

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9125, April 22, 2001]

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NORTHERN SIERRA MADRE MOUNTAIN RANGE WITHIN THE PROVINCE OF ISABELA AS A PROTECTED AREA AND ITS PERIPHERAL AREAS AS BUFFER ZONES, PROVIDING FOR ITS MANAGEMENT AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

ARTICLE I

TITLE, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

SECTION 1. *Title.* — This Act shall be known as the "Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park (NSMNP) Act of 2001."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — Considering the unique biological and ecological importance of the Northern Sierra Madre as the widest remaining tropical rainforest in the Island of Luzon; owing to its rich and diverse ecosystems spanning from coral reefs and seagrass beds to mangroves and beach forests, ultramafic forests, forests over limestone, lowland dipterocarps to montane forests; recognizing its status as home to a variety of endemic species of plants and animals such as the rare Philippine Eagle, cloud rat and jade vine, and threatened and endangered species like the pawikan and estuarine crocodile; and because of its aesthetic, historical, cultural and economic importance to the country, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to secure the protection, preservation and rehabilitation of the Northern Sierra Madre Mountain Range within the Province of Isabela, its communities, their culture and their way of life insofar as they are in harmony with nature and do not alter the ecological systems and the magnitude of biological diversity of the area. In so doing, the State shall ensure the protection and conservation of biodiversity of the NSMNP through sustainable and participatory development, to advance and protect the interests of its legitimate inhabitants and honor customary laws in accordance with Republic Act No. 7586 or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 and Republic Act No. 8371 or the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997, as well as international conventions to which the Philippines is a signatory.

SEC. 3. *Definitions.*—

- a "Biodiversity" shall refer to the variety and variability among all living organisms and the ecological complexes in which they occur.
- b "Bioprospecting" shall refer to the research, collection and utilization of biological and genetic resources, for purposes of applying the knowledge derived therefrom to make or modify products or processes

and their derivatives for scientific, agricultural, industrial and other applications.

- c "Buffer zone" shall refer to identified areas outside the boundaries of and immediately adjacent to the NSMNP pursuant to Section 5 hereof that need special development control in order to avoid or minimize harm to the protected area.
- d "By-product" shall refer to any part taken from wild species such as, but not limited to, hides, antlers, feathers, fur, teeth, claws, internal organs, eggs, guano, roots, trunk, branches, leaves, stems, flowers and any other item produced out of or utilizing wildlife or any of its parts.
- e "CITES" shall refer to the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of wild flora and fauna including all its appendices referring to the lists of species differentially regulated therein.
- f "Collection" shall refer to the act of gathering, harvesting or catching wildlife, or the taking of any of its parts, derivatives or by-products.
- g "Commercial" shall refer to market sale in volume or value in excess of that required to maintain a basic subsistence for workers and their dependents.
- h "Consultation" shall refer to a meeting or dialogue with the concerned or affected individuals, agencies and organizations within and outside the NSMNP designed to identify and resolve issues and problems affecting them in relation to the protection, conservation and sustainable development of the NSMNP.
- i "DENR" shall refer to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.
- j "Derivatives" shall refer to anything extracted from wild species such as, but not limited to, blood, oils, saliva, musks, resin, gum, seeds, spores, pollen and the like.
- k "Endangered species" shall refer to species or subspecies whose populations are in danger of extinction and whose survival is unlikely if the causal factors continue operating.
- l "Endemic species" shall refer to species or subspecies which has limited distribution, often within the geographical limits of the State.
- m "Exotic species" shall refer to species or subspecies which do not naturally occur within the biogeographic region of the NSMNP at present or in historical time.
- n "Exploration" shall refer to searching or prospecting for mineral resources, as defined by law, by geological, geochemical or geophysical surveys, remote sensing, test pitting, trenching, drilling, shaft sinking, tunneling or any other means for the purpose of determining the existence, extent, quantity and quality thereof and the feasibility of mining them for profit.
- o "Exploitation" shall refer to any mode of use, extraction, development, utilization or disposition of resources, for whatever purpose, whether commercial or otherwise.
- p "Habitat" shall refer to an area inhabited by wildlife in the natural state.
- q "ICCs/IPs" shall refer to Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples as defined in the IPRA, specifically the Agtas, Paranan and Kalinga within the NSMNP.
- r "Indigenous species" shall refer to native Philippine species and/or subspecies with an existing or historical natural occurrence and distribution within the NSMNP and its buffer zones.
- s "IPRA" shall refer to the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act or Republic Act No. 8371 and its pertinent rules and regulations.
- t "Kaingin" shall refer to the slash and burn of vegetation to clear land for

agricultural purposes.

