

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3919



Introduced by TUCP Partylist Representative
HON. RAYMOND DEMOCRITO C. MENDOZA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The bill seeks to adopt integrated coastal management (ICM) as a national strategy to ensure the sustainable development of our country's coastal and marine environment.

As an archipelagic state, the Philippines is endowed with vast coastlines, spanning over 30,000 kilometers, and gifted with rich coastal and marine resources since our country was ranked 11th in marine capture production worldwide in a 2020 report by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

However, the 2021 study of the Coastal Resources and Ecotourism Research, Development, and Extension Center (CRERDEC) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) discovered microplastics in at least 20 marine study sites in the Philippines. The highest concentration of which was found in the largest marine protected area in the country - the Tañon Strait Protected Seascape.

In response, we need to adopt ICM to address both environmental and socioeconomic issues in a comprehensive and integrated manner. ICM serves as an effective planning and management approach to sustainable coastal and marine development with demonstrated benefits in enhancing economic growth, ecosystem protection, promotion of social equity, and the quality of life of the people, such as by addressing concerns on pollution, fishing, shipping, and tourism, among many others.

This bill mandates that a National ICM Framework shall be developed by the DENR, in consultation with concerned agencies, sectors, and stakeholders, to guide local government units (LGUs) in formulating and implementing their local ICM programs.

The National ICM Framework shall include principles, strategies, and action plans identified after balancing national development priorities with local concerns, define national ICM targets, and develop a national ICM coordinating mechanism.

These ICM programs shall promote the best practices on coastal and marine use zonation, sustainable fisheries, integrated waste management, and integrated

management of port safety, health, security and environmental protection, among others.

This bill also provides for support mechanisms for the implementation of ICM programs such as ICM education and training initiatives, environmental and natural resource accounting and valuation, and coastal and marine environmental information management system.

For the welfare of over a million of our hard working fisher folks and workers in the coastal and marine industry and for the good of our environment, The passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. RAYMOND DEMOCRITO C. MENDOZA
TUCP Partylist Representative

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AN ACT
ADOPTING INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT AS A NATIONAL
STRATEGY FOR THE HOLISTIC AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF
COASTAL AND RELATED ECOSYSTEMS AND THE RESOURCES
THEREIN FROM RIDGE-TO-REEF, ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL
COASTAL GREENBELT ACTION PLAN, OTHER SUPPORTING
MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION, AND PROVIDING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Integrated Coastal Management Act.”

SEC. 2. *Policy Statement.* – It shall be the policy of the State to ensure the sustainable management of the country’s coastal and marine environment and resources by looking at the interconnectivity of ecosystems from the watersheds to the coastal and marine areas. Towards this end, it shall adopt Integrated Coastal Management as a framework in regulating different human activities, restoring or rehabilitating ecosystems, and ensuring a multi-stakeholder participation and ridge-to-reef approach to ecosystem management, with due consideration to ecological connectivity and their impact on social and ecological systems. The framework shall support the country’s achievement of sustainable development, promotion of blue economy, food security, just transition to sustainable livelihood, poverty alleviation and its resilience and risk reduction, from sea- level rise and other coastal stresses, while respecting the traditional resource rights of indigenous peoples and gender equality.

SEC. 3. *Scope and Coverage.* – Integrated Coastal Management shall be implemented in all local government units (LGUs) addressing the inter-linkages among ecosystems from ridge-to-reef, by all relevant government structures at the national and local levels in consultation and partnership with all stakeholders through participatory governance.

SEC. 4. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act:

Adaptation refers to the adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities;

Annual Investment Program (AIP) refers to the annual slice of the Local Development Investment Program (LDIP), which constitutes the total resource requirements for all programs, projects, and activities consisting of the annual capital expenditure and regular operating requirements of the LGU;

Beach forest refers to mixed association of creepers, shrubs, and trees above the high tide line along the coast which fall into various groups morphologically based on the following forms:

Herbaceous Beach – creepers with sand-binding abilities, *e.g.*, *Ipomoea pes-caprae*;

Beach Scrub – shrubs and low trees, *e.g.*, *Scaevola taccada*, *Dendrolobium umbellatum*;

Casuarina equisetifolia (*Agoho*) Forest – common pioneer on sandy beaches; and

Mixed Littoral Forest – plentiful vines, palms and trees, *e.g.*, *Barringtonia asiatica*, *Millettia pinnata*, and *Pandanus tectorius*;

Biological diversity or Biodiversity refers to the variability among living organisms from all sources including terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part. This includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems;

Climate Change refers to a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods;

Coastal area or zone refers to a band of dry land and adjacent ocean space (water and submerged land) in which terrestrial processes and uses directly affect oceanic processes and uses, and *vice versa*; its geographic extent may include areas within a landmark limit of one (1) kilometer from the shoreline at high tide to include mangrove swamps, brackish water ponds, nipa swamps, estuarine rivers, sandy beaches, and other areas within a seaward limit of 200 meters isobath to include coral reefs, algal flats, seagrass beds, and other soft-bottom areas;

Coastal greenbelts refer to at least 100-meter wide strip of natural or planted coastal vegetation extending from the seaward edge of mangroves (middle intertidal zone) towards land, or extending from the seaward edge of beach forest (high tide line) towards land, in cases where mangroves are absent. Its function is to absorb wave energy during storms thereby reducing wave damage, preventing coastal erosion, and protecting human lives and property;

Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) refers to a six-year multi-sectoral plan formulated at the city or municipal level embodying the vision, sectoral goals, objectives, development strategies, and policies within the terms of the

officials of the LGU, and the medium-term. It contains ecological profile, sectoral development plan, and implementation instruments;

Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) refers to the document formulated by the cities and municipalities, in consultation with its stakeholders, that defines or provides guidelines on the allocation, utilization, development, and management of all lands within a given territory or jurisdiction according to the inherent qualities of the land itself and supportive economic, demographic, socio-cultural, and environmental objectives as defined in Republic Act No. 11201, otherwise known as the “Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development Act”;

