



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 8441

BY REPRESENTATIVES GARCIA (J.E.) AND NOGRALES (K.A.), PER
COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 905

AN ACT DECLARING THE BALANGA WETLAND AND
NATURE PARK LOCATED IN BARANGAY TORTUGAS,
CITY OF BALANGA, PROVINCE OF BATAAN AS
A RESPONSIBLE, COMMUNITY-BASED ECOTOURISM
ZONE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State is mandated
2 to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable,
3 responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable,
4 and equitable for the local community.

5 SEC. 2. *Balanga Wetland and Nature Park Ecotourism Zone.*
6 – The Balanga Wetland and Nature Park (BWNP) located in
7 Barangay Tortugas, City of Balanga, Province of Bataan is hereby
8 declared as a responsible, community-based ecotourism zone. It
9 shall be accorded priority development by the Department of
10 Tourism (DOT) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations
11 governing the development of ecotourism zones.

12 SEC. 3. *Technical Description.* – The technical description of
13 the area for declaration as ecotourism zone are as follows:

Sta Cor	Azimuth Distance Bearing	COORDINATES		Line	Bearing
		Northings	Eastings	Desc	Distance
Reference: BLLM #1, Balanga Cadastre					
TP	N.59°24'E.	20,000.00	20,000.00	TP-1	N.59°24'E.
TP/this	2,945.98				2,945.98
1	N.30°27'W.	21,499.626	22,535.729	1-2	N.30°27'W.
1/this	12.11			P.S.	12.11
2	N.61°50'E.	21,510.063	22,529.591	2-3	N.61°50'E.
2/this	77.59			P.S.	77.59
3	N.43°19'E.	21,546.680	22,598.000	3-4	N.43°19'E.
3/this	54.45			P.S.	54.45
4	N.31°29'E.	21,586.300	22,635.350	4-5	N.31°29'E.
4/this	40.24			P.S.	40.24
5	N.44°10'W.	21,620.613	22,656.366	5-6	N.44°10'W.
5/this	380.95			P.S.	380.95
6	N.89°03'W.	21,893.865	22,390.929	6-7	N.89°03'W.
6/this	11.99			P.S.	11.99
7	S.59°13'W.	21,894.063	22,378.942	7-8	S.59°13'W.
7/this	180.39			P.S.	180.39
8	N.64°12'W.	21,801.755	22,223.957	8-9	N.64°12'W.
8/this	13.26			P.S.	13.26
9	N.05°45'W.	21,807.527	22,212.020	9-10	N.05°45'W.
9/this	35.99			P.S.	35.99
10	N.69°00'E.	21,843.339	22,208.416	10-11	N.69°00'E.
10/this	17.38			P.S.	17.38
11	N.13°39'E.	21,849.567	22,224.646	11-12	N.13°39'E.
11/this	15.10			P.S.	15.10
12	N.63°45'W.	21,864.239	22,228.207	12-13	N.63°45'W.
12/this	30.47			P.S.	30.47

13 13/this	N.17°12'E. 10.23	21,877.715	22,200.879	13-14 P.S.	N.17°12'E. 10.23
14 14/this	N.40°24'W. 29.19	21,887.491	22,203.906	14-15 P.S.	N.40°24'W. 29.19
15 15/this	N.40°41'W. 10.42	21,909.715	22,184.988	15-16 P.S.	N.40°41'W. 10.42
16 16/this	N.25°46'E. 28.72	21,917.617	22,178.196	16-17 P.S.	N.25°46'E. 28.72
17 17/this	S.74°22'E. 37.57	21,943.484	22,190.679	17-18 P.S.	S.74°22'E. 37.57
18 18/this	N.29°15'E. 17.33	21,933.360	22,226.859	18-19 P.S.	N.29°15'E. 17.33
19 19/this	N.57°34'W. 39.85	21,948.480	22,235.326	19-20 P.S.	N.57°34'W. 39.85
20 20/this	N.12°42'E. 62.68	21,969.854	22,201.696	20-21 P.S.	N.12°42'E. 62.68
21 21/this	N.05°05'E. 36.88	22,030.999	22,215.471	21-22 P.S.	N.05°05'E. 36.88
22 22/this	N.37°55'W. 18.14	22,067.730	22,218.738	22-23 P.S.	N.37°55'W. 18.14
23 23/this	N.13°35'E. 49.81	22,082.043	22,207.591	23-24 P.S.	N.13°35'E. 49.81
24 24/this	N.23°41'E. 122.08	22,130.463	22,219.294	24-25 P.S.	N.23°41'E. 122.08
25 25/this	N.40°26'E. 141.26	22,242.269	22,268.318	25-26 P.S.	N.40°26'E. 141.26
26 26/this	N.55°31'E. 176.73	22,349.777	22,359.947	26-27 P.S.	N.55°31'E. 176.73
27 27/this	S.32°39'E. 866.78	22,449.832	22,505.623	27-28 P.S.	S.32°39'E. 866.78

