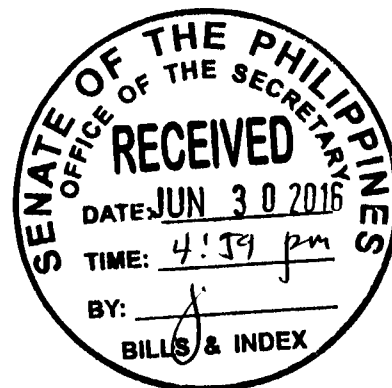


SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

SENATE

S.B. No. 148



Introduced by **Senator Cynthia A. Villar**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE LAS PIÑAS – PARAÑAQUE CRITICAL HABITAT AND
ECOTOURISM AREA AS A WETLAND, ENSURING THE PROTECTION THEREOF,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Despite its apparent congestion compounded by the presence of high-rise buildings, condominiums, and other multifarious concrete structures, traffic prone streets and highways, as well as busy urban centers, Metro Manila is quite blessed to have within its region the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area or LPPCHEA.

Established in 2007 thru Presidential Proclamation No. 1412 series of 2007, as amended, LPPCHEA is the first critical habitat to be declared in the country. It covers an area of 175 hectares of wetland ecosystem, consisting of two (2) islands — Freedom Island and Long Island — with mangroves, ponds and lagoons, mudflats, salt marshes, and mixed beach forest all over. LPPCHEA is an important resting and refueling stop for migratory birds using the East Asian-Australasian Migratory Flyway, and it serves as a sanctuary to the vulnerable Philippine Duck and around 47 species of migratory birds in the area, with some coming from as far as China, Japan and Siberia. LPPCHEA likewise shelters a 36-hectare mangrove forest. The thickest and most diverse along the Manila Bay area, the LPPCHEA mangrove forest serves as spawning ground, nursery, feeding and temporary shelter of different fish species and other forms of wildlife, as well as protects the communities of Las Piñas City and Parañaque City against storm surges and high tides. LPPCHEA truly lives up to its reputation as the region's last coastal frontier.¹

On 15 March 2013, LPPCHEA was recognized as a Wetland of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention (or the Convention on Wetlands) because of the critical role LPPCHEA plays in the survival of threatened, restricted-range and

¹ <http://ncr.denr.gov.ph/index.php/89-webpage/338>

congregatory bird species.² The Ramsar Convention requires the "conservation, and wise use of wetlands through local and national actions, and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world." LPPCHEA is the sixth Ramsar Site in the country, joining the ranks of locally and internationally acclaimed habitats such as the Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park, Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary, Naujan Lake National Park, Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary, and the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park.

Being located in an urban area, it is LPPCHEA faces threats, which, among others, include: accumulation along the coast of wastes and other effluents from nearby cities, mangrove cutting, and proposed reclamation projects in Manila Bay.

In view thereof, the attached bill aims to promote and institutionalize the protection, preservation and management of the Las Piñas – Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA). This is after all in keeping with the State policy, enshrined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution 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"³.

Thus, the approval of the bill is earnestly sought.

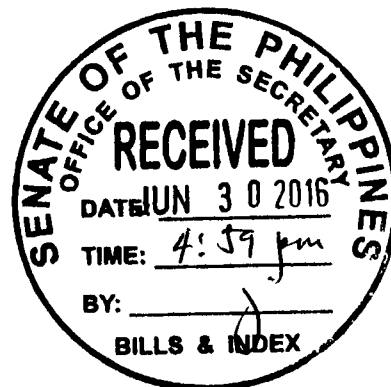


CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

² http://ramsar.rgis.ch/cda/en/ramsar-documents-list-anno-philippines/main/ramsar/1-31-218%5E16085_4000_0_

