



June 2014 marked another milestone for the Philippines as the country added one more of its crown jewels to the prestigious list of UNESCO's World Heritage sites. During its 38th session in Doha, Qatar, the United Nations cultural body gave World Heritage status to the Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary (MHRWS) in Davao Oriental province.

The designation of the mountain range – which is home to an astonishing diversity of species, including the endangered Philippine eagle and the Philippine cockatoo – as a World Heritage site brought long overdue recognition to its outstanding universal value.

Mt. Hamiguitan is the country's sixth World Heritage site. The others are: the Palawan's Tubbataha Reef Natural Park (TRNP) and Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (PPSRNP); Rice Terraces in the Cordillera Region; baroque churches in Manila, Ilocos Sur,

Ilocos Norte and Iloilo; and Vigan City in Ilocos Sur.

According to the UNESCO, Mt. Hamiguitan was designated a World Heritage site because it “showcases terrestrial and aquatic habitats at different elevations, and includes threatened and endemic flora and fauna species.”

DENR Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje has hailed the designation as a “significant milestone” in the effort to preserve Mt. Hamiguitan’s rich biodiversity, noting that it is the third “natural site” in the country to be included in the World Heritage list, next to TRNP and PPSRNP.

The environment chief said the recognition provides a major boost for the conservation of the mountain range and the protection of unique and endangered plant and animal species within it.

“It is a matter of great pride for the nation that Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary has been chosen as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its inclusion in the UN cultural agency’s prized list is a significant milestone in our effort to protect and preserve its rich biodiversity and ecosystems,” Paje said.

In a few words, Mt. Hamiguitan is a world natural treasure that needs protection for the enjoyment of future generations.

What makes Mt. Hamiguitan so special?

A wildlife sanctuary and a bonsai forest



Critically endangered Philippine Eagle *Pithecophaga jefferyi* is known to nest and breed in Mt. Hamiguitan Range.

Ceratostylis retisquama

Hamiguitan hairy-tailed rat

Dendrobium uniflorum Griffith

Paphiopedilum ciliolare

Hoya incrassata

Nepenthes alata