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**SENATE**  
**P.S. RES. NO. 95**

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Introduced by Senator Manny B. Villar

**RESOLUTION**  
**URGING THE COMMITTEES ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES,**  
**TOURISM AND CLIMATE CHANGE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF**  
**LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED STEADY DECLINE OF SEA TURTLES IN THE**  
**PHILIPPINES WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ARRESTING AND PREVENTING THE**  
**EXTINCTION OF THIS ENDANGERED SPECIES**

**Whereas**, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), reported that there are at least five hundred sixty-six (566) endangered species in the Philippines 84 of which are listed as "critically endangered;"

**Whereas**, "critically endangered" species are defined as those species that face an extremely high risk of extinction in the immediate future;

**Whereas**, the Philippine legislature has enacted Republic 9147 otherwise known as the Wildlife Act to conserve and protect our wildlife;

**Whereas**, among those most recognizable Philippine species that are flagged as critically endangered are the Philippine eagle, Dwarf Pygmy Goby (Pandaka Pygmaea), Tamaraw, Mindoro Bleeding heart and Hawksbill Sea Turtle or popularly known as Pawikan;

**Whereas**, in the recent local news, it was reported that 13 foreign poachers were fined by the Regional Trial Court of Puerto Princesa Court for about \$7 million for illegally possessing carcasses of 101 endangered Pawikans;

**Whereas**, the Pawikans were flagged as critically endangered since its population continuously and drastically dwindled due to human fishing practices, high demand for their meat and eggs which are considered as delicacy and/or exotic food, use of their tortoise shell for decorations and other parts of the turtle for leather, oil perfume, and cosmetics, beach development, destruction of coral reefs and increasing global temperature;

**Whereas**, unscrupulous fishermen inadvertently kill Pawikans when they too are caught in their nets leading to their suffocation and untimely death;

**Whereas**, hatchlings depend on the brightest horizon to find the ocean and having bright lights from developed beaches cause these hatchlings to be disoriented which prevents them from finding the beach;

**Whereas**, the demand for turtle meat is particularly high during lent season as Catholics in the coastal areas consume turtle meat instead of the usual meat;

**Whereas**, due to destruction of coral reefs, the Pawikans are affected since they rely on the reefs for food resources and habitat;

**Whereas**, climate change particularly the increasing global temperature, affects the temperature of the sand where these eggs are buried thereby unduly affecting the gender of

the turtles as studies shows that hatchlings' gender depends on the sand temperature where higher temperature sands decreases incubation time and results in more female hatchlings;

**Whereas**, unbeknownst to ordinary people, Pawikans play an important role in our sea's natural processes such as trimming the sea grass which must be constantly cut short to help it grow across the sea floor, such sea grass beds provide breeding and developmental grounds for numerous species of fish, shellfish and crustaceans without such sea grass beds, many marine species which humans harvest would be lost, and would thereby affect the food chain;

**Whereas**, Pawikans also contain the population of jellyfishes as Pawikans prey on them thus keeping our tropical beaches safe for humans;

**Whereas**, similarly eggs, hatched or unhatched, and hatchlings that fail to make it into the ocean are sources of nutrient for dune vegetation, the latter being important to protect the beaches and dunes against erosion;

**Whereas**, Pawikans likewise are steadily playing an important role in our ecotourism as people visit our Turtle islands and turtle nurseries;

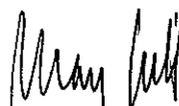
**Whereas**, the Pawikans are protected by several international treaties such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), Protocol of the Cartagena Convention, Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals the latter being binding on the Philippines by being a signatory thereof since 20 June 1980;

**Whereas**, albeit the commendatory action of the Judiciary in the speedy disposition of the above mentioned case and the fast response of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the local Government of El Nido and the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development for seeing the case through, much have yet to be done to ensure the survival of our Pawikans;

**Whereas**, considering the threat these Pawikans face and the decline of their population by 90% from their original number decades ago, and that the Philippines is a destination for these migratory turtles and/or Pawikans, it is imperative for the government to protect this specie for our future generations;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, to urge the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources, Tourism and Climate Change to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on the reported steady decline of sea turtles in the Philippines with the end in view of arresting and preventing the extinction of this endangered species.

Adopted,

  
**MANNY VILLAR**