

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*First Regular Session* )



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**SENATE**

**S. No. 1237**

RECEIVED BY:

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Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

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**AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL COASTAL GREENBELT ZONES AND THE  
NATIONAL COASTAL GREENBELT MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN,  
PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Coastal Greenbelts refers to a strip of natural or artificially created coastal vegetation including mangroves, beach forest, phytoplankton, and seagrasses, stretching at least up to 1.5 meters above towards land and up to 1.5 meters below towards the ocean from mean sea level, designed to prevent coastal erosion, and mitigate the adverse impacts of natural coastal hazards on human lives and property and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Mangrove forests are one of the most severely threatened and undervalued ecosystems. It is alarming that mangroves are being cleared at an alarming rate and among the threats to mangrove forests, include land reclamation, pollution, deforestation, and illegal conversion.

For many coastal communities, mangrove ecosystems provide livelihoods, essential sources of protein, and coastal protection and resiliency, amid the climate crisis we face. In fact, residents of small islands in Siargao were saved by the

mangrove forest in the municipality of Del Carmen as Super typhoon Odette wreaked havoc on the province last December 16, 2021<sup>1</sup>.

Compelling evidence likewise suggests that mangroves play an important role in climate stabilization, possessing carbon storage and sequestration potential considered to be greater than that of tropical forests. The Philippines is estimated to have a total blue carbon stored in mangroves in metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>: 509,701,906 (Mapping Ocean Wealth Explorer), a fact that is substantially overlooked.

Mangroves hold tremendous significance, especially for biodiversity conservation, climate mitigation and resiliency, and disaster risk reduction and management. However, the management of mangroves at both the local and national levels face a multitude of challenges, hence, we need to create and implement science-based policies for the restoration and regeneration of mangroves. Institutionalizing coastal greenbelt zones is a nature-based solution that will provide the protection and resiliency of our natural life support systems and our people, which are urgently needed if we are to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change and mainstream sustainable development for all.

In this connection, the attached bill seeks to mandate the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and all other relevant government agencies responsible for foreshore management, mangrove and beach forest protection and utilization, coastal land and sea-use planning, coastal tourism development, social welfare of coastal communities, and other relevant mandates, to prepare an integrated National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan (NCGMAP). Under the bill, the NCGMAP that shall contain the following, among others: (a) an inventory of the status of coastlines and foreshores, including the status of mangroves, beach forests, settlements, structures, and fishponds; (b) assessment of priority areas to be designated as coastal greenbelts; (c) designation of priority areas for coastal greenbelts; (d) operational plan for the rehabilitation, reforestation, or afforestation of designated priority coastal greenbelts; (e) operational plan for the reversion of all abandoned

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<sup>1</sup> <https://headtopics.com/ph/some-siargao-residents-saved-by-mangrove-forest-from-odette-onenews-ph-23047397>

fishponds to mangroves through natural regeneration or replanting with locally appropriate species; (f) operational plan for the removal of illegal structures; and (g) monitoring and evaluation plan. The bill likewise provides for the roles of implementing agencies, such as the DENR, CCC, Department of Agriculture (DA) through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD).

In view of the foregoing, I recommend the approval of this bill.



**CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

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**ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL COASTAL GREENBELT ZONES AND THE**  
**NATIONAL COASTAL GREENBELT MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN,**  
**PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

- 1           Section 1. *Short Title.* – This shall be known as the “National Coastal  
2 Greenbelt Act of 2022”.
- 3           Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby the declared policy of the State:
- 4           a)    To uphold the people’s constitutional right to a healthful and balanced  
5                ecology.
- 6           b)    To recognize that climate change and disaster risk reduction and  
7                management are closely interrelated and effective disaster risk  
8                reduction will enhance climate change adaptive capacity.
- 9           c)    To mainstream the important contribution of mangroves and beach  
10             forest species in reducing the impacts of climate change and mitigate  
11             the adverse impacts of natural coastal hazards on human lives and  
12             property.
- 13          d)    To integrate, consolidate and institutionalize coastal greenbelt  
14             framework strategy and action plans into all development plans,  
15             programs and projects, and all actions and decisions of the national

1 government, local government, business, non-government  
2 organizations, local communities, and the public in general.

