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SENATE

P. S. Resolution No. **735**

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Introduced by SENATOR LOREN LEGARDA

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RESOLUTION

COMMENDING THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF DAVAO ORIENTAL TOGETHER WITH THE PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT BOARD AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE MOUNT HAMIGUITAN RANGE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY IN LIGHT OF ITS SUCCESSFUL INSCRIPTION IN THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE SITES MAINTAINED BY THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution 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, adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization on 16 November 1972, the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage aims to conserve and protect natural sites and cultural properties that are of outstanding universal value for humanity;

WHEREAS, under Article III of the said Convention, the Philippines, being one of the current 191 State Parties, is tasked to identify and delineate the different properties found within its territory—whether cultural heritage or natural heritage, that may constitute as a world heritage site with the international community having a duty also for its conservation and preservation;

WHEREAS, since the Convention was ratified by the Philippines on 19 September 1985 until 2013, the country had only five properties inscribed on the World Heritage List—the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park and the Baroque Churches of the Philippines in 1993, the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras in 1995, and the Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park and the Historic City of Vigan in 1999;

WHEREAS, on 23 June 2014 in Doha, Qatar, it was announced by the World Heritage Committee that the Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary found along the southeastern part of the Eastern Mindanao Biodiversity Corridor and showcasing terrestrial and aquatic habitats at different elevations which include critically endangered trees, plants and the iconic Philippine Eagle and Philippine Cockatoo, is now a World Heritage Site;

WHEREAS, as highlighted by the World Heritage Committee, the high level of endemism of its habitat is significant for putting the Philippines in 7<sup>th</sup> place among

the 17 biologically rich countries in the world. Described as the only protected forest known for its unique bonsai field or “pygmy” forest of 100-year old in an ultramafic soil, the 6,834-hectare Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary hosts five vegetation types--agro-ecosystem, dipterocarp, montane, typical mossy, and the mossy-pygmy forest. It has been found that of the 477 identified flora species, 163 species (18.56%) are endemic, 35 species (3.99%) threatened, 33 species (3.75%) rare and 204 species (23.23%) economically important. Moreover, the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources and Development (PCARRD) finds that it also hosts five endangered species, 27 rare species, 44 endemic species and 59 economically important species;

**WHEREAS**, since 30 July 2004 through Republic Act 9303, the Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary has been declared a protected area under the category of wildlife sanctuary with management of the area under its Protected Areas Management Board and the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources;

**WHEREAS**, by successfully inscribing the Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary as a World Heritage Site, the Philippines commits to the international community its strong support for the conservation of its rich flora and fauna;

**WHEREAS**, this recognition highlights the need to safeguard the biodiversity and natural heritage of the wildlife sanctuary and its surrounding watershed areas and forests;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved, to commend the collaborative efforts of the provincial government of Davao Oriental together with the Protected Area Management Board and the local community for the conservation of the Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary in light of its successful inscription in the list of World Heritage Sites maintained by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization World Heritage Committee.

Adopted,



**LOREN LEGARDA**  
Senator