

D. ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Bataan has a total land area of 137,296 hectares. Around 52.35% are alienable and disposable land and the rest comprises the forestland.

The province had numerous rivers and small streams mostly cascading from Mt. Natib and Mt. Mariveles. Colo River in Dinalupihan and Pantingan- Tiawe River in Balanga City and Pilar are two of the main sources significantly discharging irrigation waters for agriculture.

There are two (2) protected areas in the province; the Bataan Natural Park which has an area of 31,200 hectares covering portions of Hermosa, Morong, Orani, Samal, Abucay, Balanga City and Bagac. The other one is the Roosevelt Protected Landscape (786.4 hectares) located in the municipalities of Dinalupihan and Hermosa.

The Subic Watershed, Mt. Natib Watershed, and Mariveles Watershed are the three main watershed groups in the province. More than a hundred rivers and small tributaries coming from these watershed areas drained the province that serve as irrigation, navigation fishing and water reservoir.

Bataan as a peninsula is also rich in marine resources. Coastal marine waters support a dynamic ecosystem and contain valuable natural resources that are important to the coastal community.

The coastal upland is composed of rocky hills, bush lands, grasslands and plantation forest found mostly in the areas of Mariveles and nearby localities.

Several species of trees are present in the forest areas of Bataan such as Mahogany, Gmelina, Narra, Teak, A. Auriculiformis, Molave, Lauaan, Guijo, Eucalyptus and many others. Minor forest products are rattan, bamboo, buho, and hingiw.

Bataan has more or less 140.51 hectares of mangrove forest that are located in Orani, Samal, Abucay, Balanga City, Orion, Pilar and Limay along the Manila Bay Area.

In the baseline survey of the wildlife at the Bataan Natural Park in 2000, a total of 127 species of birds, 16 species of mammals, 25 species of amphibians and reptiles, and 33 species of butterflies were recorded. No recent data is available.

During the Annual Asian Water Bird Census held last February 2011, migratory birds at Balanga Wetland and Nature Park were about 13,984 of different species largely dominated by whiskered terns and little egrets.

Bataan has few metallic and non-metallic mineral resources. Prospective gold deposits exist along the foot of Mt. Natib. Another metallic mineral ready for exploration is the magnetite sand abundantly present in Morong and Bagac.

A peninsula with 177 km. coastline, Bataan also prides itself with pristine and sandy beaches and preserved coral reefs, seaweeds and sea grass beds.

Mangrove Groundtruthing

Mangroves are shrubs or small trees that grow in coastal saline or brackish water. These are not only important but crucial for the coastal areas. Mangroves serve as buffer zone between the land and sea. These also protect the land from erosion as well as play an invaluable role as nature's shield against storm surge, ecological disasters and as protector of shorelines. These also provide breeding and nursery grounds for a variety of marine animals