3 e) To develop and implement a coherent, comprehensive, integrated,  
4 efficient National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan that aim  
5 to reduce our vulnerability to climate change and disaster risks,  
6 enhance adaptive capacity and build national and local resilience to  
7 climate change-related disasters.

8 f) To enjoin the participation of national and local governments,  
9 businesses, nongovernment organizations, local communities and the  
10 public in the development, implementation, monitoring and assessment  
11 of plans, programs and activities to prevent and reduce the adverse  
12 impacts of climate change through the establishment of coastal  
13 greenbelt zones.

14 g) To adopt the precautionary principle in the planning, conservation,  
15 rehabilitation, and management of coastal greenbelt zones.

16 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms and  
17 phrases shall mean as follows:

18 a) Coastal Greenbelt Zone refers to specific strips of natural or artificially  
19 created coastal vegetation, stretching at least one hundred (100)  
20 meters in width from the sea towards land, primarily of mangrove and  
21 beach forest species, designed to prevent coastal erosion, and mitigate  
22 the adverse impacts of natural coastal hazards on human lives and  
23 property.

24 b) Coastal Zone refers to a band of dry land and adjacent ocean space  
25 (water and submerged land in which terrestrial processes and uses  
26 directly affect oceanic processes and uses, and vice versa; its  
27 geographic extent may include areas within a landmark limit of one (1)  
28 kilometer from the shoreline at high tide to include mangrove swamps,  
29 brackish water ponds, nipa swamps, estuarine rivers, sandy beaches  
30 and other areas within a sea ward limit of 200 meters isobath to



1 include coral reefs, algal flats, seagrass beds and other soft-bottom  
2 areas.

3 c) Civil Society Organizations or CSOs refer to non-state actors whose  
4 aims are neither to generate profits nor to seek governing power. CSOs  
5 unite people to advance shared goals and interests. Their right to  
6 participate at all levels of decision-making is guaranteed by the  
7 Constitution and they have a significant role in public life, expressing  
8 the interests and values of their members or others, are based on  
9 ethical, cultural, scientific, environmental, human rights, religious or  
10 philanthropic considerations. CSOs include nongovernment  
11 organizations (NGOs), professional associations, foundations,  
12 independent research institutes, community-based organizations, and  
13 regional organizations and intergovernmental organizations, such as  
14 the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, International Union for the  
15 Conservation of Nature (IUCN), among others.

16 d) Designated areas refer to site-specific stretches of vegetation in the  
17 coastal zone, defined in relation to risk factors and vulnerability to  
18 coastal hazards, and reserved for protection and maintenance under  
19 the National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan. The area may  
20 undergo rehabilitation, reforestation, or afforestation with locally  
21 appropriate native species. Designated areas with abandoned  
22 fishponds require the reversion of these fishponds to mangroves  
23 through natural regeneration or replanting with locally and ecologically  
24 appropriate species.

25 e) Fisherfolk Settlement Areas refer to certain areas of the public domain,  
26 specifically near the fishing grounds, granted to or reserved for the  
27 settlement of municipal fisherfolks.

28 f) Integrated Coastal Zone Management refers to an effective approach  
29 to sustainable coastal and marine development with demonstrated  
30 benefits in enhancing economic growth, ecosystem protection,  
31 promotion of social equity, and the quality of life of the people.

- 1 g) Mangroves- refer to a community of intertidal plants in the tropics and  
2 subtropics including all species of trees, shrubs, vines, and herbs  
3 growing along tidal mudflats and shallow water coastal areas extending  
4 inland along rivers, streams and their tributaries where the water is  
5 generally brackish.
- 6 h) National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan (NCGMAP)- refers  
7 to the operation plan that shall serve as the guide for the Local Coastal  
8 Greenbelt Action Plan (LCGMAP).
- 9 i) Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan refers to the local  
10 action plan of the coastal local governments that shall be based on the  
11 NCGMAP. It shall contain the specific goals and targets for the  
12 implementation of the program set in the NCGMAP.

13 *Sec. 4. Creation of National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan.* – The  
14 Department of Environment and Natural Resources in coordination with the Climate  
15 Change Commission shall, within six (6) months, identify and convene all national  
16 agencies responsible for foreshore management, mangrove and beach forest  
17 protection and utilization, coastal land and sea-use planning, coastal tourism  
18 development, social welfare of coastal communities, and other relevant mandates, to  
19 prepare an integrated National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan  
20 (NCGMAP).

