



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, 1100  
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Website: <http://www.denr.gov.ph>

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO :** **The Director**  
Legal Affairs Service

**The Bureau Directors**  
Biodiversity Management Bureau  
Forest Management Bureau  
Land Management Bureau

**The Officer-In-Charge**  
Mines and Geosciences Bureau

**The Regional Executive Director**  
Region IV-A

**FROM :** **The Undersecretary**  
Special Concerns and Legislative Affairs

**SUBJECT :** **REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS RE:  
INQUIRY ON MASUNGI GEORESERVE ON HOUSE  
RESOLUTION NO. 411 "A RESOLUTION URGING THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THROUGH THE  
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, TO CONDUCT AN  
INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE ALLEGED  
UNAUTHORIZED AND UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES AT THE  
MASUNGI GEORESERVE IN THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL",  
AND HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 867 "A RESOLUTION  
EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES TO SUPPORT EFFORTS TO  
CONSERVE THE MASUNGI GEORESERVE" FROM THE  
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES**

**DATE :** 07 July 2023

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In reference to the letter received by our Office dated 06 July 2023, the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives is currently conducting an inquiry in aid of legislation in relation to the following measures:

1. House Resolution No. 411, "A Resolution Urging The House Of Representatives, Through The Committee On Natural Resources, To Conduct An Inquiry In Aid Of Legislation On The Alleged Unauthorized And Unlawful Activities At The Masungi Georeserve In The Province Of Rizal", authored by Rep. Emigdio P. Tanjuatco III, Rep. Michael John R. Duavit, Rep. Jose Arturo S. Garcia, Jr., Rep. Juan Fidel Felipe F. Nogralas; and

2. House Resolution No. 867, "Resolution Expressing The Sense Of The House Of Representatives To Support Efforts To Conserve The Masungi Georeserve", authored by Rep. Raoul Danniell A. Manuel, Rep. France L. Castro, Rep. Arlene D. Brosas.

During the hearing held on 16 May 2023, the Committee requested the submission of certain documents from the DENR. May we, therefore, follow-up on the verbal request made during the meeting for the submission of the following documents:

1. Complete data on the areas covered by Presidential Decree No. 324 (October 29, 1973), as to which areas have been titled and subject for reversion, including the titles of properties in the area;
2. Records of cases that have been filed before the Ombudsman in connection with the land titles issued in the areas covered by PD 324;
3. Mining production sharing agreements (MPSA) issued in the land covered by PD 324 and the cancellation of such MPSAs;
4. From the DENR Region IV-A, records of communication and requests to, and exchanges with the Masungi Georeserve Foundation, Inc. to convert the 2017 Memorandum of Agreement into a Special Agreement for Protected Area (SAPA).; and
5. Recommendation and action on the 2017 Memorandum of Agreement with the Masungi Georeserve Foundation, Inc.

In this regard, may we request **the aforesaid documents with proper labeling for ease of reference** in preparation for the next hearing to be scheduled after the opening of the Second Regular Session, as requested by the Committee. Kindly send them on or before **12 July 2023, (Wednesday) at 5 PM** via email at [denrilo@denr.gov.ph](mailto:denrilo@denr.gov.ph).

Attached herewith is the letter and the following House Resolutions for your perusal and reference.

For information and action, please.

  
IGNATIUS LOYOLA A. RODRIGUEZ



Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**Committee on Natural Resources**

✉ Committee Affairs Department, 3/F Speaker Ramon V. Mitra Building, Batasan Complex, Quezon City  
☎ +63 (2) 8931-5001 local 7161; Telefax: +63(2) 8951-3003  
[committee.naturalresources@house.gov.ph](mailto:committee.naturalresources@house.gov.ph), [naturalresources.hrep@gmail.com](mailto:naturalresources.hrep@gmail.com)

4 July 2023

**ATTY. JONAS R. LEONES, CESO I**

*Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs*

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

DENR Bldg. Visayas Avenue, Diliman,

Quezon City

**Dear Undersecretary Leones:**

The Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives is currently conducting an inquiry in aid of legislation in relation to the following measures:

1. House Resolution No. 411, "A Resolution Urging The House Of Representatives, Through The Committee On Natural Resources, To Conduct An Inquiry In Aid Of Legislation On The Alleged Unauthorized And Unlawful Activities At The Masungi Georeserve In The Province Of Rizal", authored by Rep. Emigdio P. Tanjuatco III, Rep. Michael John R. Duavit, Rep. Jose Arturo S. Garcia, Jr., Rep. Juan Fidel Felipe F. Nograles; and
2. House Resolution No. 867, "Resolution Expressing The Sense Of The House Of Representatives To Support Efforts To Conserve The Masungi Georeserve", authored by Rep. Raoul Dannel A. Manuel, Rep. France L. Castro, Rep. Arlene D. Brosas.

