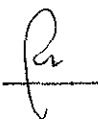


FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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S E N A T E

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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 CORAL REEFS WITH THE END IN VIEW OF FORMULATING POLICIES FOR CONCERTED NATIONAL AND LOCAL EFFORTS TO REDUCE REEF DEPENDENCE AND BUILD ADAPTIVE CAPACITY WHILE REDUCING IMMEDIATE THREATS TO THE SAME

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, coral reefs offer multiple benefits to people and the economy by providing food, sustaining livelihoods, supporting tourism, protecting coasts and preventing certain diseases;

Whereas, the total area of the world’s coral reefs amounts to less than one quarter of one percent (1%) of the entire marine environment yet some estimates put the total diversity of life found in, on and around coral reefs at up to two million species, making them home to twenty-five percent (25%) of all marine life, and form the nurseries for about a quarter of the ocean’s fish including commercially important species¹;

Whereas, a new comprehensive analysis conducted by the World Resources Institute finds that seventy-five percent (75%) of the world’s coral reefs are currently threatened by local and global pressures such as climate change, warming seas, rising ocean acidification, overfishing, coastal development, and pollution²;

Whereas, local pressures such as overfishing and destructive fishing are causing many reefs to be degraded while global pressures are leading to coral bleaching from rising sea temperatures and increasing ocean acidification from carbon dioxide pollution³;

Whereas, other threats to coral reefs are careless tourism, sedimentation caused by coasts and inland construction and coral mining⁴;

Whereas, if global and local pressures on coral reefs are left unchecked, this will lead to more than ninety percent (90%) of reefs being threatened by 2030 and nearly all reefs at risk by 2050;

¹ http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/blue_planet/coasts/coral_reefs/

² PRESS RELEASE: 75% of World’s Coral Reefs Currently Under Threat by Michael Oko, February 23, 2011

³ *ibid.*

⁴ http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/blue_planet/coasts/coral_reefs/

Whereas, the Philippines has one of the longest coastlines in the world estimated at 36,289 kilometers extending 2,000 kilometers from north to south with 25 major cities lying on the coast⁵;

Whereas, the Philippines is in the Coral Triangle region with the highest diversity of corals, fish, and other reef species anywhere in the world and is recognized as the global epicenter of marine biodiversity;

Whereas, the Philippines has been identified as one of the nations being most socially and economically vulnerable to coral reef degradation and loss, taking into consideration that the reefs in the area provide food, tourism and coastal protection from the ravages of storms, hurricanes, tsunamis and typhoons⁶;

Whereas, the State, consistent with its policy on environmental protection, should take initiatives and create policies to ensure responsible environmental management of coral reef areas, raise awareness, and promote the importance of protecting coral reefs for its better stewardship;
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 coral reefs with the end in view of formulating policies for concerted national and local efforts to reduce reef dependence and build adaptive capacity while reducing immediate threats to the same.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR
Senator

⁵ <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPHILIPPINES/Resources/PEM05-ch1.pdf>

⁶ "Coral Reefs in PH among world's most endangered" by Kristine L. Alave, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2-26-2011