

S. No. 2615
H. No. 8394

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
Metro Manila

Nineteenth Congress

Third Regular Session

Begun and held in Metro Manila, on Monday, the twenty-second
day of July, two thousand twenty-four.

[REPUBLIC ACT No. 12237]

AN ACT DECLARING A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN
THE MUNICIPALITIES OF MAYANTOC AND SAN
JOSE IN THE PROVINCE OF TARLAC, A
PROTECTED AREA WITH THE CATEGORY OF
PROTECTED LANDSCAPE UNDER THE NATIONAL
INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM, TO BE
REFERRED TO AS THE MT. SAWTOOTH PROTECTED
LANDSCAPE, PROVIDING FOR ITS MANAGEMENT,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

ARTICLE I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as
the “Mt. Sawtooth Protected Landscape Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – Cognizant of the profound impact of human activity on all components of the natural environment, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to secure for the Filipino people of present and future generations, the perpetual existence of all native plants and animals through the declaration of protected areas under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) within the classification of national park as provided in the Constitution.

In recognition of the richness of biological resources, both flora and fauna, that are native and distinct to Mt. Sawtooth, as well as their aesthetic and ecological importance, a parcel of land of the public domain located in the Municipalities of Mayantoc and San Jose in the Province of Tarlac is hereby declared a protected area under the category of protected landscape and shall hereinafter be referred to as the Mt. Sawtooth Protected Landscape (MSPL). As such, the State shall ensure the conservation, protection, management, and rehabilitation of the MSPL. It is likewise recognized that effective administration of this area is possible only through cooperation among the national government, local government units (LGUs), concerned non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private entities, and local communities. The use and enjoyment of this area must be consistent with the principles of biological diversity and sustainable development.

Towards this end, the State shall ensure the full implementation of this Act, the mobilization of resources for the institutional mechanisms herein established, and the full scientific and technical support needed for the conservation of biodiversity and the integrity of the ecosystems, and cultural and indigenous practices.

SEC. 3. *Classification as a National Park.* – The MSPL is composed of a parcel of land of the public domain located in the Municipalities of Mayantoc and San Jose in the Province of Tarlac, the metes and bounds of which are described in Section 4 of this Act. All lands of the public domain within the coverage and scope of the MSPL shall fall under the classification of a national park as provided for in Article XII, Section 3 of the Constitution.

SEC. 4. *Scope and Coverage.* – The MSPL, including its buffer zones, as well as its technical description shall be subject to actual ground survey and demarcation, as fully determined by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region III.

Beginning at a point marked "1" on the map being S78°51'05"W, 13,763.24 meters from PRS Control Monument TRC-82 with geographic coordinates of 15°35'22.59763" Latitude and 120°20'22.53348" Longitude located in Barangay Maniniog, Municipality of Mayantoc, Province of Tarlac,

thence S 56°50'16"	E 967.16	meters to corner 2;
thence S 32°13'45"	E 315.13	meters to corner 3;
thence S 07°16'50"	E 313.65	meters to corner 4;
thence S 56°09'05"	E 468.39	meters to corner 5;
thence S 13°18'50"	E 170.35	meters to corner 6;
thence N 84°53'31"	E 307.97	meters to corner 7;
thence S 81°55'59"	E 323.68	meters to corner 8;
thence S 27°49'57"	W 582.01	meters to corner 9;
thence S 45°47'41"	W 252.52	meters to corner 10;
thence S 54°11'56"	W 155.19	meters to corner 11;
thence S 12°29'11"	E 178.73	meters to corner 12;
thence S 17°23'31"	W 198.88	meters to corner 13;
thence S 50°14'24"	E 284.01	meters to corner 14;
thence S 61°44'20"	W 255.87	meters to corner 15;
thence S 23°08'14"	W 279.28	meters to corner 16;
thence S 35°55'16"	E 376.55	meters to corner 17;
thence S 81°45'40"	E 276.75	meters to corner 18;
thence S 41°46'38"	E 477.66	meters to corner 19;
thence S 11°24'46"	E 189.7	meters to corner 20;
thence S 27°48'11"	W 532.92	meters to corner 21;
thence S 68°20'42"	W 165.7	meters to corner 22;
thence S 28°41'32"	W 182	meters to corner 23;
thence N 83°51'21"	W 506.96	meters to corner 24;
thence S 84°52'11"	W 201.24	meters to corner 25;
thence S 18°40'05"	W 120.82	meters to corner 26;
thence S 47°15'24"	E 393.34	meters to corner 27;
thence S 35°52'49"	E 136.47	meters to corner 28;
thence S 17°46'15"	E 311.65	meters to corner 29;
thence S 26°06'22"	W 139.18	meters to corner 30;
thence S 56°59'36"	W 388.55	meters to corner 31;
thence N 83°24'24"	W 137.3	meters to corner 32;

