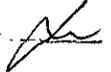


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SENATE
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FD " 31. 

Introduced by Senator Manny B. Villar

RESOLUTION
URGING THE COMMITTEES ON TRADE AND COMMERCE AND ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED SLAUGHTER AND TRADING OF ANTEATER, LOCALLY KNOWN AS "PANGOLIN", AND HAWKSBILL TURTLES IN PALAWAN WITH THE END IN VIEW OF PREVENTING THEIR ILLEGAL TRADE AND PROTECTING THESE THREATENED SPECIES

Whereas, the 1987 Philippine Constitution states that "[t]he 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, to further this mandate, the Philippine Legislature has enacted Republic 9147 otherwise known as the Wildlife Act to conserve and protect our wildlife which provides:

"Section 2. Declaration of Policy. It shall be the policy of the State to conserve the country's wildlife resources and their habitats for sustainability. In the pursuit of this policy, this Act shall have the following objectives:

- (a) to conserve and protect wildlife species and their habitats to promote ecological balance and enhance biological diversity;
- (b) to regulate the collection and trade of wildlife;
- (c) to pursue, with due regard to the national interest, the Philippine commitment to international conventions, protection of wildlife and their habitats;"

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, one of which is Hawksbill turtles which is listed as "critically endangered;"

Whereas, IUCN classifies the Philippine endemic "Pangolin" or anteater as close to becoming a threatened species.

Whereas, Convention on international Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), in fact, prohibits the Pangolin trade across borders;

Whereas, this prohibition is supported by the conclusion of Pangolin researchers that the increased demand from China has led to "great declines" in Pangolin populations across Southeast Asia — not only in the Philippines but also in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos;

Whereas, despite such prohibitions, locally and abroad, hundreds of pounds of meat and scales of Pangolin and Hawksbill turtles were interrupted recently:

Whereas, on 02 January, 209 pounds (95 kilograms) of Pangolin scales and 200 pounds (90.5 kilograms) of scutes from endangered hawksbill and green turtles were seized at the Puerto Princesa, Palawan airport, the shipment is said to fetch a market value of nearly 1 million pesos (\$23,000), and were declared as dried fish;

Whereas, two days later, fifty-eight pounds (26.5 kilograms) of Philippine Pangolin, or anteater, about to be smuggled to Manila as goat meat was confiscated Wednesday at the same airport in Palawan;

Whereas, Pangolins have been a staple of traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years, but growing human populations and greater wealth across China have increased demand as Pangolin fetuses, scales, and blood are used in medicine, the meat being considered a delicacy, while stuffed pangolins are sold as souvenirs;

Whereas, the decline in Pangolin populations and intensified efforts to curb the illegal trade have led to rising prices for Pangolin products - further enticing organized crime rings to smuggle the endangered animals, in fact, a kilogram of Pangolin scales that earned only 80 Yuan (US\$10) in the early 1990s would now yield 1,200 Yuan (\$175) on the black market, according to a wildlife trade expert in China's State Forestry Administration;

Whereas, considering the threat to the Pangolins and the Hawksbill turtles due to the widespread and unbridled illegal trade of the same, it is imperative that the government take action to ensure their existence in the future;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to urge the Committees on Trade and Commerce and Environment and Natural Resources to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on the reported slaughter and trading of anteater, locally known as "pangolin", and hawksbill turtles in Palawan with the end in view of preventing their illegal trade and protecting these threatened species

Adopted,


Manny Villar