28		21,720.041	22,973.298	28-1 P.S.	S.63°16'W. 489.95
1		21,499.626	22,535.729		

1 AREA = 344,470.00 sq. m.

2 SEC. 4. *Objectives.* – Pursuant to the above policy, the State
3 shall endeavor to accomplish the following:

4 (a) Ensure the conservation of the biodiversity and the
5 preservation of the park;

6 (b) Develop and promote responsible, community-based
7 ecological tourism as the core management strategy in the
8 development of the BWNP;

9 (c) Develop tourism products and programs that will generate
10 employment and livelihood for the local residents, consistent with
11 the preservation and maintenance of natural resources;

12 (d) Guarantee that the financial and economic benefits of the
13 tourism industry are equitably shared by, and distributed among
14 the local residents by giving preference and support to community
15 and home-based tourism enterprises, such as micro and small
16 businesses including local inns, lodges and homestays, restaurants,
17 food and fruit stands, and other similar tourism-oriented industries
18 and businesses;

19 (e) Ensure that the quality of local tourism programs and
20 activities are educational and enriching for tourists and visitors
21 through the provision of orientation, educational and tour programs
22 by local tour operators, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), the
23 local government of the City of Balanga and the DOT; and

1 (f) Guarantee that in the development and promotion of the
2 local tourism industry, the local government of the City of Balanga
3 shall ensure that the needs of local residents for adequate water
4 supply, food, energy and local construction materials are first
5 secured and met.

6 SEC. 5. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

7 (a) *Biodiversity conservation* refers to the practice of
8 preserving the variety of species and habitats, including *inter alia*,
9 terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological
10 complexes which they are a part of;

11 (b) *Community-based tourism* refers to a form of tourism
12 where the local community and its residents have substantial
13 control and involvement in the development and management of the
14 local tourism industry and a greater portion of the economic gains
15 remain within the community;

16 (c) *Ecotourism* refers to a form of sustainable tourism within
17 a natural area where community participation, protection and
18 management of natural resources, cultural and indigenous
19 knowledge and practices, environmental education and ethics, as
20 well as economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the
21 enrichment of host communities and the satisfaction of visitors;

22 (d) *Homestay* refers to a system of tourist accommodation
23 where a tourist stays with local residents and experiences their
24 day-to-day life within the local community;

25 (e) *Responsible ecotourism* refers to a form of sustainable
26 tourism in which both the tourism sector and the tourists take
27 responsibility in the protection, respect, and conservation of the

1 natural environment and the local culture and ways of life, and
2 where community participation as well as economic benefits are
3 fostered and pursued for the well-being of the local people and
4 visitors; and

5 (f) *Sustainable tourism development* refers to the
6 management of resources in a manner that simultaneously meets
7 the needs of tourists and the host locality; protects the opportunities
8 for the future; fulfills the economic and social needs of the district;
9 and preserves natural integrity, essential ecological processes,
10 biological diversity and a system that supports and perpetuates life.

