



Sangguniang Panlalawigan

BATAAN CAPITOL, BALANGA CITY



EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 10TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN OF BATAAN ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2025 HELD AT THE SESSION HALL, THE BUNKER @ THE CAPITOL COMPOUND, TENEJERO, BALANGA CITY, BATAAN 2100

PRESENT:

Hon. Ma. Cristina M. Garcia, Vice Governor and Presiding Officer

FIRST DISTRICT:

Hon. Jomar L. Gaza J.D., Board Member
Hon. Mylene A. Serrano, Board Member
Hon. Godofredo B. Galicia, Jr., M.D., Board Member

SECOND DISTRICT:

Hon. Maria Margarita R. Roque, Board Member
Hon. Noel Joseph L. Valdecañas, Board Member
Hon. Victor A. Baluyot, Jr., Board Member

THIRD DISTRICT:

Hon. Romano L. Del Rosario, MPA, Board Member
Hon. Angelito M. Sunga, Board Member
Hon. Jorge S. Estanislao, M.D., Board Member
Hon. Roman Harold R. Espeleta, OP, Board Member

Hon. Jovy Z. Banzon, Board Member (PCL President)
Hon. Romeo A. Austria, Board Member (FABC President)
Hon. Lovely Joy A. Poblete, Board Member (SKF President)
Hon. Feliciano G. Magay, Jr., Board Member (IPMR)

ABSENT:

None

PROVINCIAL ORDINANCE NO. 22 Series of 2025

AN ORDINANCE INSTITUTIONALIZING THE "ADOPT-A-FOREST PROGRAM" IN THE PROVINCE OF BATAAN, DEFINING ITS MECHANICS, ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

AUTHORED BY:

HON. FELICIANO G. MAGAY, JR.
HON. JOMAR L. GAZA J.D.

SPONSORED BY:

HON. ANGELITO M. SUNGA
HON. JOMAR L. GAZA J.D.

WHEREAS, the Provincial Government of Bataan (PGB) recognizes the urgent need to conserve, rehabilitate, and sustainably manage forest resources in the province, particularly in ancestral domains and other forestlands, in light of the growing challenges of deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate change;

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Provincial Governor

"EXCELLENT PUBLIC SERVICE TOWARDS A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL"

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WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and their communities play a vital role as stewards of forests, possessing traditional knowledge and practices that are essential to environmental protection and ecological balance;

WHEREAS, the PGB has established a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiatives Ad Hoc Body through a duly enacted ordinance, which provides mechanisms for fostering partnerships between the public and private sectors in pursuit of social and environmental programs;

WHEREAS, the Adopt-a-Forest Program seeks to provide an innovative platform that engages corporations, civil society organizations (CSO), foundations, and other stakeholders in supporting forest protection, while ensuring that IP communities benefit through sustainable livelihood and capacity-building opportunities;

WHEREAS, this program also aligns with national and global commitments on climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development, thereby contributing to both local resilience and environmental security;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it ordained as it is hereby ordained by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of the Province of Bataan, in session assembled, that:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. - This Ordinance shall be known as the "Bataan Adopt-a-Forest Ordinance of 2025."

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY. - It is hereby declared the policy of the PGB to conserve and sustainably manage its forest resources by fostering partnerships between IPs, the private sector, CSOs, and government institutions, while simultaneously promoting biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and livelihood opportunities for local communities.

SECTION 3. INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE ADOPT-A-FOREST PROGRAM. - There is hereby established an Adopt-a-Forest Program in the Province of Bataan.

The program shall serve as a collaborative partnership among the PGB, IPs and their communities, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and qualified adopters such as corporate entities, CSOs, foundations, and other groups.

Under this program, IP communities shall identify specific portions of their ancestral domains or other forest areas within the Province of Bataan for adoption. Adopters shall provide funding, technical assistance, and resources for the maintenance, protection, and sustainable use of these forest areas. The PGB, through the Office of the Provincial Government – Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PG-ENRO) and the CSR Initiatives Ad Hoc Body, shall facilitate partnerships, extend technical expertise, and ensure proper implementation and monitoring.

The program aims to:

- a. Promote forest conservation and biodiversity protection;
- b. Support climate change mitigation and disaster risk reduction through watershed and ecosystem management;
- c. Provide livelihood and capacity-building opportunities for IP communities; and
- d. Encourage private sector and community participation in environmental stewardship.

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SECTION 4. CREATION OF THE ADOPT-A-FOREST COMMITTEE (AFC). - There is hereby created an AFC to oversee the implementation of this program. The AFC shall be composed of the following:

Chairperson	Provincial Governor
Vice-Chairperson	Provincial Government - Environment and Natural Resources Officer
Members	Provincial Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative (IPMR)
	Chairperson, Sangguniang Panlalawigan Committee on Environmental Protection and Natural Resources
	Provincial Head, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
	Head, CSR Initiatives Ad Hoc Body
	Representatives from a relevant accredited CSO

The AFC shall set program guidelines, approve proposed forest adoption projects, and ensure proper monitoring and evaluation of activities under this program.