Disaster risk reduction refers to the concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyze and manage the causal factors of disasters, through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events;

Ecosystems services refer to the benefits people obtain from the ecosystems such as:

- provisioning which refers to the services that provide food, water, timber, and fiber;
- regulating which refers to the services that affect climate, floods, disease, wastes, and water quality;
- cultural which refers to the services that provide recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits; and
- supporting which refers to the essential services such as soil formation, photosynthesis, nutrient cycling, and carbon sequestration;

Holistic and sustainable management refers to the management of all components of the ecosystem and the services it provides in a way and at a rate that maintains and enhances its current state and resilience, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs of the aspirations of present and future generations. This approach involves all stakeholders in collaborative decision-making, including scientists, national and local government, private sector, local residents, and the public towards the protection, conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of the ecosystem and the resources therein;

Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) refers to a holistic and integrative management that incorporates the following components: (1) connectivity of various ecosystems – environment and resources; (2) various sectors and stakeholders; (3) institutional arrangements that are relevant; and (4) assessment of drivers of coastal ecosystem degradation, management planning and implementation, including research and education, to address coastal degradation and biodiversity losses, and to improve the well-being of communities in coastal and interconnected areas;

Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP) refers to the action plan formulated by LGUs to address climate change concerns. It focuses on both climate change adaptation and mitigation and describes how LGUs plan to respond to the impacts of climate change and mainstream them into mandated local plans, *i.e.*, land use plan, sectoral development plan, investment program, pursuant to Section 14 of Republic Act No. 9729, or the “Climate Change Act of 2009,” as amended;

Mangrove forest refers to the forested wetland growing along tidal mudflats and along shallow water coastal areas extending inland along rivers, streams, and their tributaries where the water is generally brackish and composed of low elevation species such as *Avicennia marina*, *A. alba*, and *Sonneratia alba*. The mid zone is dominated by *Rhizophora species*, *Sonneratia caseolaris*, *Xylocarpus granatum* and *Nypa fruticans* while the landward zone or areas with higher elevation are inhabited by *Avicennia rumphiana*, *A. officinalis*, and *Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*;

Mitigation, in the context of climate change, refers to human intervention to address anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases, including ozone-depleting substances and their substitutes;

Municipal waters refer not only to streams, lakes, inland bodies of water, and tidal waters within the municipality which are not included within the protected areas as defined under Republic Act No.11038, otherwise known as the “Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 2018”, public forest, timber lands, forest reserves, or fishery reserves, but also marine waters included between two (2) lines drawn perpendicular to the general coastline from points where the boundary lines of the municipality touch the sea at low tide and a third line parallel with the general coastline including offshore islands and fifteen (15) kilometers from such coastline. Where two (2) municipalities are so situated on opposite shores and when with less than thirty (30) kilometers of marine waters between them, the third line shall be equally distant from opposite shore of the respective municipalities;

Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan (PDPFP) refers to the plan document formulated at the provincial level that merges the traditionally separate provincial physical framework plan and provincial development plan to address the disconnect between spatial and sectoral factors and between medium and long-term concerns. It contains the long-term vision of the province, and identifies development goals, strategies, objectives or targets and corresponding programs, projects, and activities which serve as primary inputs to provincial investment programming and subsequent budgeting and plan implementation;

State of the Coasts (SoC) reporting system refers to an assessment tool for LGUs to be used in measuring the progress and benefits of ICM implementation. It allows the LGUs to document and measure the effectiveness and impacts of policy and management interventions in support of sustainable coastal development and evaluate progress towards local, national, and international targets for sustainable development;

Watershed refers to a land area drained by a stream or fixed body of water and its tributaries having a common outlet for surface run-off. It is a topographically delineated area of land from which rainwater can drain as surface run-off, *via* a specific stream or river system to a common outlet point. It encompasses ridge-to- reef areas and may include the uplands, lowlands, and coastal areas;

Wetlands refer to a wide variety of inland habitats such as marshes, peatlands, floodplains, rivers and lakes, and coastal areas such as saltmarshes, mangroves, intertidal mudflats; and seagrass beds; and also coral reefs and other marine areas no deeper than six (6) meters at low tide, as well as human-made wetlands such as dams, reservoirs, rice paddies, and wastewater treatment ponds and lagoons.

CHAPTER II INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

SEC. 5. *National Coordinating Committee on ICM.* – There is hereby established a National Coordinating Committee on ICM (NCC), to coordinate the review and implementation of the National ICM Framework.

The NCC shall be composed of the following members:

Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) who shall act as Chairperson;

Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) as Co-chairperson;

Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) as Vice Chairperson;

Vice Chairperson of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) as Vice Chairperson;

Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG);

Secretary of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA);

Secretary of the Department of Tourism (DOT);

Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH);

Secretary of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD);

Chairperson of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC);

Executive Director of the National Commission on Women (NCW);

Chairperson of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP);

Commandant of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG);

Director of the Philippine National Police Maritime Group (PNP- MG);

Representative from the academe who specializes in ICM;

Representative from non-government organizations dealing with coastal management or fisheries;

Representative from the private sector;

Representative from artisanal fisherfolk basic sector representative of the National Anti-Poverty Commission;

Representative from the National or Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Management Councils (FARMCs); and

Representative from any other organizations not mentioned above as the NCC may deem necessary.

The *ex-officio* members of the NCC may designate their respective permanent representatives to the NCC: *Provided* That, a permanent representative may designate a duly authorized representative whose rank shall in no case be lower than an undersecretary and whose acts shall be considered as that of the permanent representative: *Provided, further*, That the process for designation of a permanent representative shall be detailed in the implementing rules and regulations of this Act; *Provided, finally*, That the authorized representative shall have no voting right unless duly authorized by the permanent representative in writing.

