



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3396



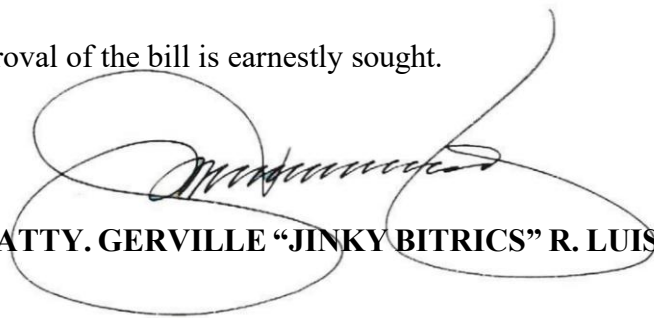
Introduced by
HON. ATTY. GERVILLE “JINKY BITRICS” R. LUISTRO

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONWIDE LAND CLASSIFICATION FRAMEWORK
TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE LAND USE AND PROTECTION OF VITAL
INDUSTRIES, INCLUDING AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, FORESTRY, ENERGY,
AND TOURISM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines, as a rapidly developing nation, faces the dual challenges of economic growth and environmental sustainability. Unregulated land conversion, urban sprawl, and climate change significantly threaten the country's agricultural lands, forests, ecosystems, and other vital industries. This legislation seeks to address these issues through a comprehensive land classification framework that ensures rational and sustainable land use while protecting critical industries like agriculture, fisheries, forestry, energy, and tourism.

In view of the foregoing, approval of the bill is earnestly sought.


HON. ATTY. GERVILLE “JINKY BITRICS” R. LUISTRO



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AND TOURISM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Sustainable Land Classification and Protection Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote sustainable development and equitable access to resources. To this end, the State shall:

- a. Protect and conserve agricultural lands, forests, and critical ecosystems.
- b. Ensure the rational and balanced use of lands based on their most suitable use.
- c. Provide mechanisms to prevent the unregulated conversion of lands vital to national interests, including food security, environmental protection, and the development of industries such as fisheries, forestry, energy, and tourism.

SECTION 3. Objectives. – This Act aims to:

- a. Establish a nationwide framework for land classification and land use planning;
- b. Ensure that land use and development align with national priorities, including food security, environmental sustainability, and economic growth;
- c. Protect agricultural lands, watersheds, ecologically significant areas, and vital industries such

- as fisheries, forestry, energy, and tourism from indiscriminate conversion and degradation; and
- d. Provide a transparent and participatory process for land classification and reclassification.

SECTION 4. Scope and Application. – This Act shall apply to all public and private lands in the Philippines, including but not limited to agricultural lands, forestlands, urban areas, protected areas, fisheries zones, tourism areas, and energy resource zones.

SECTION 5. Creation of the National Land Classification Council (NLCC). – There is hereby created a National Land Classification Council (NLCC) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The NLCC shall be composed of:

- The Secretary of the DENR, as Chairperson;
- The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA), as Vice Chairperson;
- The Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR);
- The Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI);
- The Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG);
- The Secretary of the Department of Energy (DOE);
- The Secretary of the Department of Tourism (DOT);
- Representatives from civil society, academia, and private sector stakeholders.

SECTION 6. Powers and Functions of the NLCC. – The NLCC shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. Formulate a comprehensive land classification framework in coordination with relevant government agencies and stakeholders.
- b. Oversee the delineation and classification of all lands nationwide.
- c. Establish guidelines and criteria for the classification, reclassification, and conversion of lands.
- d. Monitor compliance with the framework and impose penalties for violations.
- e. Provide technical assistance to Local Government Units (LGUs) in developing and implementing local land use plans.

SECTION 7. Land Classification Framework. –

- a. **Primary Classifications:** All lands in the Philippines shall be classified as follows:
 1. Agricultural Lands
 2. Forestlands
 3. Urban and Built-Up Areas
 4. Coastal and Marine Zones
 5. Protected Areas and Critical Habitats
 6. Industrial Zones
 7. Tourism Areas
 8. Energy Resource Zones
- b. Sub-classifications may be established under these primary categories to ensure detailed and

context-specific planning.

- c. The classification process shall be based on:
 - 1. Soil suitability and land capability assessments;
 - 2. Environmental and ecological assessments;
 - 3. Socioeconomic factors;
 - 4. National and local development priorities.

SECTION 8. Protection of Agricultural Lands and Other Vital Areas. –

- a. Prime agricultural lands, irrigated areas, lands devoted to food production, fisheries zones, critical forestlands, and energy resource zones shall be classified as "Protected Vital Zones" and shall not be subject to conversion except for projects of overriding public interest.
- b. Conversion of Protected Vital Zones shall require the approval of the NLCC and the President of the Philippines.

SECTION 9. Incentives for Sustainable Land Use. –

- a. The government shall provide tax incentives, grants, and technical assistance to individuals, businesses, and LGUs that comply with the land classification framework.
- b. Incentives shall prioritize sustainable agricultural practices, agroforestry, fisheries development, renewable energy projects, eco-tourism, and green infrastructure projects.

SECTION 10. Penal Provisions. – Any person or entity found guilty of unauthorized land conversion or violation of the provisions of this Act shall be liable for penalties, including fines of up to Five Million Pesos (Php5,000,000) and/or imprisonment of up to five (5) years. Public officials found complicit in unauthorized land conversion shall face administrative and criminal charges, including dismissal from service.

SECTION 11. Appropriations. – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DENR and other relevant agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 12. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the DENR, in consultation with the NLCC and other stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for this Act.

SECTION 13. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 14. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations

or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,