thence N 24°03'54"	W	350.52	meters to corner 33;
thence S 58°09'07"	W	329.34	meters to corner 34;
thence S 32°11'06"	E	363.07	meters to corner 35;
thence S 64°11'43"	E	285.92	meters to corner 36;
thence N 75°15'07"	E	245.01	meters to corner 37;
thence S 30°32'27"	E	51.51	meters to corner 38;
thence S 49°09'46"	W	309.74	meters to corner 39;
thence S 70°46'21"	W	481.39	meters to corner 40;
thence S 20°22'45"	E	220.08	meters to corner 41;
thence N 73°47'24"	E	513.41	meters to corner 42;
thence N 84°11'05"	E	232.6	meters to corner 43;
thence S 02°17'10"	W	864.92	meters to corner 44;
thence S 45°52'25"	W	1336.43	meters to corner 45;
thence S 10°38'47"	E	570.81	meters to corner 46;
thence S 53°02'33"	W	514.8	meters to corner 47;
thence S 21°07'06"	E	862.91	meters to corner 48;
thence S 11°45'13"	W	533.54	meters to corner 49;
thence S 87°48'21"	E	420.2	meters to corner 50;
thence S 53°46'50"	E	512.34	meters to corner 51;
thence S 07°26'51"	W	303.73	meters to corner 52;
thence S 23°00'53"	E	498.67	meters to corner 53;
thence S 32°18'38"	W	808.94	meters to corner 54;
thence S 29°13'39"	E	531.27	meters to corner 55;
thence S 24°45'37"	W	546.66	meters to corner 56;
thence S 00°12'42"	W	729.42	meters to corner 57;
thence S 18°40'23"	E	692.5	meters to corner 58;
thence S 02°26'57"	W	545.07	meters to corner 59;
thence S 73°34'05"	E	874.55	meters to corner 60;
thence S 26°43'04"	E	859.02	meters to corner 61;
thence S 30°52'24"	W	947.68	meters to corner 62;
thence S 58°58'55"	E	388.16	meters to corner 63;
thence N 44°09'04"	E	442.45	meters to corner 64;
thence N 65°08'39"	E	310.77	meters to corner 65;
thence S 84°43'04"	E	1674.16	meters to corner 66;
thence S 16°53'03"	E	3323.64	meters to corner 67;
thence S 09°31'54"	E	1404.72	meters to corner 68;
thence S 87°12'07"	W	5478.82	meters to corner 69;
thence N 15°35'40"	W	689.11	meters to corner 70;
thence N 14°23'56"	E	838.19	meters to corner 71;
thence N 07°27'23"	W	381.92	meters to corner 72;

thence N 15°36'08"	E	563.83	meters to corner 73;
thence S 53°42'34"	W	1650.05	meters to corner 74;
thence N 71°47'43"	W	5651.53	meters to corner 75;
thence N 01°35'44"	W	3759.5	meters to corner 76;
thence N 07°48'33"	E	2540.5	meters to corner 77;
thence N 29°08'44"	E	4579.25	meters to corner 78;
thence N 27°30'23"	E	4865.06	meters to corner 79;
thence N 24°08'04"	E	4398.23	meters to corner 1,

from the point of beginning, containing an area of twelve thousand six hundred seventy-six (12,676) hectares, more or less. Bearings and distances of lines were derived using the PRS 1992 Philippines Zone III coordinate system, subject to ground delineation and demarcation.

The DENR shall likewise appropriately mark on the ground the technical description of Mt. Sawtooth with clearly visible markers and shall prepare appropriate maps therefore.

The Certification from the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA) containing the boundaries and technical descriptions of the MSPL is hereby adopted and made an integral part of this Act. In case of inconsistency, the boundaries and technical descriptions in the attached Certification shall prevail.

Any modification of the scope and coverage of the MSPL in this Act shall be made through an act of Congress, after consultation with the government agencies and stakeholders concerned.

SEC. 5. Buffer Zones. – The DENR Secretary, upon the recommendation of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) created under Section 6 of this Act, may designate areas surrounding the MSPL as buffer zones for the purpose of providing an extra layer of protection where restrictions may be applied: *Provided*, That in cases where the designated buffer zone would cover private lands, the owners thereof shall be required to design their development with due consideration to the Protected Area Management Plan.

