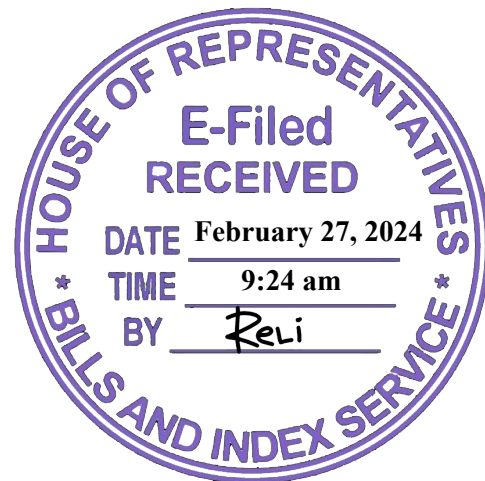


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
2nd Regular Session

House Bill No. **9999**



Introduced by Representative PAOLO Z. DUTERTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The National Greening Program or NGP is the country's most ambitious reforestation program to date. It was first introduced in 2011 through the issuance of Executive Order No. 26, Series of 2011 which main agendum includes the planting of 1.5 billion trees in 1.5 million hectares of lands of the public domain for a period of six (6) years—from C.Y. 2011 to C.Y. 2016. Thereafter, Executive Order No. 193 was issued on November 12, 2015 to implement the Expanded NGP that will rehabilitate all the remaining unproductive, denuded and degraded forestlands estimated at 7.1 million hectares from C.Y. 2016 to C.Y. 2028.

In the study conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) entitled "Positive impact of greening program on economy and environment", Senior Research Fellow Danilo Israel reiterated that in the end of the first National Greening Program in 2016, the program exceeded its target area at one hundred and thirteen percent (113%) but fell short in its target seedling planted at ninety percent (90%). Although the said figures already equaled or even surpassed what the Philippine government had accomplished in reforestation in the past 50 years since 2016, there is still a number of effective steps to improve its implementation to ensure its success, most especially during the current Expanded National Greening Program implementation and with respect to the program's billions-worth of allocated budget annually.

The main implementation strategies of the National Greening Program are the harmonization of all greening efforts of the government, civil society and the private sector and the provision of incentives to people's organizations, the program's primary partners in the areas of seedling production, site preparation and planting. Hence, there is a need to inculcate the Expanded National Greening Program in the very basic unit of the country's society—the *barangay*. In fact, as early as 2013, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) have already issued a *Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2013-03* or the *Guidelines in the Establishment of the Barangay Forest Program in Support of the National Greening Program*.

With respect to the success of the first National Greening Program in the country's economy and environment, there is a need to codify into legislation the said Joint Memorandum Circular in pursuit of the ongoing Expanded National Greening Program. The communities in the barangay, which widely and wholeheartedly know and protect their very own natural resources, especially forest lands, would be able to participate and given accord in the identification, assessment and implementation of the Expanded National Greening Program through the enactment of this proposed measure.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate approval of this Bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PAOLO Z. DUTERTE', written over the printed name below.

HON. PAOLO Z. DUTERTE

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
2nd Regular Session

House Bill No. **9999**

Introduced by Representative PAOLO Z. DUTERTE

AN ACT
TO PROMOTE GREENING AND FORESTLAND REHABILITATION AND PROTECTION AT THE BARANGAY LEVEL, SPURRING LOCAL CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

Section 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the "*Barangay Greening and Forest Land Rehabilitation and Protection Act of 2024.*"

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - Recognizing the vulnerability of local communities to the impact of climate change and the role of local governments as frontline agencies in the formulation and implementation of climate change action, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to advance climate change adaptation strategies from the national to the barangay level and promote the right of people to enjoy the benefits of a balanced and healthy ecology.

