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SENATE

P.S. Resolution No. 431

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

RESOLUTION URGING THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT A STUDY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATE OF FRESHWATER FISH SPECIES ENDEMIC TO THE PHILIPPINES AND THE EFFECT OF THE PROLIFERATION OF ALIEN SPECIES IN RIVERS, LAKES, SWAMPS, MARSHES, MUDFLATS, ESTUARIES AND OTHER WATERWAYS, FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND THE INSTITUTION OF REGULATORY MEASURES TO SAFEGUARD THE SAME

WHEREAS, Section 16 of Article II of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines provides 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, Article 6 of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity declares that:

“Each Contracting Party shall, in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities:

(a) Develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or adapt for this purpose existing strategies, plans or programmes which shall reflect, inter alia, the measures set out in this Convention relevant to the Contracting Party concerned; and

(b) Integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.”;

WHEREAS, the Philippines was among the active countries that have participated in the drafting the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and is one of the first 31 countries to ratify the convention which put the agreement into force;¹

¹ The First Philippine National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, May 1998 p.1

WHEREAS, under the same, the Philippines is obligated to provide mechanisms for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity;

WHEREAS, Biological diversity is a key issue in the Philippines because it is known as one of the 17 mega-biodiversity countries of the world with more than 52,177 described species, of which more than half are found only in this country and nowhere else;²

WHEREAS, Philippine freshwaters are endowed with a rich diversity of flora and fauna consisting of algae, aquatic macrophytes, aquatic invertebrates, insects and fisheries which represents the dominant components of the complex food webs of the ecosystems.³

WHEREAS, habitat destruction and over-exploitation are primary factors considered for the endangerment of the Philippines' endemic species; biodiversity is essential to our environment because each species has a distinct role in maintaining the different cycles of natural processes;

WHEREAS, one of the major ecological threats to freshwater species is the introduction of invasive species alien to these ecosystems, the growing number of foreign species that are spreading in local waterways and forests threaten to edge out the plants and animals endemic to the country;⁴

WHEREAS, these species came to the country through pet shops who has sold the same to irresponsible owners who tend throw away animals when they are no longer interested causing the speedy spread and reproduction of alien species turning them into primary predators as they have no natural enemies in the ecosystem;⁵

WHEREAS, with the continuous importation and selling of exotic species in the country, the threat is now so great that allowing these alien species to further reproduce could transform the landscape, wipe out native species and destroy the diversity of the ecosystem.⁶

NOW, WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines to urge the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, and other appropriate Senate Committees to conduct a study, in aid of legislation on the state of freshwater fish species endemic to the Philippines and the effect of the proliferation of alien species in rivers, lakes, swamps, marshes, mudflats, estuaries and other waterways, for the purpose of promoting biological diversity and the institution of regulatory measures to safeguard the same.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR

² As cited in <http://www.ibd-ph.com/2010-international-year-of-biodiversity/> March 14, 2011 11:00 AM

³ ibid

⁴ "DENR battles invasion of alien creatures" *Philippine Daily Inquirer* 10 March 2011: A1 print

⁵ ibid

⁶ ibid