ARTICLE II

MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

SEC. 6. *Protected Area Management Board.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, a PAMB shall be created to oversee the management of the MSPL. The PAMB shall be composed of the following:

(a) Regional Executive Director of DENR Region III where the MSPL is located, as Chairperson;

(b) Governor of the Province of Tarlac where the MSPL is located or a duly designated representative;

(c) Senators of the Republic of the Philippines who are duly registered residents of the Province of Tarlac where the MSPL is located, or their duly authorized representatives, unless the Senators decline membership in the PAMB;

(d) District Representatives of the Congressional districts where the MSPL is located, or their duly designated representatives, unless the District Representatives decline membership in the PAMB;

(e) Mayors of the Municipalities of Mayantoc and San Jose, in the Province of Tarlac where the MSPL is located, or their duly designated representatives;

(f) Chairpersons of all the barangays with territorial jurisdiction over the MSPL;

(g) Regional Directors of the following government agencies: Department of Agriculture (DA), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Philippine National Police (PNP), Department of National Defense (DND), and Department of Tourism (DOT);

(h) Three (3) representatives from either NGOs or people's organizations (POs) based in the Province of Tarlac, duly accredited by both the DENR and the Provincial Government. The NGOs or POs represented should have been in existence for at least five (5) years and with track record in or related to protected area management;

(i) At least one (1) but not more than three (3) representatives from all the indigenous cultural communities/ indigenous peoples (ICCs/IPs) present in the area and recognized by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP);

(j) One (1) representative from an academic institution, preferably from a university or college in the Province of Tarlac where the MSPL is located, with proven track record in or related to protected area management; and

(k) One (1) representative from the private sector, preferably a resident of the Province of Tarlac where the MSPL is located, who is distinguished in a profession or field of interest relevant to protected area management.

The terms of office of PAMB members, as well as the grounds for their removal, shall be in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 7586, otherwise known as the "National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992", as amended by Republic Act No. 11038, otherwise known as the "Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 2018".

SEC. 7. *Powers and Functions of the PAMB.* – The PAMB shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) Oversee the management of the MSPL;

(b) Approve policies, plans and programs, proposals, agreements, and other related documents for the management of the MSPL;

(c) Approve the management plan of the MSPL and ensure its harmonization with and integration into the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP), land use and other development plans, public or private, and its implementation;

(d) Adopt a manual of operations to include rules of procedures in the conduct of business, and the creation of committees and their respective terms of reference;

(e) Recommend the deputation of appropriate agencies and individuals for the enforcement of laws, rules, and regulations governing the management of the MSPL;

(f) Allocate financial resources for the implementation of the management plan and manage the Protected Area Retained Income Account (PA-RIA) and other funds in accordance with the accounting and budgeting rules and regulations;

(g) Set fees and charges in accordance with the existing guidelines;

(h) Issue rules and regulations for the resolution of conflicts through appropriate and effective means;

(i) Recommend appropriate policy changes to the DENR and other governing authorities with respect to the management of the MSPL;

(j) Monitor and assess the performance of the Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) and other MSPL personnel and compliance of partners with the terms and conditions of any undertaking, contract, or agreement relative to any project or activity within the MSPL;

(k) Recommend the designation or appointment of the PASu from a shortlist of qualified candidates; and

(l) Assess the effectiveness of the management of the MSPL: *Provided*, That the PAMB members representing the LGUs and national agencies shall inform their respective constituents, offices, or sectors of PAMB-approved or other relevant policies, rules, regulations, programs, and projects, and shall ensure that the provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations are complied with, and used as reference and framework in their respective plans, policies, programs, and projects. Failure to comply with the foregoing shall be the basis for disciplinary action against such member according to administrative rules and regulations and such penalties as the PAMB may provide: *Provided, further*, That the DENR, through the Regional Executive Director, shall ensure that the PAMB acts within the scope of its powers and functions. In case of conflict between the resolutions issued by the PAMB and the existing administrative orders of national application, the latter shall prevail.

SEC. 8. *The Protected Area Management Office.* – There is hereby established a Protected Area Management Office (PAMO) to be headed by a PASu with a permanent plantilla position who shall supervise the day-to-day management, protection, and administration of the MSPL. The PASu shall hold a permanent plantilla position and shall be appointed by the DENR Secretary. A sufficient number of support staff with permanent plantilla position shall be appointed by the DENR Secretary to assist the PASu in the management of the protected area.

