

# Solon seeks higher budget for global biodiversity conservation

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*By Philippine News Agency*

A lawmaker at the House of Representatives is batting for increased funding for biodiversity conservation and protection in a global scale.

Occidental Mindoro Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato made the call during the 3rd United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) workshop in Almaty, Kazakhstan.



*(PNA / MANILA BULLETIN)*

According to a news release issued on Thursday, Sato also urged member-countries of the United Nation to adopt a “whole-of-government” approach to close the financing gap.

“Recognizing the urgent requirements to address the continued biodiversity loss in the Philippines and particularly recognizing the massive requirement to secure resources to finance biodiversity plans, programs and projects — a concept comes to my mind — bayanihan,” Sato said in her keynote speech.

Sato explained the concept of “bayanihan”, which is a collective action having clear-cut roles and responsibilities to achieve a single objective, and this must be appropriately done with the government working in unison.

“The spirit of bayanihan is exactly what we want to serve as model for our ‘whole of government approach’ to financing biodiversity conservation,” Sato said.

Sato said the Philippines has much to gain in working with its neighbors to strengthen biodiversity conservation and protection.

According to a Conservation International report in 2014, the Philippines is among the 35 biodiversity hotspots all over the world.

However, Sato cited that the Philippines also ranked the tenth most threatened biodiversity hotspot in the world based on a sustainability report by writer Natalie Mayer.

“All are heavily threatened by habitat loss and degradation, making their conservation crucial to protecting nature for the benefit of all life on earth,” she said.

The lady lawmaker said areas for improvement include broader participation from citizens, linking and improved coordination among branches of government, and mobilization of local governments.

“To me, there is no one formula for biodiversity financing. We should continuously identify new and additional sources and mechanism for cooperation and financing biodiversity conservation,” she said.

Sato is supporting the plan to localize the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (PBSAP) 2015-2028, as well as effort to close the biodiversity financing gap in the Philippines.

Implementing the PBSAP, the country’s blueprint to biodiversity conservation, will cost the government P24 billion a year from 2017 to 2028.

Current spending of the Philippines for biodiversity conservation stands at P5 billion per year, leaving a financing gap of P19 billion annually.