The representatives from the academe, civil society, and other sectors shall possess relevant work experience and training in disciplines related to climate change, disaster risk reduction, natural resource management, or coastal management, and shall be appointed by the NCC from a list of nominees proposed by its member agencies. Each representative shall serve as a member of the NCC for a period of six (6) years, subject to renewal to be decided by the majority of the members of the NCC and shall perform the duties appurtenant thereto unless they resign or their representation is withdrawn by the sector that they represent. Appointment to any vacancy shall only be for the unexpired term of the predecessor.

A National Technical Working Group shall be created for the coordination of the national scientific and technical matters, and to support the NCC in the implementation of its powers and functions under Section 8 of this Act.

SEC. 6. Meetings of the National Coordinating Committee. – The NCC shall meet once every three (3) months, or as often as may be deemed necessary.

SEC. 7. Secretariat. – The DENR shall provide a secretariat to the NCC to be manned by the organic personnel of the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) and may be augmented by the employees from member-agencies of the NCC, through detail or secondment.

The Secretary of the DENR may also provide additional *plantilla* positions subject to the evaluation and approval of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and in compliance with the civil service laws, rules, and regulations.

SEC. 8. Powers and Functions of the National Coordinating Committee on ICM. – The NCC shall exercise and perform the following powers and functions:

Formulate, adopt, institutionalize, and amend, if necessary, the National ICM Framework, in consultation with other concerned agencies, LGUs, sectors, and stakeholders, within twelve (12) months from the effectivity of this Act;

Identify and delineate, after prior consultation with the designated LGUs representatives, the coastal, marine, and other resources shared by two or more LGUs, recommend and provide guidance on mainstreaming ICM into existing local plans and programs through their respective regional or provincial development councils, and assist the relevant authorities in resolving conflicts arising from ICM between or among LGUs;

Undertake baseline and periodic assessment and reporting of the state of coastal and marine environment and natural resources and the level of socioeconomic development of the adjacent communities, governance or management interventions, and relevant infrastructures in place, among others;

Identify capacity building programs and activities, in coordination with the DENR and the DILG, for national government, LGUs, and stakeholders, and pursue information, education, and communication (IEC) campaigns on ICM, and develop guidelines for mainstreaming the ICM into the development planning and investment programming processes of local governments;

Develop guidelines for provinces sharing the same resources for the integrated management, protection, conservation, and restoration of the shared coastal and marine ecosystems, and reduce or eliminate the impacts of activities originating from upstream and downstream sources including government contracts and permits issued by the government such as foreshore lease agreements, forest management agreements, special land use permits, and mining permits;

Ensure documentation, promotion, and dissemination of learnings and best practices on ICM implementation;

Facilitate the establishment of integrated data and monitoring systems using innovative technologies and develop a national ICM dashboard as the repository of data on ICM;

Pursue the mobilization of sustainable financing mechanisms for ICM from both public and private sectors funding institutions, among others;

Ensure adaptive management to consider new threats and emerging issues arising from changes in the socioeconomic, technological, and ecological landscape;

Recommend the issuance or passage of policies or legislation to the appropriate agency or the legislature;

Ensure that the LGUs shall allocate adequate funds for the development and implementation of ICM programs and plans; and

Create a National Technical Working Group in support of the NCC for the implementation of its powers and functions.

All concerned national government agencies with mandates related to integrated coastal management shall provide support and assistance to the NCC and concerned stakeholders to ensure the timely and efficient implementation of the national ICM framework and its integration in existing plans.

SEC. 9. *Elements of the National ICM Framework.* – The implementation of ICM-responsive plans shall include the following elements in line with the ICM principles:

Inter-agency, inter-LGU alliances, multi-sectoral mechanism to coordinate the efforts of different agencies, sectors, and administrative levels;

Peoples' participation in the formulation and implementation of the National ICM Framework while upholding and respecting their right to a balanced and healthful ecology, gender equality, especially those from the marginalized communities, indigenous peoples, and the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and other hazards;

Coastal and marine strategies including the designation, rehabilitation and reforestation, or afforestation of priority coastal greenbelts and action plans that provide a long-term vision and strategy for sustainable development and hazard prevention of the coastal and marine areas; and a fixed-term program of actions specifying responsible agencies or institutions for addressing priority issues and concerns including improving existing endeavors to protect marine protected areas and other protected areas on or near coastal and marine zones, as defined under Republic Act No. 11038;

Public awareness programs to increase the level of understanding and appreciation of the value and benefits derived from healthy and resilient coastal and marine resources and ecosystems of the area, and to promote a shared responsibility among stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the National ICM Framework;

Mainstreaming the National ICM Framework into the national and local government planning and socio-economic development programs; and allocation of adequate financial and human resources for its implementation;

Capacity building programs and development of coastal and marine spatial planning tools, in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology, to enhance required human resource skills, scientific input to policy and planning processes, knowledge sharing; and enforcement and monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with adopted rules, regulations, and guidelines;

Integrated environmental and socio-economic impact monitoring for the purpose of measuring, evaluating, and reporting the status, progress, and impacts of management programs against established sustainable development indicators and basis for decision-making, public awareness, and performance evaluation;

Investment opportunities and sustainable financing mechanisms for environmental protection and improvement; resource conservation, and ecosystem-based adaptation and other nature-based solutions;

Disaster risk reduction and management as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation programs, and vulnerability and risk assessment;

Knowledge management, research, and development programs in such areas as carrying capacity, limits to acceptable change, and enhancement of the analytical and predictive value of scenarios for protecting a sustainable future;

Development of a national coastal greenbelt action plan for the protection of coastal biodiversity and habitats from the effects of climate change and the impacts of natural events such as typhoons, tsunamis, among others;

Conduct of community-based monitoring and evaluation framework and development of SoC reporting system to track the progress of implementation that allows results-based management, learning and evidence-based decision-making;

Promotion of the blue economy for the improvement of livelihood and to stimulate economic growth while conserving and sustainably using the ocean and marine resources;

Designation and assessment of priority area to be declared as coastal greenbelts for each coastal province, city, and municipality, to be planted with mangroves and beach forests, based on vulnerability to storm surges, waves, tsunami, and the like;

Operational plan for the reversion of all abandoned fishponds to mangroves through natural regeneration or replanting with locally appropriate species; and

Existing legal frameworks related to coastal resource management and instruments that will complement the implementation of ICM Framework.