The PASu shall be primarily accountable to the PAMB and the DENR for the management and operations of the MSPL. Pursuant thereto, the PASu shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

(a) Prepare the management plan, including the annual work and financial plans, and ensure its implementation, in consultation with the stakeholders;

(b) Ensure the integration of the protected area management plans, programs, projects, and policies with relevant national and LGUs' plans and programs;

(c) Provide secretariat services to the PAMB and its committees and ensure the availability of relevant and timely information for decision-making;

(d) Formulate and recommend proposed policies, rules, regulations, and programs to the PAMB;

(e) Establish, operate, and maintain a database management system which shall be an important basis for decision-making;

(f) Enforce the laws, rules, and regulations relevant to the MSPL, commence and institute administrative and legal actions in collaboration with other government agencies or organizations, and assist in the prosecution of offenses committed in violation of this Act;

(g) Monitor, evaluate, and report the implementation of management activities of the MSPL;

(h) Request for and receive any technical assistance, support, or advice from any agency or instrumentality of the government as well as academic institutions, NGOs, and the private sector, as may be necessary for the effective management, protection, and administration of the MSPL;

(i) Issue permits and clearances for activities that implement the management plan and other permitted activities in accordance with terms, conditions, and criteria established by the PAMB: *Provided*, That all permits for extraction activities, including collection for research purposes, shall also continue to be issued by relevant authorities, subject to prior clearance from the PAMB, through the PASu, in accordance with the specific acts to be covered;

(j) Collect and receive pertinent fees, charges, donations, and other income for the MSPL: *Provided*, That such fees, charges, donations, and other income collected and received shall be reported regularly to the PAMB and the DENR in accordance with existing guidelines;

(k) Prepare and recommend to the PAMB, the approval of the annual work and financial plans of the MSPL based on the management plan; and

(l) Perform such other functions as the PAMB and the DENR may assign.

The PAMO may be augmented by the deputized local environment and natural resources officers upon the recommendation of the PAMB and approval of the DENR.

ARTICLE III

PROCEEDS AND FEES

SEC. 9. *The Mt. Sawtooth Protected Landscape-Integrated Protected Area Fund.* – There is hereby established a trust fund to be known as the Mt. Sawtooth Protected Landscape-Integrated Protected Area Fund (MSPL-IPAF) for purposes of financing projects of the MSPL and the NIPAS. All income generated from the operation and management of MSPL shall accrue to the MSPL-IPAF. The income shall be

derived from fees and charges from the use of resources and facilities of the MSPL, contributions from industries and facilities directly benefiting from the MSPL, and such other fees and income derived from the operation of the MSPL.

The PAMB shall retain seventy-five percent (75%) of all revenues raised through the above means, which shall be deposited in the PA-RIA in any authorized government depository bank within the locality: *Provided*, That disbursements out of such deposits shall be used solely for the protection, maintenance, administration, and management of the MSPL and implementation of duly approved projects of the PAMB.

The remaining twenty-five percent (25%) of revenues shall be deposited as a special account in the General Fund in the National Treasury for purposes of financing the projects of the NIPAS.

The fund may be augmented by grants, donations, and endowments from various sources, domestic or foreign: *Provided*, That the fund shall be deposited in full as a special account in the National Treasury and disbursements therefrom shall be made solely for the protection, maintenance, administration, and management of the NIPAS and for duly approved projects endorsed by the PAMB in accordance with existing accounting, budgeting, and auditing rules and regulations: *Provided, further*, That the fund shall not be used to cover personal services expenditures.

The LGUs shall continue to impose and collect all other fees not enumerated herein which they have traditionally collected, such as for business permits, property tax, and rentals of LGUs' facilities.

ARTICLE IV

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SEC. 10. *Appropriations.* – The Secretary of the DENR shall immediately include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 11. *Supplementary Application of the NIPAS Law.* – The provisions of Republic Act No. 7586, as amended by Republic Act No. 11038, shall have supplementary application to this Act.

SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the DENR shall, in consultation with the local governments of the Municipalities of Mayantoc and San Jose, the Provincial Government of Tarlac, and concerned national government agencies, issue the corresponding rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any section or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining sections or provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 15. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

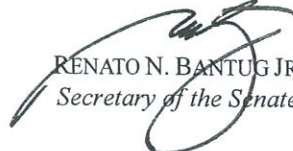
Approved,


FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ
Speaker of the House
of Representatives



FRANCIS "CHIZ" G. ESCUDERO
President of the Senate

This Act was passed by the Senate of the Philippines as Senate Bill No. 2615 on December 16, 2024 and adopted by the House of Representatives as an amendment to House Bill No. 8394 on January 15, 2025.


REGINALD S. VELASCO
Secretary General
House of Representatives


RENATO N. BANTUG JR.
Secretary of the Senate

Approved: AUG 29 2025


FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.
President of the Philippines