- u "Large-scale infrastructure projects" shall refer to major port facilities, major highways, tall edifices, major dams, and the like.
- v "Multiple-use zone" shall refer to areas where settlement, traditional and/or sustainable land use, including agriculture, agroforestry, extraction activities and other income generating or livelihood activities may be allowed to the extent prescribed in the management plan.
- w "Natural park" shall refer to a relatively large area not materially altered by human activity where extractive resource use and large-scale infrastructure projects are not allowed in its strict protection zones and maintained to protect outstanding natural and scenic areas of national or international significance for educational, scientific and recreational use.
- x "NIPAS Act" shall refer to the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992 or Republic Act No. 7586, and its pertinent rules and regulations.
- y "Nongovernment organization (NGO)" shall refer to any civic, development, conservation or philanthropic, non-stock, nonprofit organization, duly registered, having by-laws, a democratically elected representation and multi-sectoral in character.
- z "Non-renewable resources" shall refer to those resources within the NSMNP and its buffer zones, the natural replenishment rate of which is not known.
- aa "PASu" shall refer to the Protected Area Superintendent.
- bb "PAMB" shall refer to the Protected Area Management Board.
- cc "People's organization (PO)" shall refer to any organized group of people residing within the NSMNP and its buffer zones formed to advance the interests of the sector they represent.
- dd "Protected area" shall refer to identified portions of land and water set aside by reason of their unique physical and biological significance, managed to enhance biological diversity and protected against destructive human exploitation, and unless the context otherwise provides, shall refer to the NSMNP.
- ee "Protected species" shall refer to any plant or animal that is declared 'protected' under Philippine laws, rules and regulations. This shall also include all plants and animals listed under CITES, the Bonn Convention on Migratory Animals, those specified under the red-list categories of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and those species which may not be considered threatened elsewhere but are in danger of extinction within the NSMNP as determined by the PAMB.
- ff "Quarrying" shall refer to the process of extracting, removing and disposing quarry resources, as defined by law, found on or underneath the surface of private or public land.
- gg "Recreation zones" shall refer to areas of high recreational, tourism, educational or environmental awareness values where sustainable eco-tourism, recreational, conservation, education or public awareness activities may be allowed as prescribed in the management plan.
- hh "Special use zones" shall refer to areas containing existing installations of national significance such as telecommunication facilities, irrigation canals or electric power lines.
- ii "Sustainable use" shall refer to the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the decline of the species used and not causing permanent or long-term diminishment or qualitative degradation of biological species, ecological functions or of

other resources extracted or disturbed, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of the present and future Filipino generations.

- jj "Strict protection zones" shall refer to areas with high biodiversity value which shall be closed to all human activity except for scientific studies and/or ceremonial or religious use by ICCs/IPs.
- kk "Tenured migrants" shall refer to individuals and households within the NSMNP who have actually and continuously occupied such areas for five (5) years prior to March 10, 1997 and are substantially dependent therein for subsistence.
- ll "Traditional" shall refer to using no power machinery resource in extraction process and consistent with historically customary techniques of production.
- mm "Wildlife" shall refer to wild forms and varieties of flora and fauna, including captive-bred or propagated individuals, parts, derivatives and by-products thereof.
- nn "Zones" shall refer to the divisions within the NSMNP into levels of protection and permitted use of natural resources such as strict protection zone, sustainable use zone, restoration zone, habitat management zone, multiple-use zone, cultural zone, recreational zone and special use zone, as provided under existing rules and regulations.

