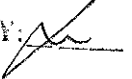


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S E N A T E

RECEIVED BY: 

P. S. Res. No. 509

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

RESOLUTION
URGING THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PRESENT STATE OF
PHILIPPINE NATURAL RESOURCES IN ORDER TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE
COUNTRY'S RICH BIODIVERSITY

Whereas, Section 16 Article II of the 1987 Constitution states 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, biodiversity is the degree of variation of life forms within a given ecosystem, biome, or an entire planet and is a measure of the health of ecosystems¹;

Whereas, the Philippines is one of the few nations that is, in its entirety, both a hotspot and a megadiversity country, hosting thousands of species which that can be found nowhere else on Earth, causing it to be placed among the top priority hotspots for global conservation²;

Whereas, more than 7,100 islands fall within the borders of the Philippines hotspot, identified as one of the world's biologically richest countries;

Whereas, many endemic species are confined to forest fragments that cover only 7 percent of the original extent of the hotspot which includes over 6,000 plant species and many birds species such as the Cebu flower-pecker, the Philippine cockatoo, the Visayan wrinkled hornbill, and the enormous Philippine eagle while the amphibian endemism is also unusually high and boosts unique species like the panther flying frog³;

Whereas, of the 1,137 bird, mammal and amphibian species endemic to the country, 592 are considered "threatened or endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Red List, along with 227 endemic species of flowering plants⁴;

Whereas, years of unmitigated and destructive human activities have plunged the Philippines in a biodiversity crisis that could take decades to reverse;

Whereas, the rate of extinction of species is 1,000 times the natural rate because of manmade activities like deforestation, unmitigated logging and coastal denigration resulting to habitat loss;

¹ Raup, D. M. (1994). "The role of extinction in evolution". *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*

² <http://www.biodiversityhotspots.org/xp/hotspots/philippines/Pages/default.aspx>

³ *ibid.*

⁴ <http://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/wilderness-resources/stories/biodiversity-crisis-in-the-philippines>

Whereas, habitat loss, unsustainable use of resources, climate change, invasive alien species and pollution have not been arrested and continue to negatively impact biodiversity;

Whereas, threats to biodiversity contribute to the decline in the mangrove, coral reef, seagrass, forest, agro, peatland and freshwater ecosystems;

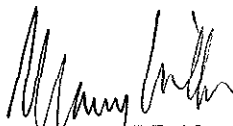
Whereas, recently, shipments containing black corals and endangered turtles were discovered as part of illegal trading activities;

Whereas, presently, geckos or the local “tuko” also fetch high prices in the black market because of its alleged properties relative to AIDS research⁵;

Whereas, the State, in pursuit of its constitutional mandate to protect the environment, should take steps so that the Philippines’ natural treasures of flora and fauna be preserved and protected against destruction and degradation of whatever cause and create policies to ensure the continuity of these resources for the benefit of the next generation of Filipinos;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources to conduct an inquiry, *in aid of legislation*, on the present state of Philippine natural resources in order to preserve and protect the country’s rich biodiversity.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR
Senator

⁵ “Illegal wildlife traders target endemic geckos” by Carla P. Gomez, Philippine Daily Inquirer, June 1, 2011