



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City  
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Website: <http://www.denr.gov.ph> / E-mail: [web@denrgov.ph](mailto:web@denrgov.ph)

## MEMORANDUM

FOR : **All Undersecretaries**

**The Administrator**

National Mapping and Resource Information Authority

**The Directors**

Legal Affairs Service

Policy and Planning Service

**The Executive Director**

Manila Bay Coordinating Office

**The Bureau Directors**

Environmental Management Bureau

Biodiversity Management Bureau

**The Regional Executive Directors**

DENR - National Capital Region, Regions IV-A, VII and VIII

**The Regional Directors**

EMB, National Capital Region, Regions IV-A, VII and VIII

FROM : **The Undersecretary**

Special Concerns and Legislative Affairs

SUBJECT : **AMENDMENT TO MEMORANDUM DATED 18 SEPTEMBER 2023 REGARDING COORDINATION MEETING ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2023 AND SENATE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE RECLAMATION PROJECTS ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2023 FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

DATE : 22 September 2023

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This refers to the email received by our Office on 15 September 2023, the Committee on Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, Chaired by Sen. Cynthia A. Villar, will conduct a public hearing on **Wednesday, September 27, 2023, 10:00 AM at the Senator Ambrosio B. Padilla Room 2nd Floor, Senate of the Philippines**. The Committee will discuss and deliberate the following Senate Resolutions:

- **PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 300** – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate committee to Conduct an inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, into the Reported Large-Scale Land Reclamation Projects Being Undertaken on a Nationwide Scale in the Philippines that Threaten Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Around the Country (Introduced by Senator Risa Hontiveros); and
- **PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 759** – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, on the Ongoing and Proposed Reclamation Projects in Manila Bay and Their Latent Effects in the Environment, and on the Evaluation Process Conducted by the Philippine Reclamation Authority in the Approval of the Reclamation Projects (Introduced by Senator Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III)

In this regard, we would like to invite you or your representative **as resource persons to the public hearing, as requested by the Committee**. Kindly inform us of the name/s of the representative/s from your office who will participate in the meeting so we may include him/her/them **as resource person/s**. The Secretary of the Department is scheduled to attend the hearing.

We kindly invite you or your representative to a **coordination meeting via Zoom videoconference on 25 September 2023, Monday at 02:00 PM**. The details are as follows:

<https://zoom.us/j/8942747489?pwd=cIVSYzBUb096b1lweIF3bHFNQkFXUT09>

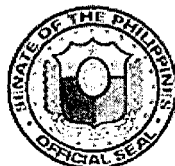
Meeting ID: 894 274 7489

Passcode: DENRLLO

Attached herewith are the Letter Invitation and copies of the Senate Resolutions for your reference.

  
**IGNATIUS LOYOLA A. RODRIGUEZ**

cc: Office of the Secretary



Republic of the Philippines  
SENATE  
Pasay City

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
*Joint with*  
**COMMITTEE ON URBAN PLANNING, HOUSING AND RESETTLEMENT**

**NOTICE OF CHANGE OF VENUE**

**FOR:**

- Chairperson : **SEN. JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO**  
Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement
- Vice-Chairpersons : **SEN. PIA S. CAYETANO**  
**SEN. MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY**  
**SEN. RONALD "BATO" DELA ROSA**
- Members : **SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA**  
**SEN. WIN GATCHALIAN**  
**SEN. CHRISTOPHER BONG GO**  
**SEN. MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID**  
**SEN. IMEE R. MARCOS**  
**SEN. ROBINHOOD C. PADILLA**  
**SEN. RAMON BONG REVILLA JR.**  
**SEN. RAFFY T. TULFO**  
**SEN. MARK A. VILLAR**  
**SEN. FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO**  
**SEN. FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO**  
**SEN. RISA HONTIVEROS**
- Ex-Officio Members : **SEN. LOREN LEGARDA**, President Pro-Tempore  
**SEN. JOEL VILLANUEVA**, Majority Leader  
**SEN. AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III**, Minority Leader
- Date : September 20, 2023

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Please be informed that the joint public hearing of the Committees on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change and on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement on:

- **PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 300** – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate committee to Conduct an inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, into the Reported Large-Scale Land Reclamation Projects Being Undertaken on a Nationwide Scale in the Philippines that Threaten Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Around the Country (*Introduced by Senator Risa Hontiveros*); and
- **PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 759** – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, on the

Ongoing and Proposed Reclamation Projects in Manila Bay and Their Latent Effects in the Environment, and on the Evaluation Process Conducted by the Philippine Reclamation Authority in the Approval of the Reclamation Projects (*Introduced by Senator Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III*)

scheduled on **Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. has been transferred** from the Senator Manuel L. Quezon Room **to Senator Ambrosio B. Padilla Room.**

For your Honor's guidance. Thank you.