21 The NCGMAP shall, at the minimum, contain the following:

- 22 a) Spatial representation, or if feasible, quick/rapid inventory of the status  
23 of coastlines and foreshores, including the status of mangroves, beach  
24 forests, settlements, structures, and fishponds within one hundred  
25 (100) meters therein.
- 26 b) Assessment of priority areas to be designated as coastal greenbelts for  
27 each coastal province, city, and municipality. The criteria for  
28 designation of priority area shall be based on its vulnerability to storm  
29 surges, waves, tsunami and the like. This shall be completed within  
30 one (1) year from the adoption of the NCGMAP.

1 c) Designation as priority areas for coastal greenbelts all those that are  
2 declared as a protected area under the Expanded National Integrated  
3 Protected Areas System (Republic Act 11038), a fish refuge or  
4 sanctuary under the Amended Fisheries Code (Republic Act 10654), or  
5 as a local marine protected area as declared by municipalities and  
6 cities through ordinances. The designation shall be completed within  
7 six (6) months from the completion of the assessment. The designation  
8 shall be done through the proposal of the appropriate agency,  
9 municipality or city as may be necessary. No structures shall be  
10 allowed in the designated area. Designation as priority area, however,  
11 shall not affect structures found in fisherfolk settlement areas reserved  
12 for the settlement of municipal fisherfolks and shall not impair existing  
13 foreshore lease and other similar agreements, provided that grantees  
14 shall be tasked to implement the plans and conditions laid down under  
15 the NCGMAP and LCGMAP.

16 d) Operational plan for the rehabilitation, reforestation, or afforestation of  
17 designated priority coastal greenbelts with ecologically appropriate  
18 mangrove and beach forest species, not less than one hundred (100)  
19 meters in width; existing forests or plantations greater than the  
20 minimum width shall not be reduced. The program for rehabilitation,  
21 reforestation or afforestation shall be community-based, long-term and  
22 implemented through the municipality or city government. The  
23 Operation Plan shall indicate that the program for rehabilitation,  
24 reforestation and afforestation must cover a minimum target area of  
25 twenty percent (20%) of the designated priority areas in the first five  
26 (5) years for maximum protection of the most vulnerable communities  
27 in the city or municipality. The remaining priority areas must be  
28 completed within ten (10) years from the designation as priority area.

29 e) Operational Plan for the reversion of all abandoned fishponds to  
30 mangroves through natural regeneration or replanting with locally  
31 appropriate species. The NCGMAP shall indicate that the identification



1 and recovery of possession from delinquent fishpond lease agreement  
2 holders shall be completed within twelve (12) months from the  
3 adoption thereof. All fishpond areas to be reverted to mangroves shall  
4 form part of the minimum target for the first year of implementation of  
5 the Action Plan.

6 f) Operational Plan for the removal of illegal structures, in the identified  
7 priority coastal greenbelts. The NCGMAP shall indicate that the  
8 declaration and notice to persons responsible for removal of illegal  
9 structures shall be completed within twelve (12) months from the start  
10 of rehabilitation, reforestation or afforestation of these areas shall form  
11 part of the minimum target for the first year of implementation of the  
12 Action Plan.

13 g) Monitoring and evaluation plan, with quantitative and qualitative  
14 targets consistent with subparagraphs (d), (e) and (f) of this Section,  
15 appropriate indicators, and reasonable means of verification. The plan  
16 shall become an integrated part of the National Coastal Greenbelt  
17 Management Action Plan and Annual Report to Congress.

18 The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Climate Change  
19 Commission shall be responsible for consolidating the NCGMAP not later than twelve  
20 (12) months from the effectivity of this Act.

21 *Sec. 5. Role of Key Implementing Agencies.* – The following agencies shall  
22 take the lead in implementing components of the Action Plan that are relevant to  
23 their mandates:

24 a) The Department of Environment and Natural Resource (DENR),  
25 through its relevant Bureaus, such as but not limited to, Biodiversity  
26 Management Bureau, Forest Management Bureau, among others, shall  
27 be the primary agency responsible for the implementation of the  
28 National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan, particularly  
29 Section 4 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f) of this Act in line with existing  
30 laws and mandates, and it shall provide the Implementing Agencies

1 with all the relevant information to aid in the monitoring and evaluation  
2 of the NCGMAP. In particular, the DENR shall identify the designated  
3 areas that must be expropriated by the government and recommend  
4 the expropriation plan to the proper implementing agencies.