The National ICM Framework shall provide direction, support, and guidance to the LGUs and shall adhere to the principles of sustainable development and ecosystem-based management that focuses on the interconnectivity of ecosystems and maintaining their health and resiliency to deliver the goods and services; and policy and functional integration, coordination, and adaptive management that guide the ICM practice. The NCC shall finalize the National ICM Framework within twelve (12) months from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Coordination of ICM Programs, Plans, and Activities at the Regional Level.* – The ICM shall be mainstreamed into the Regional Development Plans and Regional Development Investment Programs, and other relevant plans, programs, and projects.

SEC. 11. *Coordination of ICM Programs, Plans, and Activities at the Provincial Level.* – The Provincial Development Council (PDC) established under Section 107 (c) of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the “Local Government Code of 1991”, shall be responsible for the formulation of the ICM-responsive mandated local plans at the provincial level, including the coordination necessary for implementation except for provinces which have already established an environmental management office or the like which can formulate such plans.

In addition to its members, the following offices and sectors shall be consulted for the purpose of facilitating the mainstreaming of ICM planning in the formulation of the provincial development and physical framework plan, among other related documents in line with the ICM principles:

Chairperson of the Environment Committee of the *Sanggunian Panlalawigan*;

Provincial Fisheries Office or Office of the Provincial Agriculturist or the Provincial Government Environment and Natural Resources Office;

Provincial Tourism Office;

DENR Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer;

In the Province of Palawan, a representative from Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), pursuant to Republic Act No. 7611, otherwise known as the “Strategic Environmental Palawan (SEP) for Palawan Act”;

Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), especially from the concerned district command of the respective provinces in the exercise of PCG’s functions of maritime safety, marine environmental protection, and maritime security including the enforcement of international conventions and treaties;

Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA);

Philippine National Police Maritime Group (PNP- MG);

Board Member of Marine Protected Area Networks, where applicable;

Regional Office of DHSUD;

Local people's organization or indigenous community; and

Other stakeholders concerned.

In cases where two or more provinces share a common resource such as bays, gulfs, river basins, lakes, watersheds, marine protected areas, marine biodiversity corridors, key biodiversity areas and upland ecosystems, the coordination support and assistance for the formulation, establishment, and implementation of the Inter-Provincial ICM Plan shall be provided by the concerned Regional Development Council established under Executive Order No. 325, series of 1996.

However, this provision shall not apply to provinces or common resources shared by several LGUs which have an existing ICM coordinating mechanism at the time of the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 12. *Mainstreaming of ICM into Mandated Local Plans through Watershed-level Analysis and Planning.* – Whenever feasible, the analysis and planning shall be undertaken at the watershed or sub-watershed level, especially for LGUs that share common resources and climate and disaster risks that cut across political boundaries.

The ICM strategies and guidelines shall be spelled out in the national and sub-national level plans through the National Physical Framework Plan (NPFP), Regional Physical Framework Plan (RPFP), and Regional Development Plan (RDP). With reference to the ICM Framework and the national and regional plans, the LGUs shall mainstream the ICM into their mandated local plans such as CLUP and CDP in the case of cities and municipalities, and the PDPFP for provinces by translating the concepts, strategies, and principles outlined in the aforementioned higher-level framework and plans into specific programs, projects, and activities.

To strengthen the alignment in terms of strategic direction and harmonization of programs, projects, and activities related to ICM, the LGUs shall provide a venue for relevant national or regional line agencies to participate in their respective Local Development Council's Sectoral Committees. They shall, likewise, be tapped to assist in data gathering and validation, situational analysis, consultation meetings, and identification of goals, objectives, targets, and programs, projects and activities under the CLUP, CDP, and PDPFP.

For monitoring purposes, LGUs shall submit an annual report on the implementation of their ICM-related programs, projects, and activities to BMB of the DENR.

SEC. 13. *Data Sharing and Technical Assistance.* – To address the LGUs' need for data access and technical assistance in the preparation of their ICM-responsive plans, the following strategies shall be pursued by concerned national government agencies and LGUs:

Data sharing agreement between the national government agencies and LGUs;

Updating of base maps;

Creation of National Geospatial Database in relation to Sections 29 (d) and 30 of this Act; and

Joint technical assistance of DHSUD, DENR, and DILG during the preparation of CLUP, CDP, and PDPFP.

SEC. 14. *Additional Functions of the Provincial Development Council.* – In addition to the functions provided in Section 109 of Republic Act No. 7160, without prejudice to the agreements crafted for ICM plans, the PDC shall:

Develop policies and guidelines for the ICM protection, conservation, and restoration of the province's coastal and marine ecosystems;

Coordinate the efforts of provinces sharing a resource to address issues that cut across their political boundaries;

Coordinate the establishment and consolidation of baseline data on ICM especially in relation to biodiversity;

Resolve conflicts arising from ICM between or among municipalities or cities, or between an LGU and a body managing a specially administered area within the province: *Provided, That* boundary disputes between and among the LGUs shall be settled in accordance with Sections 118 and 119 of Republic Act No. 7160 and its implementing rules and regulations;

Coordinate the efforts of provinces, cities, and municipalities with shared coastal ecosystems and resources, to address issues that transcend their political boundaries;

Consult cities and municipalities on the development of the provincial ICM plan; and

Provide technical advisory and assistance to city and municipal LGUs in the formulation of ICM programs, plans, and activities that are aligned to the PDPFP, provincial ICM plan and strategy; CLUP, and CDP.