**FOR THE CHAIRPERSON:  
SEN. CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

by:   
**MARIA CLARINDA R. MENDOZA**  
*Committee Secretary*

cc : Office of the Senate President  
Office of the Senate Secretary  
Office of Senator Cynthia A. Villar  
Office of the Deputy Secretary for Legislation  
Office of the Executive Directory for Legislation  
Committee Affairs Bureau  
LCSS "B"  
Legislative Bill Drafting Service  
Legislative Research Service  
EDP-MIS  
PRIB  
PLLO



Republic of the Philippines  
**SENATE**

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
*Joint with*  
**COMMITTEE ON URBAN PLANNING, HOUSING AND RESETTLEMENT**

September 15, 2023

**HON. MARIA ANTONIA YULO LOYZAGA**

Secretary

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)  
Visayas Avenue, Quezon City

Dear **Secretary Loyzaga**:

The Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change joint with Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement would like to invite you as a resource person to its public hearing on **Wednesday, September 27, 2023, 10:00 a.m. at the Senator Manuel L. Quezon Room** to deliberate on the following proposed Senate resolutions:

- **PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 300** – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate committee to Conduct an Inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, into the Reported Large-Scale Land Reclamation Projects Being Undertaken on a Nationwide Scale in the Philippines that Threaten Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Around the Country (*Introduced by Senator Risa Hontiveros*); and
- **PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 759** – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, on the Ongoing and Proposed Reclamation Projects in Manila Bay and Their Latent Effects in the Environment, and on the Evaluation Process Conducted by the Philippine Reclamation Authority in the Approval of the Reclamation Projects (*Introduced by Senator Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III*)

Attached to this invitation are the ecopies of the abovementioned proposed Senate resolutions for your ready reference.

Kindly instruct your staff to coordinate with the undersigned on the names of your staff who will accompany you to the public hearing. The undersigned is required to submit the

names of the resource persons who will physically attend the public hearing to the Office of the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms at least a day before the scheduled hearing. Those who are not on the list will be denied entry in the Senate building.

Should you have queries or concerns, and for the submission of your presentations and position paper, kindly coordinate with the undersigned at 0945-750-5319 (Globe/viber), [senateenviandnatres@gmail.com](mailto:senateenviandnatres@gmail.com) or at [mcrmendoza@yahoo.com](mailto:mcrmendoza@yahoo.com).

The Committee earnestly request your personal presence in the public hearing.

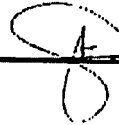
**FOR THE CHAIRPERSON:  
SEN. CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

by:   
**MARIA CLARINDA R. MENDOZA**  
*Committee Secretary*

22 NOV 15 AM 55

**SENATE**  
**P.S. Res. No. 300**

DECL. BY



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**INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS**

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE REPORTED LARGE-SCALE LAND RECLAMATION PROJECTS BEING UNDERTAKEN ON A NATIONWIDE SCALE IN THE PHILIPPINES THAT THREATEN COASTAL AND MARINE ECOSYSTEMS AROUND THE COUNTRY**

**WHEREAS**, Section 16, Article II of the Constitution mandates 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**, in the landmark case of *Oposa v. Factoran*<sup>1</sup>, the Supreme Court expounded that "rhythm and harmony of nature" alluded to in the Constitution necessarily entail "judicious disposition, utilization, management, renewal and conservation of the country's forest, mineral, land, waters, fisheries, wildlife, off-shore areas and other natural resources to the end that their exploration, development and utilization be equitably accessible to the present as well as future generations;"

**WHEREAS**, Title XIV, Book IV of the Administrative Code of 1987, specifically provides that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources "shall be the primary government agency responsible for the conservation, management, development and proper use of the country's environment and natural resources, specifically forest and grazing lands, mineral, resources, including those in reservation and watershed areas, and lands of the public domain, as well as the licensing and regulation of all natural resources as may be provided for by law in order to ensure equitable sharing of the benefits derived therefrom for the welfare of the present and future generations of Filipinos;"