SEC. 4. *Declaration and Scope.* — Pursuant to and in accordance with the NIPAS Act, the Northern Sierra Madre Mountain Range within the Province of Isabela is hereby declared and established as a protected area and part of the National Integrated Protected Areas System under the category of a natural park as defined herein. It shall be referred to as the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park (NSMNP) and its boundaries shall be as follows:

Beginning at a point marked 1 on the map which is a point located at the boundary of the provinces of Isabela and Cagayan,

POINT	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE
1	122 - 11'23"	17 - 32'23"
2	122 - 11'15"	17 - 31'16"
3	122 - 10'14"	17 - 29'43"
4	122 - 10'35"	17 - 28'26"
5	122 - 11'22"	17 - 28'44"
6	122 - 12'19"	17 - 28'02"
7	122 - 12'27"	17 - 25'51"
8	122 - 11'37"	17 - 26'21"
9	122 - 10'18"	17 - 26'57"
10	122 - 09'21"	17 - 28'38"
11	122 - 08'58"	17 - 30'32"
12	122 - 07'47"	17 - 32'01"
13	122 - 05'10"	17 - 32'21"
14	122 - 02'21"	17 - 32'21"
15	122 - 59'31"	17 - 32'20"
16	121 - 59'21"	17 - 30'31"
17	121 - 59'39"	17 - 28'41"
18	122 - 00'45"	17 - 26'47"
19	122 - 00'19"	17 - 24'28"
20	121 - 59'55"	17 - 22'27"

21	122 - 00'08"	17 - 20'26
22	122 - 00'58"	17 - 19'01
23	122 - 03'16"	17 - 18'13"
24	122 - 02'24"	17 - 16'25
25	122 - 02'44"	17 - 14'15"
26	122 - 03'06"	17 - 12'39
27	122 - 03'12"	17 - 10'52
28	122 - 04'55"	17 - 09'33
29	122 - 06'56"	17 - 10'21
30	122 - 07'17"	17 - 08'19"
31	122 - 07'43"	17 - 06'05
32	122 - 09'04"	17 - 04'46
33	122 - 09'21"	17 - 02'40
34	122 - 09'19"	17 - 00'39
35	122 - 09'19"	16 - 59'27
36	122 - 10'39"	16 - 59'18"
37	122 - 12'11"	16 - 58'25
38	122 - 12'06"	16 - 56'09
39	122 - 12'37"	16 - 54'20
40	122 - 11'10"	16 - 52'49
41	122 - 11'40"	16 - 21'28
42	122 - 12'52"	16 - 49'05
43	122 - 11'21"	16 - 48'16"
44	122 - 10'53"	16 - 46'29
45	122 - 10'47"	16 - 44'17"
46	122 - 11'55"	16 - 42'19"
47	122 - 12'34"	16 - 40'26
48	122 - 12'44"	16 - 37'56
49	122 - 14'41"	16 - 38'37
50	122 - 16'19"	16 - 39'36
51	122 - 17'26"	16 - 38'50
52	122 - 19'42"	16 - 38'54
53	122 - 21'09"	16 - 39'21
54	122 - 23'58"	16 - 39'21
55	122 - 25'18"	16 - 41'27
56	122 - 26'45"	16 - 43'40
57	122 - 28'03"	16 - 45'53
58	122 - 28'51"	16 - 48'21
59	122 - 29'49"	16 - 50'46
60	122 - 30'20"	16 - 53'18"
61	122 - 31'11"	16 - 55'45
62	122 - 30'59"	16 - 58'24
63	122 - 32'40"	16 - 59'59
64	122 - 33'47"	17 - 02'21
65	122 - 34'16"	17 - 04'44
66	122 - 33'59"	17 - 07'10"
67	122 - 32'58"	17 - 09'29
68	122 - 30'55"	17 - 10'58
69	122 - 28'24"	17 - 10'03
70	122 - 28'11"	17 - 11'60"
71	122 - 29'13"	17 - 14'23
72	122 - 28'60"	17 - 17'03
73	122 - 27'55"	17 - 19'24
74	122 - 26'33"	17 - 21'28
75	122 - 24'29"	17 - 23'15"