However, these functions may be performed by an environmental management office or the like for provinces which have already established such an office.

SEC. 15. Coordination of ICM Programs, Plans, and Activities at the City and Municipal Levels. – The City or Municipal Development Council (CDC or MDC) established pursuant to Section 107 (b) of Republic Act No. 7160 shall be responsible for the mainstreaming and integration of national ICM elements and strategies into their respective development plans, land use plans, and other relevant plans, whether in the level of a highly urbanized city (HUC), independent component city (ICC), component city, or municipality, including the implementation and coordination necessary therefor which shall be reviewed by the NCC. In addition to its members, the following offices and sectors shall be consulted or serve as resource persons thereto for the purpose of coordinating the formulation and implementation of the ICM-responsive local development plans:

Chairperson of the Environment Committee of the *Sangguniang Panglungsod* or *Bayan*;

City or Municipal Planning and Development Office or Office of the City or Municipal Planning and Development;

City or Municipal Fisheries Office or Office of the City or Municipal Agriculturist;

City or Municipal Tourism Office;

DENR Community Environment and Natural Resources;

Local people's organization or indigenous community;

Local academic institution which specializes in ICM; and

Other stakeholders concerned.

The Provincial Planning and Development Coordination Office shall perform oversight functions to ensure the responsiveness of existing plans and policies, and shall serve as the Secretariat to the local development councils, pursuant to planning and development coordination functions provided under Sections 113 and 476 of Republic Act No. 7160.

A position for a City ICM Officer or a Municipal ICM Officer may be created or designated for the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the ICM-responsive mandated local plans such as LCCAPs, CLUP, and CDP. Each LGU may allocate fund for the creation of a *plantilla* position for the ICM officer in consultation with the DBM.

However, this provision shall not apply to cities or municipalities which have an existing ICM coordinating mechanism at the time of the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 16. ICM Office. – The Provincial Planning and Development Coordination Office shall serve as the ICM Office and shall act as the Secretariat to the PDC which shall serve as the overall coordinating mechanism for ICM programs, plans

and activities, and monitor the implementation of the provincial ICM-responsive mandated local plans in consonance with the national ICM framework.

SEC. 17. *Additional Functions of the City or Municipal Development Council.* – In addition to the functions provided in Section 109 of Republic Act No. 7160, the CDC or MDC shall:

Ensure that the formulation of LCCAPs, CLUPs, CDPs, and AIPs are guided by the ICM principles and incorporate the elements of ICM planning and shall be reviewed and approved by the appropriate government agencies or committees;

Ensure that the rights of the indigenous cultural communities/indigenous peoples shall be recognized and protected pursuant to Section 7 of Republic Act No. 8371 or the “Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997”;

Coordinate the efforts and the implementation of ICM-responsive mandated local plans among relevant barangays to address issues that transcend their boundaries;

Coordinate the establishment and consolidation of baseline data on ICM especially in relation to biodiversity and ecosystems goods and services; and

Resolve conflicts arising from ICM between or among barangays or between a barangay and a specially managed or administered area within the city or municipality.

SEC. 18. *Representation of Other Agencies and Stakeholders.* – LGUs shall include the representation in their respective development councils of other national agencies and stakeholder groups that may be affected by the implementation of ICM. The modalities and mechanisms for this representation shall be determined by the government offices mentioned in Sections 11 and 15 of this Act.

SEC. 19. *Assistance from LGUs and National Agencies.* – The local development councils may call upon any local official or any official of national agencies or offices within the LGU to assist in the formulation of ICM-responsive mandated local plans.

In providing technical assistance and other forms of support related to coastal management and the implementation of mandated local plans, national government agencies shall give priority to sixth- up to third-class municipalities and other LGUs with approved or existing ICM-responsive mandated local plans in accordance with their economic environmental condition or requirement.

SEC. 20. *Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting of ICM Framework.* –The NCC shall coordinate the preparation, consolidation, and submission of an initial SoC Report one (1) year after the effectivity of this Act, based on a monitoring and evaluation mechanism that shall be developed to track the progress of the country’s ICM implementation. Every five (5) years thereafter, the NCC shall coordinate the

preparation, consolidation, and submission of the SoC Report to the President. This report shall contain the status of implementation of the ICM-responsive mandated local plans such as LCCAPs, CLUPs, and CDPs, in line with the National ICM Framework. The LGU shall submit their respective progress reports on the implementation of their respective ICM-responsive mandated local plans to the NCC through the DENR.

The NCC shall regularly update their existing monitoring and assessment mechanisms relevant to ICM to ensure compliance of the LGU.

National government agencies which are members of the NCC shall update their existing monitoring and assessment mechanisms relevant to ICM to ensure compliance of the LGUs.

SEC. 21. *ICM Best Practices.* – The National ICM Framework and local ICM-responsive plans shall promote the application of best learnings which include the following:

Coastal and marine use classification, marine spatial planning, and harmonization of comprehensive land and water use plan as management tools;

Sustainable fisheries and conservation of living resources;

Protection and rehabilitation of coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass, estuaries, and other habitats, particularly through establishment of marine protected areas, nature reserves, and sanctuaries;

Development of management approaches for the conservation of upland watershed, catchment areas, and river basins;

Integrated waste management, including sewage and solid, hazardous, toxic, and other forms of pollution by major sources that affect coastal areas;

Natural and man-made hazards management;

Water demand use and supply management;

Blue economy accounting for payment for ecosystem services and equitable allocation of costs and benefits;

Integrated and bay wide law enforcement;

Disaster risk reduction and management in coastal and marine areas;

Climate change adaptation and mitigation in coastal and marine areas;

Community-led natural resource management;

Recognition of indigenous peoples' concerns;

Integrated management of port safety, health, security and environment protection;

Involvement of the private sector or business sector as a partner in ICM;

Knowledge management and exchange;

Mobilization of sustainable financing mechanisms;

Adoption of nature-based solutions to consider threats and emerging issues arising from changes in socioeconomic, technological, and ecological landscape; and

Management of informal settlements situated in hazard prone areas.