**WHEREAS**, Presidential Decree No. 1084 or the Charter of Public Estates Authority, now called Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), declares that the State shall "provide for a coordinated, economical and efficient reclamation of lands, and the administration and operation of lands belonging to, managed and/or operated by the Government, with the object of maximizing their utilization and hastening their development consistent with the public interest." PRA is created "to reclaim land, including foreshore and submerged areas, by dredging, filling or other means, to acquire reclaimed land";

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<sup>1</sup> G.R. No.101083, 30 July 1993

**WHEREAS**, under Section 17 of the Local Government Code (LGC), local government units shall endeavor to be self-reliant and shall continue exercising the powers and discharging the duties and functions currently vested upon them, devolved to them, and such other functions and responsibilities as are necessary, appropriate, or incidental to efficient and effective provisions of the basic services and facilities, including reclamation projects;

**WHEREAS**, Sections 26 of the LGC mandates that it shall be the duty of every national agency authorizing or involved in the planning and implementation of any project or program that may cause pollution, climatic change, depletion of non-renewable resources, loss of crop land, rangeland, or forest cover, and extinction of animal or plant species, to consult with the local government units, non-governmental organizations, and other sectors concerned and explain the goals and objectives of the project or program, its impact upon the people and the community in terms of environmental or ecological balance, and the measures that will be undertaken to prevent or minimize the adverse effects thereof;

**WHEREAS**, Section 27 of the LGC further states that no project or program shall be implemented by government authorities unless the consultations are complied with, and prior approval of the *Sanggunian* concerned is obtained: Provided, that occupants in areas where such projects are to be implemented shall not be evicted unless appropriate relocation sites have been provided, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution;

**WHEREAS**, for 2021 alone, there are several ongoing reclamation projects in various stages of development

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines is the center of marine biodiversity as it is found at the apex of the Coral Triangle -- a reputation that may soon be lost with the wholesale approval of large-scale reclamation projects as massive projects in the past have destroyed thousands of hectares of mangroves, seagrasses and coral reefs and irreversibly destroyed fishing grounds, thereby displacing hundreds of thousands of fisherfolks and their families;

**WHEREAS**, according to the position paper submitted by the non-profit ocean conservation organization Oceana and signed by at least 80 other environmental protection advocacy groups, reclamation projects "hide behind the promise of economic progress and infrastructure development at the expense of the environment, as well as the socio-economic welfare and livelihoods of many marginalized Filipinos, especially our fisherfolk";

**WHEREAS**, as early as 2014, scientist Dr. Giovanni Tapang was quoted in a Rappler article saying that the reclamation of more than 38,000 hectares covered by the National Reclamation Plan (26,232 of which are along the coast of Manila Bay) will translate to a loss of the same amount of sea grass, the spawning ground, and habitat of aquatic life, leading to an annual loss of 4-7 billion invertebrates and 3-78 trillion fish;<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, there is a growing body of evidence of the harmful effects and negative impacts that reclamation projects can have on not only the environment but

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<sup>2</sup> Ranada, P. (3 March 2014). 'Abolish the PH Reclamation Authority'. Retrieved 1 December 2021, from <https://r3.rappler.com/nation/52033-abolish-ph-reclamation-authority>



also the affected communities and surrounding ecosystem. Yet the government is insistent on its widespread implementation under the promise of economic development;

**WHEREAS**, the widespread approval of reclamation projects is altogether alarming for our and future generations of Filipinos and the government should consider imposing a moratorium on the continuing approval of such projects, both large and small;

**WHEREAS**, there is a need to strictly implement our environmental laws to ensure that only those projects who are fully compliant with its environmental provisions and prepared to address its harmful impacts will be the only ones to be approved in order to enforce a more stringent application process;

**WHEREAS**, by local government units in approving these reclamation projects and determine their compliance with existing environmental laws and regulations;

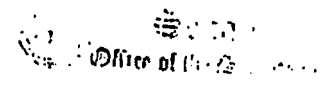
**WHEREAS**, there is also a need to review and strengthen our environmental laws to address any gaps they may have that enables the apparent unencumbered approval of reclamation projects in the Philippines;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE**, to direct the appropriate Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the reported large-scale land reclamation projects being undertaken on a nationwide scale in the Philippines, thereby threatening coastal and marine ecosystems around the country.