³ Article 2, Section 16, 1987 Philippine Constitution

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



SENATE

S.B. No. 148

Introduced by **Senator Cynthia A. Villar**

AN ACT

ESTABLISHING THE LAS PIÑAS – PARAÑAQUE CRITICAL HABITAT AND ECOTOURISM AREA AS A WETLAND, ENSURING THE PROTECTION THEREOF, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1. Short title. – This Act shall be known as the “*Las Piñas - Parañaque*
2 *Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area Act of 2016.*”

3 SEC. 2. Declaration of policy. – Pursuant to Section 16, Article II (State Policies)
4 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution which makes it the obligation of the State to protect
5 and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with
6 the rhythm and harmony of nature, and to the policies of the *International Convention on*
7 *the Conservation of Wetlands* (otherwise known as the “*Ramsar Convention*”), of which
8 the Philippines is a signatory, relevant to the protection and sustainable development of
9 foreshore areas, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect important and
10 critical areas hosting vulnerable wildlife, and to preserve and sustain development of
11 key biodiversity sites.

12 The comprising lagoons of Las Piñas and Parañaque, which support populations
13 of the globally threatened Chinese Egret and Philippine Duck along with at least twenty-
14 five (25) species of other rare and uncommon species of waterfowl, is hereby declared
15 as a wetland and an ecotourism area.

16 SEC. 3. Definition of terms. – As used in this Act:

17 (a) “*Wetland*” shall refer to an area of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether
18 natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh,
19 brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not

1 exceed six (6) meters. A *wetland* may incorporate riparian and coastal zones adjacent
2 to wetlands, and islands or bodies of marine water deeper than six (6) meters at low tide
3 lying within the *wetland*.

4 (b) "*Ecotourism*" refers to a form of sustainable tourism within a natural and
5 cultural heritage area where community participation, protection and management of
6 natural resources, culture and indigenous knowledge and practices, environmental
7 education and ethics as well as economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the
8 enrichment of host communities and satisfaction of visitors. For this purpose, the
9 definition of *ecotourism* in Administrative Order No. 2013 -19 (issued on 01 July 2013)
10 of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is hereby adopted.

11 (c) "*Protected Areas Systems*" refers to identified portions of land and water
12 set aside by reason of their unique physical and biological significance, managed to
13 enhance biological diversity and protected against destructive human exploitation
14 pursuant to Republic Act No. 7586 otherwise known as the *National Integrated*
15 *Protected Areas System Act of 1992*.

16 SEC. 4. *The Las Piñas – Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area*. - The
17 Las Piñas – Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area is hereby established
18 covering one hundred seventy-five thousand three hundred seven hectares (175,307
19 hectares) with technical description as follows:

Line	Bearing	Distance
1-2	S.20%%D 28'W.	131.54 M.
2-3	S.73%%D.56'E	19.50 M.
3-4	S.02%%D15'W	88.59 M.
4-5	2.26%%D02'E.	28.97 M.
5-6	S.13%%D48'W.	138.29 M.
6-7	S.20%%D08'W	37.31 M.
7-8	S.14%%D56'W.	110.33 M.
8-9	S.16%%D32'W	52.11 M.
9-10	S.16%%D32'W.	52.57 M.
10-11	S.18%%D41'W.	113.32 M.
11-12	S.24%%D42'W.	99.58 M.
12-13	S.25%%D37'W.	65.28 M.
13-14	S.29%%D06'W	63.13 M.
14-15	S.30%%D34'W.	44.93 M.
15-16	S.31%%D28'W	42.68 M.
16-17	S.33%%D28'W	38.23 M.
17-18	S. 34%%D36'W.	50.93 M.
18-19	S.36%%D11'W.	41.39 M.
19-20	S.39%%D16'W.	67.80 M.
20-21	S.39%%D34'W.	31.81 M.
21-22	N.87%%D28'W.	216.46 M.

