

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**
Third Regular Session

24 JUN 24 P12 :38

RECEIVED BY: 

SENATE

S.B. No. 2715

Introduced by **SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA**

AN ACT DECLARING THE MARAMO SECTION OF THE ANGAT RIVER SYSTEM IN BARANGAY SAN MATEO, MUNICIPALITY OF NORZAGARAY, PROVINCE OF BULACAN, AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION, TO BE KNOWN AS THE MARAMO NATURE RESERVE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to the Department of Tourism, Central Luzon, including the province of Bulacan, recorded a total of 2.8 million tourist arrivals as of the third quarter of 2023, consisting of 2.6 million domestic arrivals and 197,837 foreign arrivals.¹

The province of Bulacan prides itself not only for its rich historical heritage, but also for its stunning natural wonders, such as the town of Norzagaray. Norzagaray is a fast rising commercial and economic center with promising tourism potentials because of its natural resources and natural beauty. Among the gems in Norzagaray is the Maramo Section of the Angat River System which is popularly known as the "Little Palawan of Bulacan."

The Maramo Section of the Angat River System or the "Maramo River" is a popular attraction for nature lovers and adventure seekers because of its stunning natural beauty and the many outdoor activities it offers. Similar to the famous cliffs and rivers of Palawan, Maramo River also shares these natural features that draw numerous tourists from Bulacan and other nearby provinces.

¹ DOT eyes Central Luzon as compelling, distinctive tourism destination. PIA.gov. 14 January 2024. Available at: <https://pia.gov.ph/features/2024/01/14/dot-eyes-central-luzon-as-compelling-distinctive-tourism-destination> Date last accessed: 16 April 2024.

Tourism is a major driver of economic growth and employment in the country. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA),² the contribution of the sector to the country's GDP in 2023 was estimated at 8.6%. In addition, the sector generated a total of 6.2 million jobs in 2023.

Thus, developing the Little Palawan of Bulacan into an ecotourism destination will not only boost the country's GDP but also generate more employment, especially for locals in the area.

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



JOEL VILLANUEVA

² Tourism Posted Highest Growth in 2023, Contributing 8.6 % to the Economy. PSA. 18 June 2024. Available at: <https://www.psa.gov.ph/statistics/tourism>. Date last accessed: 19 June 2024.

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Third Regular Session

24 JUN 24 P12:38

RECEIVED BY



SENATE

S.B. No. 2715

Introduced by **SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA**

AN ACT DECLARING THE MARAMO SECTION OF THE ANGAT RIVER SYSTEM IN BARANGAY SAN MATEO, MUNICIPALITY OF NORZAGARAY, PROVINCE OF BULACAN, AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION, TO BE KNOWN AS THE MARAMO NATURE RESERVE

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

1 **SECTION 1. Declaration as Ecotourism Zone.** – The Maramo section of the
2 Angat River System in Barangay San Mateo, Municipality of Norzagaray, Province of
3 Bulacan, is hereby declared an ecotourism destination, and shall be known as the
4 “Maramo Nature Reserve.” Pursuant thereto, the Department of Tourism (DOT) shall
5 support and prioritize the development of the area subject to the rules and regulations
6 governing the development of ecotourism zones.

7
8 **SEC. 2. Tourism Development Plan.** – Within one (1) year after the approval
9 of this Act, the municipal government of Norzagaray shall, in coordination with the
10 DOT, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other
11 concerned government agencies, prepare a tourism development plan which shall
12 include the construction, installation and maintenance of appropriate facilities and
13 infrastructure to enhance tourism in the area: *Provided*, That said development plan
14 shall ensure the preservation and conservation of the natural beauty and resources
15 of the area: *Provided, further*, That the implementation of the tourism development
16 plan shall be included in the budget of the municipal government of Norzagaray.

17
18 **SEC. 3. Assistance to the Local Government Unit.** – The DOT shall provide
19 technical assistance in tourism capacity building to the municipal government of
20 Norzagaray for the proper implementation of the tourism development plan. The DOT
21 shall also include the Municipality of Norzagaray in its national and regional promotion
22 programs.
23
24

1 **SEC. 4. Funding.** – The funding for the implementation of this Act shall be
2 included in the annual budget of the municipal government of Norzagaray. The DOT
3 may augment such allocation with internally-generated funds.
4

5 **SEC. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations** – Within sixty (60) days from
6 the effectivity of this Act, the municipal government of Norzagaray shall, in consultation
7 with the DOT, DENR and other concerned agencies of the government, promulgate
8 the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.
9

10 **SEC. 6. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act shall be declared
11 unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full
12 force and effect.
13

14 **SEC. 7. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, rules, regulations, executive orders,
15 proclamations, presidential decrees, and other issuances inconsistent with any of the
16 provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.
17

18 **SEC. 8. Effectivity** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following
19 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.
20

21
22 Approved,