5 b) The Climate Change Commission shall be responsible for convening the  
6 relevant government agencies, facilitating public participation in the  
7 crafting the NCGMAP and integration of the NCGMAP into the Local  
8 Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan (LCGMAP), and preparing  
9 the integrated report to Congress especially with regard to the  
10 expenditure of the appropriation and other pertinent matters under  
11 Section 8 of this Act.

12 c) The Department of Agriculture through the Bureau of Fisheries and  
13 Aquatic Resources shall coordinate with the DENR for Section 4 (e)  
14 above or the Operation Plan that provides for the reversion of all  
15 abandoned fishponds to mangroves through natural regeneration,  
16 replanting with locally appropriate species, and implementation of  
17 fisherfolk settlement program in line with existing laws and mandate,  
18 and it shall provide the Climate Change Commission with all relevant  
19 information to aid in the monitoring and evaluation of the NCGAP.

20 d) The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) through its  
21 relevant offices, shall provide technical guidance and supervision for  
22 provinces, cities, and municipalities to establish their local coastal  
23 greenbelt zones and develop appropriate Local Coastal Greenbelt  
24 Management Action Plans, design and implement community-based  
25 and ecologically appropriate rehabilitation, reforestation, and  
26 afforestation programs, and monitor and evaluate the implementation  
27 of the Local Government Unit's (LGUs) programs and action plans.

28 e) The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development  
29 (DHSUD) in coordination with concerned Local Government Units  
30 (LGUs) shall provide for the relocation of the families or individuals  
31 who will be affected by the designated areas.

1 Other implementing agencies that participated in the preparation of the  
2 Action Plan shall implement their commitments, as provided therein within a period  
3 of six (6) months. The actions required of implementing agencies are immediately  
4 executable, based on the agreed National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action  
5 Plan, and on their existing mandates, programs and budgets that must be integrated  
6 in and aligned with the Action Plan, without need of formulating implementing  
7 guidelines, rules, and regulations for this Act.

8 *Sec. 6. National Technical Advisory Committee.* – The Department of  
9 Environment and Natural Resources in collaboration with the Climate Change  
10 Commission shall convene a National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC)  
11 composed of:

- 12 a) A representative from the Climate Change Commission;
- 13 b) A representative from the Department of Environment and Natural  
14 Resources;
- 15 c) A representative from the Department of Agriculture - Bureau of  
16 Fisheries and Aquatic Resources;
- 17 d) A representative from the Department of the Interior and Local  
18 Government;
- 19 e) Two experts in mangrove and beach forest ecosystems, oceanography,  
20 or other related disciplines;
- 21 f) A representative from a non-government organization or a people's  
22 organization that demonstrates capacity to promote the public interest  
23 and with identifiable leadership, membership and structure and has  
24 been actively involved in mangrove research as among the criteria that  
25 will be set by DENR, BFAR and the Commission.

26 The National Technical Advisory Committee shall provide scientific guidance in  
27 the design, implementation, and evaluation of actions under the NCGMAP. The  
28 experts shall serve the Committee without compensation but may be reimbursed for  
29 basic expenses to attend meetings and prepare technical reports.

1            *Sec. 7. Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan.* – Each coastal city  
2 and municipality in the identified priority coastal greenbelt areas in the Action plan  
3 shall prepare a Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan (LCGMAP) to  
4 facilitate the implementation of mandated actions in the NCGMAP. Each city and  
5 municipality shall:

- 6            a)     Facilitate the implementation of the mandates of the national agencies  
7                     under Section 4, by providing local data and other supporting  
8                     measures;
- 9            b)     Implement complementary programs to assist local communities and  
10                    local businesses affected by the actions under Section 4, such as but  
11                    not limited to relocations sites with basic services like livelihood and  
12                    transportation programs, zoning, or re-zoning of the priority coastal  
13                    greenbelt areas, as appropriate, and the like;
- 14           c)     Provide an actual inventory of affected families in designated areas to  
15                    ensure that a legal, just, fair, and humane process of relocation is  
16                    carried out;
- 17           d)     Lead in the actual implementation of rehabilitation, reforestation, and  
18                    afforestation, through the coastal barangays;
- 19           e)     Integrate the identified coastal greenbelt zones in the Comprehensive  
20                    Land-Use Plan; and
- 21           f)     Provide data and qualitative feedback to the Key Implementing  
22                    Agencies as may be relevant.