*Adopted,*

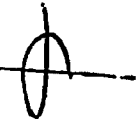
  
**RISA HONTIVEROS**  
*Senator*

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )**



23 AUG 24 P12:23

**SENATE  
Proposed Senate Resolution No. 759**

RECEIVED BY: 

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**Introduced by Senator Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III**

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**A RESOLUTION  
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO  
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE  
ONGOING AND PROPOSED RECLAMATION PROJECTS IN  
MANILA BAY AND THEIR LATENT EFFECTS IN THE  
ENVIRONMENT, AND ON THE EVALUATION PROCESS  
CONDUCTED BY THE PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION  
AUTHORITY IN THE APPROVAL OF THE RECLAMATION  
PROJECTS**

1       **WHEREAS**, the prime duty of the Government is to serve and  
2 protect the people<sup>1</sup>. In addition, the State shall protect and advance the  
3 right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with  
4 the rhythm and harmony of nature<sup>2</sup>;

5  
6       **WHEREAS**, pursuant to this duty, any project which may  
7 introduce damage to a balanced and healthful ecology must be  
8 thoroughly reviewed;

9

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<sup>1</sup> Article II Section 4. 1987 Constitution  
<sup>2</sup> Article II Section 16. 1987 Constitution

1           **WHEREAS**, there are a total number of twenty-two (22)  
2 approved reclamation projects nationwide with thirteen (13) of them in  
3 Manila Bay<sup>3</sup>;

4  
5           **WHEREAS**, the United States Embassy in the Philippines raised  
6 concerns that some of those involved in the reclamation projects have  
7 ties to a firm, which was cited by the World Bank and the Asian  
8 Development Bank for engaging in fraudulent business practices.<sup>4</sup>;

9  
10           **WHEREAS**, while land reclamation may provide prospective  
11 economic benefits, it also poses environmental concerns, such as the  
12 change of coastal processes and the potential implications on water  
13 quality and marine species;

14  
15           **WHEREAS**, fishers' and scientists' groups allege that the  
16 Philippine Reclamation Authority should not downplay the impacts of  
17 reclamation projects on coastal ecosystems and communities, stressing  
18 that the environmental and socio-economic costs of dump-and-fill  
19 activities are significant. "The issue is not only about the total size of  
20 the entire reclamation projects in Manila Bay, but the ongoing and  
21 long-term impacts to the livelihood of fisherfolk, marine biodiversity,  
22 and local fisheries production," quoting PAMALAKAYA vice  
23 chairperson Ronnel Arambulo<sup>5</sup>;

24  
25           **WHEREAS**, it is provided under Executive Order No. 74, s.  
26 2019 that no reclamation project shall be approved by the Philippine  
27 Reclamation Authority without the required Area Clearance and  
28 Environmental Compliance Certificate to be issued by the DENR.  
29 Moreover, Philippine Reclamation Authority shall evaluate all  
30 proposals for reclamation projects based on their cumulative impacts  
31 rather than on a specific project basis;

32

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<sup>3</sup> Gaea Katreena Cabico. *Only 13 reclamation projects OKd in Manila Bay — PRA*. Philstar.com. August 14, 2023. <<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2023/08/14/2288634/only-13-reclamation-projects-okd-manila-bay-pra>>

<sup>4</sup> Filane Mikee Cervantes. *House probe sought into Manila Bay reclamation*. Philippine News Agency. August 8, 2023. <<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1207381>>

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

1           **WHEREAS**, on 07 August 2023, President Ferdinand Marcos,  
2 Jr. said that all of the reclamation projects have been suspended and  
3 under review, except for one which pushed through because it has  
4 already been reviewed<sup>6</sup>;

5  
6           **WHEREAS**, although these reclamation projects have been  
7 suspended pending review, much environmental damage has been done  
8 with the completion of these projects remaining contingent on the  
9 results of the review ordered by the President.

10  
11           **WHEREAS**, in order to avert the approval of the administration  
12 and operation of reclamation projects which are non-compliant with the  
13 environmental standards, there is a necessity to call for the review of  
14 the evaluation process conducted by the Philippine Reclamation  
15 Authority as well as the entire approval process for reclamation  
16 projects.

17  
18           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** as it is hereby  
19 resolved, to direct the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an  
20 inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the ongoing and proposed reclamation  
21 projects in Manila Bay and their latent effects on the environment, and  
22 on the evaluation process conducted by the Philippine Reclamation  
23 Authority and/or other government agencies in the approval of the  
24 reclamation projects.

*Adopted,*

  
**AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III**

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<sup>6</sup> Jocelyn Montemayor. *PBBM suspends Manila Bay reclamation projects*. Malaya Business Insight. August 10, 2023. <[https://malaya.com.ph/news\\_news/pbbm-suspends-manila-bay-reclamation-projects/](https://malaya.com.ph/news_news/pbbm-suspends-manila-bay-reclamation-projects/)>