22-23	S.76%%D27'W.	7.94 M.
23-24	S.39%%D14'W.	121.05 M.
24-25	S.34%%D56'E.	54.28 M.
25-26	S.13%%D15'E.	130.81 M.
26-27	S.87%%D49'W.	8.95 M.
27-28	S.07%%D06'W.	11.74 M.
28-29	S.41%%D30'W.	67.77 M.
29-30	S.12%%D38'W.	27.25 M.
30-31	S.30%%D52'E.	16.97 M.
31-32	S.09%%D.42'W.	18.51 M.
32-33	S.21%%D27'W.	74.80 M.
33-34	S.21%%D41'W.	23.93 M.
34-35	S.36%%D41'W.	32.71 M.
35-36	S.34%%D15'W.	311.98 M.
36-37	S.33%%D52'W.	243.49 M.
38-39	S.36%%D02'W.	21.96 M.
39-40	S.36%%D25'W.	20.34 M.
41-42	S.37%%D28'W.	21.08 M.
42-43	S.37%%D03'W.	10.34 M.
43-44	S.40%%D02'W.	29.60 M.
44-45	S.40%%D36'W.	20.53 M.
45-46	S.41%%D15'W.	19.81 M.
46-47	S.41%%D31'W.	20.32 M.
47-48	S.43%%D24'W.	42.40 M.
48-49	S.44%%D16'W.	20.86 M.
50-51	S.45%%D35'W.	21.66 M.
51-52	S.44%%D14'W.	19.48 M.
52-53	S.48%%D43'W.	20.97 M.
53-54	S.48%%D17'W.	21.91 M.
54-55	S.48%%D18'W.	21.60 M.
55-56	S.48%%D44'W.	519.66 M.
56-57	N.67%%D41'W.	106.26 M.
58-59	N.24%%D14'W.	31.90 M.
59-60	N.10%%D58'W.	29.68 M.
60-61	N.22%%D51'E.	106.73 M.
61-62	N.26%%D37'E.	139.26 M.
62-63	N.08%%D46'W.	92.29 M.
63-64	N.73%%D23'W.	9.93 M.
64-65	N.30%%D54'W.	10.05 M.
65-66	N.00%%D47'W.	20.57 M.
66-67	N.20%%D02'E.	277.76 M.
67-68	N.27%%D16'E.	99.63 M.
68-69	N.32%%D05'E.	28.95 M.
69-70	N.19%%D00'E.	33.55 M.
70-71	N.06%%D40'W.	15.17 M.
71-72	N.38%%D08'W.	42.23 M.
72-73	N.29%%D16'E.	154.46 M.
73-74	N.31%%D03'E.	79.75 M.
74-75	N.35%%D10'E.	149.23 M.

75-76	N.37%%D54'E	137.34 M.
76-77	N.32%%D30'E	230.47 M.
77-78	N.38%%D01'3	237.39 M.
78-79	N.69%%D08'E	53.32 M.
79-80	N.89%%D55'E	60.09 M.
80-81	N.71%%D06'E	29.39 M.
81-82	S.86%%D10'E	57.19 M.
82-83	N.73%%D04'E	107.95 M.
83-84	N.55%%D27'E	41.22 M.
84-85	N.27%%D20'E	49.03 M.
85-86	N.13%%D48'E	53.77 M.
86-87	N.11%%D55'E	77.02 M.
87-88	N.00%%D35'E	229.70 M.
88-89	N.04%%D52'E	63.82 M.
89-90	N.12%%D12'E	101.37 M.
90-91	N.06%%D16'E	170.68 M.
91-92	N.09%%D06'W	111.21 M.
92-93	N.06%%D15'W	63.48 M.
93-94	N.16%%D19'W	53.23 M.
94-95	N.53%%D29'E	16.26 M.
95-96	N.88%%D08'E	26.44 M.
96-97	S.39%%D25'E	10.74 M.
97-98	S.83%%D28'E	16.72 M.
98-99	N.82%%D12'E	38.05 M.
99-100	N.66%%D43'E	46.48 M.
100-101	N.42%%D04'E	44.98 M.
101-102	N.66%%D11'E	56.78M.
102-103	N.57%%D25'E	59.13 M.
103-104	N.46%%D35'E	37.21 M.
104-105	N.57%%D54'E	7.00 M.
105-106	S.58%%D15'E	7.83 M.
106-107	S.46%%D39'E	89.13 M.
107-108	N.79%%D55'E	18.23 M.
108-109	S.85%%D37'E	33.91 M.
109-110	S.69%%D52'E	33.52 M.
110-111	S.66%%D33'E	45.08 M.
111-112	S.81%%D36'E	62.71 M.
112-113	N.64%%D36'E	11.45 M.
113-1	S.83%%D30'E	221.52 M.