23            The Provincial Government shall provide technical and budgetary support to  
24 component coastal cities and municipalities and ensure consistency across  
25 contiguous cities and municipalities sharing common priority coastal greenbelt area.  
26 Highly urbanized cities shall likewise provide support to component barangays under  
27 their jurisdiction.

28            *Sec. 8. Incentives.* – Local Government Units (LGUs) whose Local Coastal  
29 Greenbelt Management Action Plan have been submitted and/or approved to the



1 Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Climate Change  
2 Commission or those LGUs who have been recognized by the DILG and the  
3 Commission for their effective establishment and/or management efforts for coastal  
4 greenbelts may be entitled to receive grants and incentives for the purpose building  
5 technical capacities in implementing the LCGMAP and supporting programs which  
6 are in line with the objectives of this Act. The national incentive program, including  
7 but not limited to, technical assistance and capacity building for the development of  
8 the Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan, that will encourage the  
9 participation of LGUs in the implementation of this Act, shall be included in the  
10 NCGMAP. The Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan shall be consistent  
11 with and/or integrated into the local development plan, Comprehensive Land Use  
12 Plan, Local Climate Change Action Plan, and other relevant plans.

13           *Sec. 9. Coastal Greenbelt Incentive Fund.* – There is hereby created a special  
14 account under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) called "Coastal Greenbelt Fund"  
15 (CGIF). The fund shall be utilized to pay out the incentives granted to LGUs which  
16 qualify for the CGIF.

17           *Sec. 10. Enforcement Actions.* –

18           a) In addition to the penalties provided under existing laws, any person  
19 who obstructs the LGU, DENR, or any other authorized agency or  
20 officer in the removal of illegal structures, or the BFAR in the process  
21 of reversion of abandoned fishponds, shall be liable to that agency for  
22 an administrative fine of fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) per day  
23 that the agency is prevented from performing its function.

24           b) No structures shall be built within the identified coastal greenbelt zones  
25 without permits from the LGU, DENR or BFAR, consistent with their  
26 mandates. Any person who violates this prohibition shall be liable for  
27 an administrative fine of fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) per day  
28 from the time the structure was built until its removal.

1 c) Proceeds from administrative fines under this Section shall be retained  
2 by the agency imposing such fines and used exclusively for the  
3 implementation of its mandate under this Act.

4 d) Legal actions filed in the exercise of rights and enforcement of  
5 obligations under this Act shall also be covered by the Fisheries Code,  
6 as amended by RA 10654, and the 2010 Supreme Court Rules of  
7 Procedure for Environmental Cases.

8 Sec. 11. *Annual Report to Congress.* – The Key Implementing Agencies shall  
9 report to Congress on their progress in meeting the quantitative and qualitative  
10 targets under the Action Plan for each year. The reports shall be consolidated by the  
11 Commission for presentation to the appropriate Committee in Congress at a meeting  
12 called for that purpose.

13 Sec. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from  
14 the effectivity of this Act, the DENR and Climate Change Commission shall  
15 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of  
16 this Act.

17 Sec. 13. *Appropriations.* – The Key Implementing Agencies shall draw from  
18 their existing programs and budgets to implement their responsibilities under the  
19 Action Plan, and through the People’s Survival Fund, where appropriate, subject to  
20 additional funding in the annual national appropriations, including a special fund for  
21 LGUs, to meet the targets agreed in the Action Plan.

22 Sec. 14. *Separability Clause.* - Should any provision of this Act be declared  
23 invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other  
24 provisions of this act.

25 Sec. 15. *Amendatory and Repealing Clause.* - To expand the powers and  
26 functions of the Climate Change Commission, Section 9 of Republic Act 9729, insofar  
27 as it may be inconsistent with this Act, is hereby amended. All laws, decrees, orders,  
28 rules and regulations or other issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of  
29 this Act are likewise hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1           Sec. 16. *Effectivity*. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its  
2 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general  
3 circulation.

Approved,