SECTION 5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PGB. - The PGB, through the PG-ENRO and the CSR Initiatives Ad Hoc Body, shall:

- a. Identify priority forest areas for adoption in coordination with IP communities and the NCIP;
- b. Provide technical expertise on reforestation, watershed management, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience;
- c. Facilitate partnerships between adopters and IP communities;
- d. Mobilize additional support from government programs and external partners; and
- e. Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of forest adoption projects.

SECTION 6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF IPS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES. - Guided by the NCIP, IPs and their communities shall:

- a. Identify forest areas within their ancestral domains available for adoption;
- b. Enter into agreements with adopters and the PGB to protect and rehabilitate such areas;
- c. Provide on-the-ground services for forest care and protection for appropriate compensation; and
- d. Ensure that cultural traditions and ancestral practices are integrated in forest conservation.

SECTION 7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADOPTERS. - Forest Adopters shall:

- a. Provide funding, technical resources, and logistical support for forest adoption projects;
- b. Implement forest conservation, rehabilitation, and livelihood programs in collaboration with IP communities and the PGB;


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- c. Respect cultural rights and traditional practices of IP communities in program implementation; and
- d. Submit progress reports to the AFC for monitoring and evaluation.

SECTION 8. LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT. - The program shall provide livelihood opportunities to IP communities by engaging them in forest protection and rehabilitation activities, with corresponding compensation for services rendered. Adopters may also provide additional community-based projects such as agroforestry, ecotourism initiatives, or skills training that will enhance both environmental sustainability and socio-economic well-being.

SECTION 9. INCENTIVES FOR FOREST ADOPTERS. - To encourage participation in forest protection and rehabilitation programs, the following incentives may be granted to Forest Adopters:

- a. Recognition and Accreditation. - Forest Adopters shall receive a Certificate of Accreditation from the PGB, duly endorsed by the Adopt-a-Forest Committee, acknowledging their contribution to environmental protection;
- b. Access to Technical Support. - Forest Adopters shall be given priority access to technical assistance from the PG-ENRO, including capacity-building, training, and advisory services on sustainable forest management, agroforestry, and biodiversity conservation;
- c. Project Visibility. - Forest Adopters shall be acknowledged in provincial reports, publications, and events related to environmental conservation, and may be allowed to install modest signages in their adopted sites, subject to provincial guidelines; and
- d. Eligibility for Partnership Projects. - Accredited Forest Adopters shall be given priority in entering into partnerships with the PGB for ecotourism initiatives, livelihood support, or CSR programs linked to sustainable development.

SECTION 10. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. - If any provision of this Ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected shall continue in full force and effect.

SECTION 11. REPEALING CLAUSE. - All ordinances and resolutions which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 12. EFFECTIVITY. - This Ordinance shall take effect after compliance with the relevant provisions of the Local Government Code.

UNANIMOUSLY ENACTED this 8th day of September 2025.

I HEREBY CERTIFY to the enactment of the foregoing ordinance.



ATTY. MARK LORENZ C. QUEZON
Secretary to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan

JOSE ENRIQUE S. GARCIA III
Provincial Governor




T.M.S.A.



M. Lopez

Garcia




ENACTED:


JOMAR L. GAZA J.D.
Board Member


MYLENE A. SERRANO
Board Member


GODOFREDO B. GALICIA, JR., M.D.
Board Member

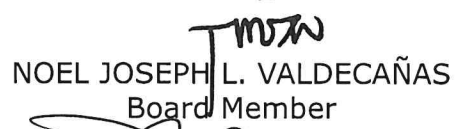

ROMANO L. DEL ROSARIO, MPA
Board Member


ANGELITO M. SUNGA
Board Member


JOVY Z. BANZON
Board Member
(PCL President)


LOVELY JOY A. POBLETE
Board Member
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Board Member


NOEL JOSEPH L. VALDECAÑAS
Board Member


VICTOR A. BALUYOT, JR.
Board Member


JORGE S. ESTANISLAO, M.D.
Board Member


ROMAN HAROLD R. ESPELETA, OP
Board Member

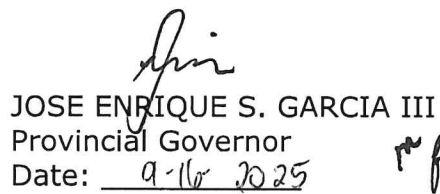

ROMEO A. AUSTRIA
Board Member
(FABC President)


FELICIANO S. MAGAY, JR.
Board Member
(IPMR)

ATTESTED:


MA. CRISTINA M. GARCIA
Vice Governor & Presiding Officer

APPROVED:


JOSE ENRIQUE S. GARCIA III
Provincial Governor
Date: 9-16-2025 mf

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