SEC. 22. *Incentives.* – The NCC shall develop a national incentive and recognition system to encourage and motivate the LGU to diligently and efficiently implement; and monitor the implementation of their ICM-responsive mandated local plans.

In addition to the criteria provided in Section 7 of Republic Act No. 11292, otherwise known as “The Seal of Good Local Governance Act of 2019”, the LGU may be granted the Seal of Good Local Governance if it exemplarily implemented and sustained its ICM-responsive mandated local plans.

The details of the recognition and reward system shall be provided in the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

Sec. 23. *Scientific Advisory Group.* –The NCC shall establish a National Scientific Advisory Group to ensure that ICM interventions have sound scientific basis.

The Scientific Advisory Group shall provide guidance to the LGUs in relation to technical documents, new scientific developments and policies in climate science and coastal management; and in achieving their environmental goals.

It shall be composed of the following:

Representative from the academe who specializes in ICM or any related discipline;

Representative from the DOST;

Representative from the DENR;

Representative from the BFAR;

Representative from the Philippine Association of Marine Science (PAMS) or other professional society related to natural resource management and coastal management; and

Representative from the PCG's functional command Marine Environmental Protection Command Service (MEPCOM).

The Scientific Advisory Group shall also convene to serve as the experts in discussing and advising on the technical and science-based issues related to the National Coastal Greenbelt Action Plan in Chapter III of this Act. It may also coordinate with existing science-based expert groups, such as the National Panel on Technical Experts, on ICM-related policies and development.

SEC. 24. *Role of National Government Agencies.* – All concerned national agencies shall support the implementation of the National ICM Framework and ICM-responsive mandated local plans, and promote ICM best learnings that fall within their respective mandates. They shall identify, prepare, and provide policy guidance and technical assistance to the DENR, the development councils, and the LGUs in the implementation of the National ICM Framework and ICM-responsive mandated local plans, and in the enforcement of relevant coastal and marine policies and regulations; and regional and international commitments or treaties. These agencies shall directly consult with concerned LGUs in the development and implementation of the National ICM Framework and ICM-responsive mandated local plans affecting coastal and marine areas in their respective localities.

All government contracts entered into and permits issued by the government such as foreshore lease agreements, forest management agreements, special land use permits, and mining permits shall be entered into or issued by the government and its instrumentalities in conformity with the National ICM Framework and ICM-responsive mandated local plans.

Sec. 25. *Specially Managed or Administered Areas.* – Specially managed or administered areas such as river basins, Water Quality Management Areas (WQMAs) established under Republic Act No. 9275, otherwise known as the “Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004”, special economic and freeport zones, and protected areas, whether established under Republic Act No. 11038 or by virtue of an ordinance, shall prepare their management plans in consonance with the ICM National Framework and relevant ICM-responsive mandated local plans. Their management plans shall incorporate ICM principles and best practices taking into account the interlinkages between and among associated watersheds and wetlands.

Sec. 26. *Review of Existing ICM or Related Programs and Plans.* – Provinces, cities, municipalities, specially managed or administered areas such as special economic zones or freeport zones, bays, lakes, or marine protected areas (MPAs) shall review, revise, reconcile, and harmonize their existing ICM or related programs or plans based on the National ICM Framework within three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act. Actual use shall be preferred over future or reserve use: *Provided*, That all existing locational clearances and zoning permits issued by the LGUs or other government agencies prior to the effectivity of this Act shall remain valid pending review of existing programs and plans and zoning ordinances (ZOs),

and they shall not be invalidated because of the new and approved programs and plans and ZOs which determined proper location in a different coastal use zoning area: *Provided, further*, That appropriate measures shall be adopted by the LGU concerned, the landowner, and the developer in the event that any existing structure and facility are found to be properly covered by a different coastal use zoning category in the areas where they are currently located: *Provided, finally*, That existing structures and facilities within extremely hazardous and high risk danger zones which cannot be addressed by any mitigating or protective measures shall be required to relocate.

Sec. 27. Role of Local Government Units. – All LGUs shall act as the frontline agencies in the formulation, planning, implementation, and monitoring of ICM programs in their respective municipal waters. The ICM-responsive mandated local plans shall be supportive of and compliant with the National ICM Framework and shall be prepared in consultation with the stakeholders. The LGUs shall regularly update their ICM-responsive mandated local plans such as LCCAPs, CLUPs, and CDPs to reflect emerging needs, and changing, socio-economic, technological, and environmental conditions. The LGUs shall also ensure that their annual work and investment plans are aligned based on their ICM-responsive LCCAPs, CLUPs, and CDPs. The LGUs shall furnish the NCC their respective ICM-responsive mandated local plans and all subsequent amendments, modifications, and revisions thereto. LGUs shall mobilize and allocate the necessary personnel, resources, and logistics to effectively implement their respective ICM-responsive mandated local plans. Barangays shall be directly involved with municipal and city governments in prioritizing coastal and marine issues and identifying and implementing solutions. Municipal and city governments with coastal areas or zones shall consider ICM as one of their priority programs.

Provincial governments shall provide technical assistance, enforcement, and information management in support of Municipal and City ICM-responsive mandated local plans. Inter-LGU collaboration shall be encouraged in the conduct of activities related to protecting the country's coastal and marine resources.

Sec. 28. Roles of Civil Society and the Private Sector. – In the development and implementation of the ICM program, the non-government organizations, civic organizations, people's organizations, the academe, the private sector, and other concerned stakeholder groups shall be engaged in activities such as planning, community organizing, research, technology transfer, information sharing, investment, training programs, and monitoring; and evaluation, response, and feedback systems.

