

## ASEAN TOURISM: PROMOTING NATURE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

| National Initiative/s   | Areas for Possible Common Legislation   |
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| <p>1) Republic Act No. 9593 – An Act Declaring a National Policy for Tourism as an Engine of Investment, Employment, Growth and National Development, and Strengthening the Department of Tourism and Its Attached Agencies to Effectively and Efficiently Implement That Policy, and Appropriating Funds Therefor</p> <p>Under RA 9593, “sustainable tourism development” refers to the management of all resources that meets the needs of tourists and host regions while protecting the opportunities for the future, in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.</p> <p>The definition is inclusive as it gives emphasis in the management of natural resources without sacrificing the needs of the future generation. As an industry of national interest, the State promotes sustainable tourism anchored on the country’s history, culture and natural endowments to protect its resources towards regional tourism development.</p> | <p>Promotion and Management of Sustainable Tourism Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common definition of tourism governance in the region to strengthen tourism as an engine of investment towards sustainable growth in the region.</li> </ul> |
| <p>2) Republic Act No. 9072 – An Act to Manage and Protect Caves and Cave Resources and for Other Purposes</p> <p>RA 9072 provides for a comprehensive mechanism to conserve, protect</p>   | <p>Protection of Caves and Cave Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common definition of caves and cave resources</li> </ul>   |

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| <p>and manage caves and cave resources as part of the country's natural wealth.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common regional framework on strengthening cooperation and exchange of information between governments and peoples in the utilization of caves and cave resources for scientific, educational, and recreational purposes.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>3) Republic Act No. 7942 – An Act Instituting a New System of Mineral Resources Exploration, Development, Utilization and Conservation</p> <p>The State has among its responsibilities the promotion of the rational exploration, development, utilization and conservation of mineral resources within its territory and exclusive economic zone, thus, the enactment of RA 7942.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common definition of the following terms to promote the use of mineral resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ecological profile or eco-profile</li> <li>2. exploration</li> <li>3. mineral processing</li> <li>4. sustainable development</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |
| <p>5) Republic Act No. 7611 – An Act Adopting the Strategic Environment Plan for Palawan, Creating the Administrative Machinery to Its Implementation, Converting the Palawan Integrated Area Development Project Office to Its Support Staff, Providing Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes</p> <p>Under RA 7611, a strategic environment plan for Palawan was adopted towards a sustainable development of Palawan compatible with protecting and enhancing the natural resources and endangered environment of the province. Palawan is composed of islands and islets generally bounded by the South China Sea to the northwest and by the Sulu Sea to the east.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common definition of: (1) sustainable development; and (2) “environmentally critical areas” (ECAN) which refers to terrestrial aquatic and marine areas that need special protection and conservation measures as they are ecologically fragile (RA 7611)</li> </ul>            |
| <p>6) Republic Act No. 7586 – An Act Providing for the Establishment and Management of National Integrated Protected Areas System, Defining Its Scope and Coverage, and for Other Purposes</p>  | <p>Adoption of a robust mechanism to protect natural resources in the region from exploitation considering the increase in population, industrial advancement and other harmful activities of human beings.</p>  |

In 1992, the National Integrated Protected Areas Systems Act was enacted “to secure for the Filipino people of present and future generations the perpetual existence of all native plants and animals through the establishment of a comprehensive system of integrated protected areas within the classification of national park” (Section 2, RA 7586).

- Common definition of the terms:
  1. protected areas
  2. national park
  3. protected landscapes/seascapes

In most general terms, one of the common possible areas for legislation is to adopt a tourism governance framework in the region which gives premium emphasis in the management of the tourism industry as a vital component of economic growth toward a sustainable tourism development anchored on the principles of the region’s history, culture and natural endowments.

By promoting tourism governance in the region, the protection and preservation of the region’s diverse attractions and natural resources (i.e. natural parks, national parks, beaches, mountains and forest, historical cultural heritage) will encourage people’s participation from various sectors of the society.

Equally important to people’s participation is the capacity enhancement of public managers and citizens for continuous education and awareness on the proper use of natural resources for exploration, development, utilization, education or scientific purposes.

In this context, adoption of a tourism governance framework will further promote stewardship in the region, thus, developing sustainable tourism will likely be achieved as envisaged in the campaign slogan GO ASEAN global.