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 **Senate**  
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SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 607

RECEIVED BY 

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

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**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE INVENTORY OF RICE TERRACES IN THE PROVINCE OF IFUGAO THAT ARE CLASSIFIED AS PROTECTED AREAS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF AVERTING THEIR EXPLOITATION AND DESTRUCTION, IN LIGHT OF THE SO-CALLED 'GOLD RUSH' THAT OFTEN ATTRACTS BOTH LEGAL AND ILLEGAL SMALL-SCALE MINING**

*Whereas*, the ancient Ifugao Rice Terraces (IRT) is the country's only remaining highland mountain ecosystem featuring the ingenuity of the Ifugaos and a remarkable agricultural farming system which has retained the viability as well as the efficacy of the 2000 year-old organic paddy farming;<sup>1</sup>

*Whereas*, in 1995, five terrace clusters in four towns of Ifugao province were declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as World Heritage Sites because their spectacular landscapes express conquered and conserved harmony between humankind and the environment;<sup>2</sup>

*Whereas*, the rice terraces of Batad and Bangaan in Banaue town; Nagacadan in Kiangan town; and the terraced rice farms in the towns of Mayoyao and Hungduan comprise the 'Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras';

*Whereas*, amid concerns over a gold rush due to rising prices of the precious metal in the world market, two applications covered Hungduan town, out of 103 mine claims filed in the Cordillera;<sup>3</sup>

*Whereas*, as a matter of protocol, rice terraces would automatically be segregated from the mining area being staked, once processing takes place;

*Whereas*, although other terraces were properly classified as food areas by the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, there may be rice terraces that government forest or agricultural inventories had missed;<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.fao.org/nr/giahs/pilot-systems/pilot/ifugao-rice-terraces/ifugao-rice-terraces-summary/en/+rice+terraces,+ifugao+province&cd=10&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=ph>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

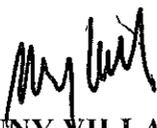
<sup>3</sup> 'Check on rice terraces urges to prevent mining' Philippine Daily Inquirer, September 17, 2011, p

<sup>4</sup> Brent Pagtetlan, mining engineer at the licensing and records division of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB)

*Whereas*, it is incumbent upon local governments to check if rice terraces in their jurisdiction are properly classified to inhibit any and all forms of exploitation, particularly mining, that may damage the cultural and historical legacy of the ancient Ifugaos: Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge Senate Committees on Environment and Natural Resources and Local Government, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the inventory of rice terraces in the province of Ifugao that are classified as protected areas, with the end in view of averting their exploitation and destruction, in light of the so-called 'gold rush' that often attracts both legal and illegal small-scale mining.

Adopted,

  
MANNY VILLAR  
Senator