Sec. 29. Supporting Activities. – The following activities shall be undertaken in support of the implementation of ICM programs:

ICM Education – The Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) shall integrate the concept and basic principles of ICM into the primary, secondary, and tertiary education curricula, as well as in the textbooks, primers and other educational materials. The DOST shall, likewise, include integrated coastal management, tropical marine ecosystem management, and other related studies in their scholarship programs for graduate studies;

ICM Training Program for LGUs – The DENR and the DILG, through the Local Government Academy, shall develop and provide ICM training programs for LGUs. For this purpose, LGUs may allocate funds for scholarships on tertiary and graduate courses relating to ICM or secure funds for such scholarships from sources other than the LGU's funds;

Environmental and Natural Resource Accounting and Valuation for ICM Planning – The NEDA and the National Statistics Coordination Board (NSCB) shall incorporate coastal and marine resource accounting as well as estimates of their carrying capacity in the national and regional accounts;

Coastal and Marine Environmental Information Management System and National Geospatial Database – The DENR shall oversee the establishment and maintenance of a coastal and marine environmental information management system and network, in collaboration with other concerned national government agencies, institutions, LGUs, civil society organizations and other academic institutions. The DENR shall promote the documentation and information dissemination of good practices as well as initiate replication and scaling up of ICM programs in the country. The concerned agencies, however, shall review the coastal and marine data prior to their public dissemination.

Sec. 30. *Contribution of the National ICM Framework to the Establishment of the National Environment and Natural Resources Geospatial Database and Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) System.* – The National ICM framework shall contribute to the creation of the National Geospatial Database on Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) that will serve as a platform for the planning and implementation of integrated strategies for inter-agency and multi-sectoral collaboration. In particular, a coastal and marine spatial planning tool shall be developed which can bring together multiple users of the ocean, including energy, industry, government, conservation, and recreation sectors, to make informed and coordinated decisions about how to use marine resources.

It shall, likewise, contribute to the establishment of the NCA System, that includes (1) valuation of coastal and marine resources and the ecosystem services that they provide; and (2) costs resulting from unsustainable economic activities, over-exploitation of natural resources, loss of habitats and biodiversity, and environmental degradation have to be analyzed since these are not explicitly measured in the national income accounts.

CHAPTER III NATIONAL COASTAL GREENBELT ACTION PLAN

Sec. 31. *National Coastal Greenbelt Action Plan.* – The NCC shall identify and convene all national 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 Action Plan (NCGAP).

The NCGAP shall, at the minimum, contain the following:

Spatial representation, or if feasible, quick or rapid national inventory of the status of coastlines and offshores, including the status of mangroves, beach forests, settlements, structures and fishponds within 100 meters therein;

The action plan shall indicate that the assessment of priority areas shall be completed within twelve (12) months from the adoption of the NCGAP;

Designation of priority areas for coastal greenbelts that are already included either as a protected area under Republic Act No. 11038 or as a fish refuge or sanctuary under Republic Act No. 8550, otherwise known as "The Philippine Fisheries Code of the Philippines", as amended by Republic Act No. 10654, or as a local marine protected area as may be declared by municipalities and cities through ordinances. The designation of a priority area shall be completed within six (6) months from the completion of the applicable biophysical, socioeconomic, and geological assessment contemplated under Section 32 of this Act. Designation shall also be done through a proposal to the appropriate agency, municipality or city as may be deemed necessary. In the event an area is designated as a priority area for coastal greenbelts, no structure shall be allowed therein unless it is approved by the DENR or DA through the BFAR: *Provided*, That with respect to the Province of Palawan, the necessary clearance from the PCSD shall also be required pursuant to Republic Act No. 7611, otherwise known as "Strategic Environmental Plan (SEP) for Palawan Act";

Operational plan for the rehabilitation, reforestation, or afforestation of designated priority coastal greenbelts with ecologically appropriate mangrove and beach forest species, not less than 100 meters in width. Existing forests or plantations greater than the minimum width shall not be reduced. The program for rehabilitation, reforestation or afforestation shall be community-based, long-term, and implemented through the municipality or city government. The operational plan shall indicate that the program for rehabilitation, reforestation, and afforestation must cover a minimum target area of twenty percent (20%) of the designated priority areas in the first five (5) years for maximum protection of the most vulnerable communities in the city or municipality. The remaining priority areas must be completed within ten (10) years from the designation of the priority area;

All fishponds that are declared by the DENR and DA-BFAR, through a joint assessment, as abandoned, undeveloped or underutilized (AUU) shall be turned over to the DENR within one (1) year after its declaration. The DENR will then revert the AUU fishponds to their original mangrove state through natural or artificial reforestation in accordance with Section 49 of Republic Act No. 8550 as amended by Republic Act No. 10654. All AUU fishponds turned over to the DENR shall be declared as part of the

coastal greenbelt. The minimum target for the first year of implementation of the NCGAP will include all AUU fishpond areas turned over to the DENR for reversion to their original mangrove state;

Operational Plan for the removal of illegal structures such as breakwaters, permanent residential or commercial structures, and the like, in the identified priority coastal greenbelts. The NCGAP shall indicate that the declaration of and notice to persons responsible for the removal of illegal structures shall be completed within twelve (12) months upon issuance of Notice to Vacate. The removal of illegal structures and the start of rehabilitation, reforestation or afforestation of these areas shall form part of the minimum target for the first year of implementation of the NCGAP; and

Monitoring and evaluation plan, with quantitative and qualitative targets consistent with (d), (e), and (f) above, appropriate indicators and reasonable means of verification. The plan shall become an integrated part of the NCGAP-responsive LCCAP.

The NCGAP and all of its relevant components shall be incorporated into the mandated local plans of the LGUs, such as, but not limited to, CLUP and CDP.