11 SEC. 6. *Balanga Wetland and Nature Park Tourism*
12 *Development Plan*. – The DOT, in coordination with the
13 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR),
14 shall assist the local government of the City of Balanga
15 in the formulation of the BWNP Tourism Development Plan.
16 The Plan shall include a set of guidelines for a responsible,
17 community-based ecotourism that shall ensure the preservation
18 of the area, and shall include the following components:

19 (a) Carrying capacity of the park;

20 (b) Specific site assessments;

21 (c) Identification of strategic priorities;

22 (d) Product development for local income generation;

23 (e) Capacity building for the local community to allow
24 residents therein to ably manage economically viable and
25 responsible, community-based ecotourism business enterprises;

26 (f) Support for the formulation of local production groups and
27 networks, including the marketing and pricing of products; and

1 (g) Marketing strategies that reflect the natural, social and
2 environmental integrity of the BWNP.

3 The process of developing the BWNP Tourism Development
4 Plan shall be participatory, from the bottom up, with the framework
5 to be provided by the DOT and DENR, in consultation with the
6 Balanga Wetland and Nature Park Development Council herein
7 created.

8 *SEC. 7. Balanga Wetland and Nature Park Development*
9 *Council.* – A multisectoral council to be known as the Balanga
10 Wetland and Nature Park Development Council, hereinafter
11 referred to as the Council, shall be created. The Council, whose
12 members shall serve coterminously with the incumbent Mayor
13 of the City of Balanga, shall be composed of the following members:

- 14 (a) The Mayor of the City of Balanga, as Chairperson;
15 (b) The head of the City Tourism Office, as Vice-Chairperson;
16 (c) The head of the City Environmental and Natural
17 Resources Office; and
18 (d) Three (3) representatives from the private sector.

19 The local government of the City of Balanga, Province of
20 Bataan shall provide a Secretariat for the Council including the
21 funding necessary to cover the expenses for the performance of its
22 official functions and activities.

23 *SEC. 8. Functions and Responsibilities of the Council.* – The
24 Council shall be responsible for the following:

- 25 (a) Formulation and the implementation of the Tourism
26 Development Plan in consultation with the local residents,
27 businesses, and other stakeholders;

1 (b) Assessment and evaluation of the potential impact of the
2 development to the environmental safety and well-being of the area,
3 communities, and enterprises;

4 (c) Provision of technical and financial assistance to the
5 communities within the site;

6 (d) Formulation of the rules and regulations in relation to the
7 maintenance and security of the ecotourism zone; and

8 (e) Performance of other functions as may be necessary to
9 carry out the objectives of this Act.

10 SEC. 9. *Formulation of Guidelines and Standards.* – The
11 concerned Protected Area Management Board of the DENR, the
12 DOT and the Council shall assist in the formulation of local tourism
13 standards ensuring that environmental protection is integrated in
14 the development of ecotourism plans.

15 The guidelines and standards shall:

16 (a) Raise the capacity of all stakeholders and ensure that best
17 practices are followed;

18 (b) Ensure optimal use of water and energy;

19 (c) Reduce waste and pollution through the encouragement of
20 recycling and other environmentally-sound waste management
21 reduction and disposal schemes;

22 (d) Prevent vandalism in the facilities of the park; and

23 (e) Encourage the use of local produce and services, and
24 support the employment of local people.

25 SEC. 10. *Coordination with National Agencies.* – The DOT
26 shall closely coordinate with the local government of the City of
27 Balanga, as well as the relevant regional offices of the DENR,

1 Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Public
2 Works and Highways, Department of Transportation, Department
3 of Agriculture, Department of Education, Department of Trade and
4 Industry, Department of the Interior and Local Government,
5 Philippine National Police, Maritime Industry Authority and other
6 line agencies of the government in the implementation of this Act.

7 SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The Secretary of Tourism shall
8 include in the Department's subsidy program, support for the
9 capital outlay requirements of the BWNP for the preliminary
10 implementation of this Act and enhancement of the facilities of the
11 ecotourism zone, the funding of which shall be included in the
12 annual General Appropriations Act and internally generated funds
13 of the DOT.

14 The budgetary allocations for the succeeding years shall be
15 included in the annual General Appropriations Act, subject to
16 government audit.

17 SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within
18 thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOT, in
19 coordination with the DENR, and in consultation with the local
20 government of the City of Balanga and other concerned government
21 agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules
22 and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

23 SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any
24 provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid,
25 other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall
26 continue to be in full force and effect.

1 SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive
2 orders, proclamations and administrative regulations, or parts
3 thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or
4 modified accordingly.

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

Approved,

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