Further recognizing that environmental degradation aggravates the impact of climate change, it is the policy of the State to advance greening and rehabilitation and protection of forest lands as a priority adaptation strategy.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - As used in this Act:

(a) *Adaptation* refers to the adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities;

(b) *Climate Change* refers to a change in climate identified by changes in the mean and /or variability of its properties that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity;

(c) *Forest lands* include the public forest, the permanent forest or forest reserves, and forest reservations;

(d) *Forest land rehabilitation programs* shall include the conservation, management, and development of forest resources and biodiversity; and

(e) *Forest resources* shall refer to any timber stands of half a hectare or more regardless of land classification or ownership

(f) *Local greening programs* shall aim to build, develop, and maintain forest parks in provincial, city, municipal, barangay parks, roads, elementary school grounds, and other public open spaces, where appropriate and in private lands where permitted or if such are left idle for at least 10 years.

SEC. 4. *Barangay Greening and Forest Land Rehabilitation and Protection* - Pursuant to the pertinent provisions of Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code, local government units (LGUs) shall share the responsibility in sustainable management and utilization of forest resources within their territorial jurisdiction, including those assigned by law to other government agencies. The Barangay Environment Committee in the Barangay Council shall inventory forest resources in public and private lands for the City or Municipality to consolidate in their databases for planning purposes. These inventories should specify, as far as possible, the dominant species in the timber stands. Subject to vested rights, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and LGUs in the provincial, city, municipal, and barangay level, in consultation with other government agencies, local communities, non-government organizations, academic and research institutions, and other sectors, shall jointly undertake the planning, formulation and implementation of local greening and forest land rehabilitation and protection programs.

SEC. 5. *Institutional Arrangements.* - Each province, city, and municipality shall integrate the objectives of this Act in its policies, plans, and programs. Each city and municipality shall mobilize all concerned local agencies and communities to ensure prompt and effective implementation of this Act in every barangay. The LGUs shall conduct information and advocacy drives to promote local greening and forest land rehabilitation and protection programs, prioritizing native trees and if possible, species of endangered trees. The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall coordinate with the LGUs to ensure prompt and effective implementation of this Act. The Climate Change Commission (CCC), as the sole government agency tasked to coordinate,

monitor, and evaluate government programs and actions plans relating to climate change, shall coordinate and synchronize programs on forest land rehabilitation to ensure harmonization with national plans and programs and to facilitate the provision of resources. The DENR shall provide assistance to LGUs in the identification, selection, and allocation of sites for rehabilitation and local greening and in enhancing LGU capability for the planting of the right species, especially in critical watersheds, natural forests, and mangrove areas, the use of efficient reforestation technologies, and the necessary steps to protect the remaining natural forests and national parks. The DENR shall likewise assist in the planning and permitting to cull invasive tree species and/ or species that may impact vulnerable food chain elements such as but not limited to African Tulips. All concerned agencies shall undertake information and advocacy drives.

SEC. 6. *Coordination with Forestry, Natural Resources, Agricultural, and Fisheries Schools.* - Subject to the rules and regulations, DENR, in consultation with the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), may promulgate forestry, natural resources, agricultural and fisheries schools, both public and private, shall participate in the national and local implementation and monitoring of this Act. The concerned national agencies shall facilitate government or other financial assistance for such participation. The DENR shall provide technical assistance for capacity building of participating educational institutions, not only to ensure adequate, quality supply of planting materials, but also to transfer and propagate appropriate technologies for local greening and forest land rehabilitation and protection. The DENR shall likewise mobilize civil society to assist in these tasks and help DENR with localized plans and inventories. Fiscal and non-fiscal incentives shall be granted to participating institutions.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The DENR shall, in consultation with CC and DILG, promulgate the pertinent rules and regulations to fully implement the objectives and purposes of this Act within a period not later than ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to initially implement the provision of this Act shall be taken out of any funds in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated: *Provided*, That subsequent annual funding for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act: *Provided*, further, that there shall be an equitable and proportionate annual appropriation of funds, and access thereto, for this purpose for all barangays.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree, issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,