Sec. 32. *Designated Areas for Coastal Greenbelt.* – Areas designated for coastal greenbelt shall cover natural, rural, and urban areas with mangrove or mangrove areas, AUU fishponds turned over to the DENR, site specific stretches of vegetation in areas requiring the reversion to mangroves through natural regeneration or replanting with locally appropriate species and beach forests, subject to prior vested right.

All applicable biophysical, socioeconomic, and geological assessments shall be conducted prior to the designation of coastal greenbelts. Upon determination by the NCC of a particular area as a designated area for coastal greenbelt under Section 31 (c) of this Act, CLUPs and zoning ordinances shall be updated accordingly.

AUU fishponds turned over to the DENR shall be prioritized in the designation of coastal greenbelts and its corresponding reversion to category of public lands as mangrove reforestation sites shall be completed within the year of identification as such following the guidelines approved by the NCC.

Sec. 33. *Implementation of the NCGAP.* – In addition to the functions of the NCC in Section 8 of this Act, the NCC shall take the lead in implementing the component plans and programs of the NCGAP.

The DHSUD, through its attached agencies, shall provide appropriation for the relocation of the families or individuals who will be affected by the designated areas subject to the availability of funds.

Other agencies that participated in the preparation of the NCGAP-responsive LCCAP shall implement their commitments thereto. The actions required of the NCC are immediately executable based on the agreed NCGAP-responsive LCCAP, and on

NCC members existing mandates, programs or budgets that are aligned with the action plan, without need for the formulation of the implementing guidelines, rules and regulations for this Act.

All existing laws, rules, and regulations providing protection to coastlines, foreshores, and priority areas shall remain in full force and effect, and shall supplement the provisions of this Act unless otherwise terminated, modified or amended.

Sec. 34. *Local Coastal Greenbelt Action Plan.* – The CDC or MDC established pursuant to Section 107 (b) of Republic Act No. 7160 shall ensure that the coastal greenbelt elements and strategies are incorporated into the mainstreaming process of ICM within their respective development plans, land use plans, and other relevant plans, whether at the highly urbanized city (HUC), independent component city (ICC), component city, or municipal levels, including the implementation and coordination necessary therefor which shall be reviewed by NCC. A detailed step-by-step process of mainstreaming the coastal greenbelt into the relevant local plan of the LGU shall be provided for in the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

CHAPTER IV FINAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 35. *Prohibited Acts.* – The following shall constitute prohibited acts punishable under this Act, without prejudice to accrued liability for acts and omissions punishable under existing environmental laws:

Any person who unjustly obstructs the LGU, DENR, or DA through BFAR and PCSD in the Province of Palawan in the removal of illegal structures in the process of reversion of AUU fishponds, shall be liable to the agency for an administrative fine of Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱50,000.00) per day that the agency is prevented from performing its function.

No structures shall be built within the identified coastal greenbelts without a permit from DENR, or DA through the BFAR, or PCSD in the Province of Palawan, consistent with their mandates. Any person who violates this prohibition shall, be liable to the agency for an administrative fine of Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱50,000.00) per day from the time the structure was built until its removal.

A crime or offense committed within designated coastal greenbelt areas shall subject the offender to a fine of not less than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱100,000.00) and not more than Five Million Pesos (₱5,000,000.00), depending on the gravity of the offense.

Any violation of the provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations duly promulgated and published in accordance with Section 39 of this Act, shall be subject to an administrative fine of Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱50,000.00) upon any person or entity found guilty thereof.

Proceeds from the administrative fines imposed under this Section shall be remitted to the Bureau of the Treasury.

SEC. 36. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of the Act shall be charged against the current year appropriations of the departments or agencies concerned. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continuing implementation of this Act shall be sourced from and included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

The LGUs concerned may provide the necessary funds for the purpose, in their respective annual budgets.

SEC. 37. *Other Funding Options.* – The NCC, the local development councils, the LGUs, and the national government agencies may source local and international grants, bequests, donations, and other sustainable financing mechanisms in support of ICM implementation. LGUs to be prioritized in the allocation of these funds shall include sixth- up to third-class municipalities and LGUs with existing ICM and/or related policies.

The Land Bank of the Philippines, the Development Bank of the Philippines, the People's Credit and Finance Corporation, and other relevant government financial institutions shall formulate and identify loan and financing mechanisms that shall be made available to support local ICM-responsive programs, including alternative livelihood projects for small-scale fisherfolks and cooperatives.

SEC. 38. *Tax exemption.* – All grants, bequests, endowments, donations, and contributions made to the NCC, the local development councils, the LGUs, the DA, the DENR, and the PCSD to be used actually, directly, and exclusively for the implementation of the ICM shall be exempt from donor's tax and the same shall be considered as allowable deductions from gross income for purposes of computing the taxable income of the donor in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

SEC. 39. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DA, DENR, CCC, DHSUD, and DILG, in consultation with concerned agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within one hundred eighty (180) days from its effectivity: *Provided*, That failure to issue the implementing rules and regulations will not prevent the implementation of this Act upon effectivity.

SEC. 40. *Annual Report.* – The NCC shall submit an annual report to Congress of the Philippines and the Office of the President on its compliance with its functions under this Act, the implementation of the ICM Framework, and the SoC Report on or before March 30 of every year following the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 41. *Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.* – There is hereby created a Joint Congressional Oversight Committee (JCOC) to monitor the implementation of this Act and to review the implementing rules and regulations promulgated by the DA, DENR, DHSUD, and CCC for a period not exceeding five (5) years from the effectivity of this Act. The Committee shall be composed of five

(5) Senators and five (5) Representatives to be appointed by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively. The Oversight Committee shall be co-chaired by the Chairpersons of the Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change and the House of Representatives Committee on Climate Change.

The secretariat of the JCOC shall be drawn from existing personnel of the Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, and House of Representatives Committee on Climate Change.

SEC. 42. *Separability Clause.* – If any of the sections or provisions of this Act is held invalid, all other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid.

SEC. 43. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, decrees, orders, resolutions, instructions, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 44. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,