1 SEC. 5. *Effects of declaration.* – All relevant departments and instrumentalities
2 of the State shall cooperate to undertake the following:

3 (a) Include the area specified in Section 4 of this Act, hereafter to be known
4 as the "Las Piñas – Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area," as a component
5 of the National Integrated Protected Areas Systems under Republic Act No. 7586
6 otherwise known as the *National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992*.

7 (b) Enforce Republic Act No. 9147 otherwise known as the *Wildlife Resources*
8 *Conservation and Protection Act* in the Las Piñas – Parañaque Critical Habitat and
9 Ecotourism Area.

10 (c) Prohibit the reclamation of the "Las Piñas – Parañaque Critical Habitat
11 and Ecotourism Area," and the immediately periphery so as not to impede the
12 ecological function of the lagoons and its small islands mangroves, salt marshes and
13 tidal areas as breeding, feeding, and roosting place for marine and terrestrial wildlife.

14 (d) Ensure that existing mangrove, mudflats, and ecosystems are preserved
15 and/or not built over, and are kept in a condition that will support natural growth of
16 indigenous and or naturally occurring wetland plants critical to the survival of wildlife and
17 natural ecological functions.

18 (e) Ensure the biodiversity component is included and strengthened in all
19 Environmental Impact Assessments and Environmental Risk Assessment Processes for
20 development projects under Administrative Order No. 42 series of 2002.

21 The Department of Environment and Natural Resources shall ensure spearhead
22 the efforts for maintenance, protection, and establishment of the Las Piñas – Parañaque
23 Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area.

24 SEC. 6. *Creation of the LPPCHEA Management Council.* – There is hereby
25 created a Las Piñas – Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area Management
26 Council which shall be convened by the Department of Environment and Natural
27 Resources. It shall be composed of the following:

28 (a) The Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources
29 as Chairperson;

30 (b) The Secretary of the Department of Tourism as Member;

31 (c) The Secretary of the Department of Education;

32 (d) Two (2) representatives from non-governmental organizations with
33 technical capacity and proven ecological biodiversity management
34 capability and track record in the area as Members;

- 1 (e) Two (2) representatives from the people's organizations with a direct stake
2 in the area as Members.

3 SEC. 7. *Tasks of the LPPCHEA Management Council.* - The Management
4 Council shall have the following tasks:

5 (a) Prepare and cause the implementation of a Wetland Management Plan,
6 which will include a master plan to establish criteria and guide development in and
7 around the area according to universally established and scientific principles to ensure
8 protection of critical bird habitats and an ecotourism business plan to ensure
9 sustainable and education in the area.

10 (b) Ensure integrated and sustainable management of the area for the
11 protection of all waterbirds wintering, foraging, breeding, roosting, and nestling, within
12 the Las Piñas – Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area;

13 (c) Ensure strict compliance with this Act through the incorporation and
14 consideration of the requirements herein in the design of any future development
15 projects, and in the master and development plans of the local governments and other
16 concerned agencies.

17 SEC. 8. *Funding.* - The initial amount of Ten million Philippine pesos
18 (Php10,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be allotted for the initial funding for the
19 implementation of this Act. Subsequent appropriations shall be included in the budget
20 of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

21 SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any part, section or provision of this Act is held
22 invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force
23 and effect.

24 SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, orders, rules or regulations which are
25 inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby amended or
26 repealed accordingly.

27 SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after the completion of
28 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

29 Approved,