

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




Senate
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SENATE

S.B. No. 434

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by **SENATOR LOREN LEGARDA**

AN ACT TO PROMOTE GREENING AND FORESTLAND REHABILITATION AND PROTECTION IN THE BARANGAY LEVEL, SPURRING LOCAL CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Explanatory Note

With the recognition of the vulnerability of the Philippine archipelago and its local communities to potential dangerous consequences of climate change such as increasing frequency and/or severity of droughts, fires, floods and storms, damage to ecosystems, and biodiversity loss that affect the country's environment, culture, and economy, it has become the policy of the State to enjoin the participation of national and local governments, businesses, nongovernment organizations, local communities and the public to prevent and reduce the adverse impacts of climate change.

This bill seeks to address one of the drivers of our vulnerability to disasters and climate change -- ecosystems decline. Over the last century, the country's forest cover of around 30 million hectares has now dropped to 7.2 million hectares. In this manner, reforestation initiatives must be accelerated as a way to adapt to a changing climate.

The bill recognizes role of local governments as frontline agencies in the formulation and implementation of climate change action, as it empowers local officials to advance greening and rehabilitation and protection of forestlands as a priority adaptation strategy from the provincial to the *barangay* level.

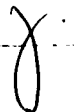
In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


LOREN LEGARDA
Senator

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AN ACT TO PROMOTE GREENING AND FORESTLAND REHABILITATION AND PROTECTION IN THE BARANGAY LEVEL, SPURRING LOCAL CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Title.- This Act shall be known as the “Barangay Greening and Forest Land Rehabilitation and Protection Act.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - Recognizing the vulnerability of local communities to climate change impact and the role of local governments as frontline agencies in the formulation and implementation of climate change action, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to advance climate change adaptation strategies from the national to the barangay level and promote the right of people to enjoy the benefits of a balanced and healthy ecology.

Further recognizing that environmental degradation aggravates the impact of climate change, it is the policy of the State to advance greening and rehabilitation and protection of forest lands as a priority adaptation strategy.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the following shall have the corresponding meanings:

- a. “*Adaptation*” refers to the adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities;
- b. “*Climate Change*” refers to a change in climate identified by changes in the mean and/or variability of its properties that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity; and
- c. “*Forest lands*” include the public forest, the permanent forest or forest reserves, and forest reservations.

SEC. 4. Barangay Greening and Forest Land Rehabilitation and Protection. – Pursuant to the pertinent provisions of Republic Act. No. 7160 or the Local Government Code, local government units (LGUs) shall

1 share the responsibility in sustainable management and utilization of forest
2 resources within their territorial jurisdiction, including those assigned by
3 law to other government agencies.

4
5 Subject to vested rights, the Department of Environment and Natural
6 Resources (DENR) and LGUs - provincial, city, municipal and *barangay* - in
7 consultation with other government agencies, local communities, non-
8 government organizations, academic and research institutions, and other
9 sectors, shall jointly undertake the planning, formulation and
10 implementation of local greening and forest land rehabilitation and
11 protection programs.

12
13 Forest land rehabilitation programs shall include the conservation,
14 management and development of forest resources and biodiversity.

15
16 Local greening programs shall aim to build, develop and maintain forest
17 parks in provincial, city, municipal, *barangay* parks, roads, elementary
18 school grounds and other public open spaces where appropriate.

19
20 **SEC. 5. Institutional Arrangements.** - Each province, city and
21 municipality shall integrate the objectives of this Act in its policies, plans
22 and programs. Each city and municipality shall mobilize all concerned local
23 agencies and communities to ensure prompt and effective implementation of
24 this Act in every *barangay*. The LGUs shall conduct information and
25 advocacy drives to promote local greening and forest land rehabilitation and
26 protection programs.

27
28 The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall coordinate
29 the local government units to ensure prompt and effective implementation of
30 this Act.

31
32 The Climate Change Commission, as the sole government agency tasked to
33 coordinate, monitor and evaluate government programs and action plans
34 relating to climate change, shall coordinate and synchronize programs on
35 forest land rehabilitation to ensure harmonization with national plans and
36 programs and to facilitate the provision of resources.

37
38 The DENR shall, in consultation with the Commission and the DILG,
39 promulgate the pertinent rules and regulations as may be necessary to fully
40 implement the objectives and purposes of this Act within a period not later
41 than ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act.

42
43 The DENR shall provide assistance to LGUs in the identification, selection,
44 and allocation of sites for rehabilitation and local greening and in enhancing
45 LGU capability for the planting of the right species especially in critical
46 watersheds, natural forests, and mangrove areas, the use of efficient
47 reforestation technologies, and the necessary steps to protect the remaining
48 natural forests and national parks.

49
50 All concerned agencies shall undertake information and advocacy drives.

51
52 **SEC. 6. Coordination with Forestry, Natural Resources, Agricultural**
53 **and Fisheries Schools.** - Subject to such rules and regulations as the
54 DENR, in consultation with the Department of Education and the
55 Commission on Higher Education, may promulgate, forestry, natural
56 resources, agricultural and fisheries schools, both public and private, shall

1 participate in the national and local implementation and monitoring of this
2 Act. The concerned national agencies shall facilitate government or other
3 financial assistance for such participation. The DENR shall provide
4 technical assistance for capacity building of participating educational
5 institutions, not only to ensure adequate, quality supply of planting
6 materials, but also to transfer and propagate appropriate technologies for
7 local greening and forest land rehabilitation and protection. Fiscal and non-
8 fiscal incentives shall be granted to participating institutions.

9
10 **SEC. 7. Appropriations.** - The amount necessary to initially implement the
11 provisions of this Act shall be taken out of any funds in the National
12 Treasury not otherwise appropriated: *Provided*, That subsequent annual
13 funding for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the General
14 Appropriations Act: *Provided, further*, That there shall be an equitable and
15 proportionate annual appropriation of funds, and access thereto, for this
16 purpose for all *barangays*.

17
18 **SEC. 8. Separability Clause.** - Should any part or provision of this Act be
19 declared unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof not
20 otherwise affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

21
22 **SEC. 9. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, ordinances, rules and regulations,
23 and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act,
24 are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

25
26 **SEC. 10. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
27 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

28
29
30 Approved,