging social and  
2           cultural diversity.

3           6) Endeavour to ensure that tourism contributes to improvements in health and  
4           education.

5           (C) Principles of Environmental Responsibility:

6           1) Assess environmental impacts throughout the life cycle of tourist  
7           establishments and operations – including the planning and design phase -  
8           and ensure that negative impacts are reduced to the minimum and  
9           maximizing positive ones.

10          2) Use resources sustainably, and reduce waste and over-consumption.

11          3) Manage natural diversity sustainably, and where appropriate restore it; and  
12          consider the volume and type of tourism that the environment can support,  
13          and respect the integrity of vulnerable ecosystems and protected areas.

14          4) Promote education and awareness for sustainable development – for all  
15          stakeholders.

16          5) Raise the capacity of all stakeholders and ensure that best practice is  
17          followed, for this purpose consult with environmental and conservation  
18          experts.

19          SECTION 5. *Reporting to Congress.* – The Secretary of the Dept. of Tourism shall  
20          submit an evaluation report to Congress every two (2) years after the effectivity of this  
21          Act.

22          SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – A Technical Working Group  
23          shall be created under the helm of the Secretary of the Dept. of Tourism which shall  
24          promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act. The Technical Working  
25          Group shall be composed of representatives from the following:

- 1 A) Department of Tourism;
- 2 B) Department of Interior and Local Government;
- 3 C) Department of Environment and Natural Resources;
- 4 D) National Ecotourism Development Council;
- 5 E) Tourism estate development and management services;
- 6 F) Accommodation enterprises;
- 7 G) Air, sea and land tourism transport services;
- 8 H) Travel and tour enterprises;
- 9 I) Heritage Conservation Society;
- 10 J) Philippine Green Building Council.

11 SECTION 7. *Appropriations.* - There shall be authorized to be appropriated such  
12 amounts as necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act, to be included in the annual  
13 budget of the Department of Tourism in the General Appropriations Act.

14 SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid  
15 or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law of the provision not otherwise affected shall  
16 remain valid and subsisting.

17 SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance,  
18 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to,  
19 or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended  
20 accordingly.

21 SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after  
22 its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

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