During the hearing held on May 16, 2023, the Committee requested the submission of certain documents from the DENR. May we, therefore, follow-up on the verbal request made during the meeting for the submission of the following documents:

1. Complete data on the areas covered by Presidential Decree No. 324 (October 29, 1973), as to which areas have been titled and subject for reversion, including the titles of properties in the area;
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3. Mining production sharing agreements (MPSA) issued in the land covered by PD 324 and the cancellation of such MPSAs;
4. From the DENR Region IV-A, records of communication and requests to, and exchanges with the Masungi Georeserve Foundation, Inc. to convert the 2017 Memorandum of Agreement into a Special Agreement for Protected Area (SAPA); and
5. Recommendation and action on the 2017 Memorandum of Agreement with the Masungi Georeserve Foundation, Inc.

We would like to request the submission of the aforesaid documents on or before **July 21, 2023** in preparation for the next hearing to be scheduled after the opening of the Second Regular Session. May we also request the proper labeling of these submissions for ease of reference. The Committee shall inform your good office of the date of the next hearing once the same has been confirmed.

For further inquiries, the Committee may be reached at [committee.naturalresources@house.gov.ph](mailto:committee.naturalresources@house.gov.ph). We hope that this request merits your usual prompt and positive consideration and response. Thank you very much!

Very truly yours,



**HON. ELPIDIO F. BARZAGA JR.**  
*Chairperson*  
Committee on Natural Resources

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

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

House Resolution No. 867



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Introduced by **KABATAAN PARTY-LIST Representative Raoul Daniel A. Manuel,**  
**ACT TEACHERS PARTY-LIST Representative France L. Castro,**  
and **GABRIELA WOMEN'S PARTY Representative Arlene D. Brosas**

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**RESOLUTION**  
**EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO**  
**SUPPORT EFFORTS TO CONSERVE THE MASUNGI GEORESERVE**

**WHEREAS**, the Masungi Georeserve is a conservation area and a rustic rock garden tucked in the rainforests of the province of Rizal;

**WHEREAS**, its name is derived from the word "masungki" which translates to "spiked" to describe the sprawling limestone landscape found within the georeserve;

**WHEREAS**, the fragile karst limestone formations in Masungi Georeserve house flourishing ecosystems, some members of which are endemic species to the georeserve;

**WHEREAS**, Masungi Georeserve is key in providing water supply to lower levels of the Rizal and Marikina areas, as it is part of the Upper Marikina Watershed and has several underground water channels flowing to Rizal and Marikina;

**WHEREAS**, initiatives to conserve the area are led and funded by Blue Star Construction and Development Corporation and the Masungi Georeserve Foundation, Inc. (MGFI), and such conservation efforts are undertaken alongside members of local communities in Baras, Rizal;

**WHEREAS**, Ann Dumaliang, MGFI co-founder, said the area is included in conservation efforts under the Masungi Geopark Project between MGFI and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) through a valid and binding memorandum of agreement signed by then Environment Secretary Gina Lopez in 2017;

**WHEREAS**, in 2019, MGFI received an international recognition at the annual United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Awards for its sustainable tourism practices;

**WHEREAS**, the Masungi Georeserve is a symbol of sustainable development and is at the forefront of efforts to conserve, restore, and improve the environment in the

face of climate change, thereby underscoring the need for the government and private sector to protect such efforts at all costs;

**WHEREAS**, Masungi has faced many instances of encroachment by agents of quarriers, who have disturbed reforestation efforts and threatened the lives and safety of the conservationists;

**WHEREAS**, Last July 2021, two Masungi park rangers were shot inside their ranger station after their daily patrol, and the alleged mastermind behind the shooting was the owner of a local resort;

**WHEREAS**, in February 2022, Masungi rangers were attacked by persons associated with large swimming pool resorts and structures that were built illegally under the Georeserve's protected area;

**WHEREAS**, three large-scale Mineral Production Sharing Agreements (MPSAs) covering an area of 1,300 hectares — two of which included the protected areas of the georeserve — were granted to quarrying companies, disregarding prohibitions versus mining and quarrying inside protected areas under RA11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Systems Act;

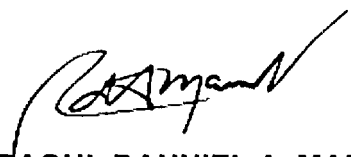
**WHEREAS**, it was bared that the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) has a plan to relocate and build its headquarters in the Masungi Georeserve, even though scientists from the National Museum of the Philippines have previously noted that using the Masungi Georeserve as relocation site will have dire consequences for the environment;

**WHEREAS**, while the BuCor has announced through a statement that the plan to construct the headquarters in Masungi Georeserve has been "held in abeyance," this is only a temporary suspension of the plan and is not a guarantee that BuCor will keep its hands off the Masungi Georeserve;

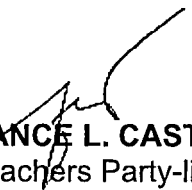
**WHEREAS**, it is our duty, as the House of the People, to support instead of hamper the initiatives of concerned citizens who take on the task of protecting and restoring the environment and ensuring the safety and integrity of local ecosystems;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the House of Representatives express its sense to support the conservation of the Masungi Georeserve and explore legislation to strengthen similar efforts.

Adopted,



**REP. RAOUL DANNIEL A. MANUEL**  
Kabataan Party-list



**REP. FRANCE L. CASTRO**  
ACT Teachers Party-list

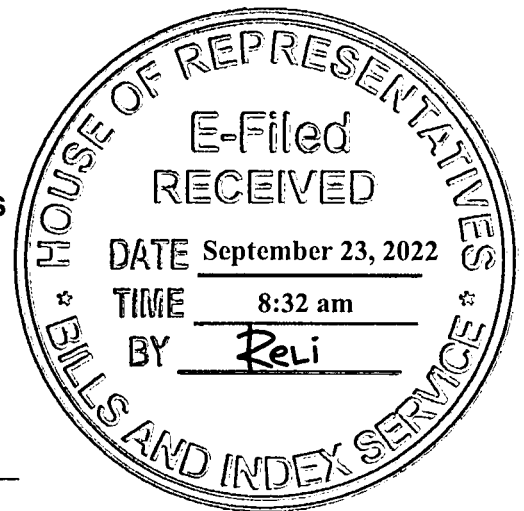


**REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS**  
Gabriela Women's Party

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

19<sup>th</sup> Congress  
First Regular Session

House Resolution No. 411



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Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVES EMIGDIO P. TANJUATCO III,**  
**MICHAEL JOHN R. DUAVIT, JOSE ARTURO S. GARCIA, JR.,**  
and **JUAN FELIPE FIDEL F. NOGRALES**

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**A RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THROUGH THE  
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID  
OF LEGISLATION ON THE ALLEGED UNAUTHORIZED AND UNLAWFUL  
ACTIVITIES AT THE MASUNGI GEORESERVE IN THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL**

**WHEREAS**, it is the basic principle of the State to maintain peace and order, protect the life, liberty, and property, and to promote the general welfare of all its people;

**WHEREAS**, it is the policy of the State to protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature;

**WHEREAS**, the Masungi Georeserve is situated in the Southern Sierra Madre range in Baras, Rizal that surrounds the geological formations of the Masungi Rock and is part of the Marikina Watershed Reservation;

**WHEREAS**, Presidential Proclamation No. 296, dated November 24, 2011, declared said Marikina Watershed Reservation, situated in the City of Antipolo and in the municipalities of Baras, Rodriguez, San Mateo and Tanay, all in the province of Rizal, as a protected area, henceforth referred to as the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape, pursuant to RA7586, as amended, also known as the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 2018;

**WHEREAS**, in January 2016, the Sangguniang Bayan of Tanay, Rizal and the Masungi Rock Management Council ordered the temporary suspension of the operations of the Masungi Karst Eco Park due to multiple violations of Environmental Laws, Department Orders, and Memorandum, as well as Local Government Ordinances, Building Codes, and Safety Regulations;

**WHEREAS**, in April 2017, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through its then Secretary, the late Regina Paz "Gina" L. Lopez, entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Masungi Georeserve Foundation Incorporated (MGFI), granting a Perpetual Land Trust over lands covered by Presidential Decree No. 324



and the Greater Masungi Karst in favor of the latter, which is patently in direct contravention to provisions in Article 12 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution;

**WHEREAS**, despite the limited coverage of the MOA, MGFI's activities allegedly encroach well beyond the said agreement, impinging into three protected areas, namely: Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL), Kaliwa River Forest Reserve (KRFR), and the area covered by Presidential Proclamation No. 1636, totaling approximately 2700 hectares of public land located in the Rizal Province;

**WHEREAS**, during July 2021 and February 2022, unprovoked attacks were committed against several Masungi Georeserve Forest Rangers, who were carrying out their duties;

**WHEREAS**, last September 18, 2022, more than thirty (30) armed men have been encamped along the Marikina-Infanta Highway, between the Kaliwa and Marikina Watersheds. These men who refused to identify themselves, are allegedly associated with Sinagtala Security Agency Services who allegedly intend to occupy parcels of land within the area;

**WHEREAS**, the fences erected by MGFI allegedly restricted the rightful access of farmers and residents to and from the premises of Masungi which affected their means of livelihood and day to day activities, and more alarmingly, allegedly displacing the indigenous tribes in the area;

**WHEREAS**, illegally-constructed fences likewise allegedly created road obstructions that impede the free and clear passage of motor vehicles and/or pedestrians as well as pose a danger to motorists and tourists plying the Marikina-Infanta Road;

**WHEREAS**, the environment occupies pride of place in the fundamental laws of the land and the people must defend it and ensure that it is truly honored;

**WHEREAS**, it has become alarming that the area specified above has been the subject of alleged illegal activities, violence and has disrupted the peace and order situation in the province of Rizal;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the House of Representatives, through its Committee on Natural Resources, conduct a thorough investigation in aid of legislation, on the controversies surrounding the Masungi Georeserve, including the conduct of unlawful activities in the area.

  
EMIGDIO P. TANJUATCO III

  
MICHAEL JOHN R. DUAVIT

  
JOSE ARTURO S. GARCIA, JR.

  
JUAN FIDEL FELIPE F. NOGRALES