

TWENTIETH CONGRESS )  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 4791

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Introduced by Representative **FRANZ FERNANDEZ LEGAZPI**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Philippines is the world's second largest archipelagic state. Our maritime domain totals to 2.2 million square kilometers, composing 88% of the national territory. It is estimated that 60% percent of Filipinos live in coastal communities, in 315 municipalities and 25 cities throughout the country. Likewise, our country is very rich in marine and coastal resources. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) 2020 State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture report, the Philippines produced 1.89 million tons of marine capture fisheries in 2018, 11th highest in the world.<sup>1</sup> Further, the National States of Ocean and Coasts (NSOC) report provides that ocean-based industries generated \$11.9 billion in 2016 or 6.96% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), employing 2.2 million workers or 5.3% of the country's total employment.<sup>2</sup>

However and despite the abundance of our marine resources, local fisheries production has continuously declined since 2018, with the Philippine Statistics Authority reporting a -14.2% decline for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2023.<sup>3</sup> Human activities such as illegal and unregulated fishing, coastal development and pollution have affected the production of marine species and ecosystem. Thus, it is imperative that we establish a unified and integrated approach on managing marine and coastal activities. We need to protect our marine resources to prevent further decline of one of our country's major source of food and livelihood.

The Blue Economy Act will provide the policy framework for ocean-based and ocean-related economic activities within the Philippine maritime zones, including fisheries, aquaculture, mariculture and aquasilviculture and support industries, marine and coastal tourism, shipping, logistics and maritime transport, shipbuilding and ship repair, production of renewable energy from marine sources, installation of submarine cables and pipelines, marine biotechnology and bioprospecting, desalination, underwater cultural heritage and maritime archaeology, and commercial research and development activities.

The protection of marine and ocean resources is a global concern. As a contributing partner to our shared value of preserving the natural resources of our planet in the community of nations, we seek everyone's support in passing the Blue Economy Act, as we recognize the need to harness the full potential of the sustainable development of coastal and marine resources while at the same time, protecting our marine ecosystem from overdevelopment.

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



**FRANZ FERNANDEZ LEGAZPI**

Representative, PINOY WORKERS PARTYLIST

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<sup>1</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/170b89c1-7946-4f4d-914a-fc56e54769de/content>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pemsea.org/resources/publications/reports/nsoc-philippines>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ispweb.pcaarrd.dost.gov.ph/psa-reports-decline-in-fisheries-production-in-the-second-quarter-of-2023/>

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 4791

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Introduced by Representative FRANZ FERNANDEZ LEGAZPI

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AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK FOR BLUE ECONOMY, PROMOTING  
STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF COASTAL AND MARINE  
ECOSYSTEMS AND RESOURCES

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

CHAPTER I  
GENERAL PROVISIONS

1           **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “Blue Economy Act.”

2  
3           **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It shall be the policy of the State to:

- 4  
5           (a) Adopt blue economy as a framework for sustainable and safe use and development  
6           of marine wealth within our coastal and maritime domain, as a pillar of our national  
7           economy and patrimony;
- 8  
9           (b) Exercise stewardship of our coast and oceans, protect and conserve the health and  
10           resilience of marine and coastal ecosystems and habitats, to promote the well-being,  
11           prosperity and security of present and future generations; and expand areas under  
12           protection to meet the nation’s international obligations especially in refugial  
13           habitats;
- 14  
15           (c) Preserve our maritime heritage, recognize the economic, social, cultural, and  
16           historical value of our coasts and oceans, and foster public understanding and respect  
17           of the value of our coasts and oceans to build a strong foundation for social  
18           responsibility;
- 19  
20           (d) Enrich scientific understanding of ocean, marine and coastal ecosystems, the  
21           benefits we gain from these, their naturally changing extent and conditions and the  
22           causes thereof; and use the best available scientific knowledge to inform decisions  
23           affecting our coasts and oceans, and to enhance our capacity to respond and adapt to  
24           changing maritime environments;
- 25  
26           (e) Exercise rights and jurisdiction, and enjoyment of freedom of the high seas, in  
27           accordance with applicable international laws;
- 28  
29           (f) Strategically address the factors that adversely affect the oceans and the living and  
30           non-living resources that comprise our seas, turning threats into opportunities and  
31           preventing further harm to all water bodies, including land-based pollution,  
32           biodiversity loss, reclamation, and climate change; and  
33

- 1 (g) Ensure a whole-of-nation approach and a comprehensive and integrated framework  
2 for the stewardship of our coasts and oceans to facilitate cohesive action of the  
3 National Government, local authorities, academe, civil society organizations,  
4 indigenous peoples, local communities, and the private sector, to secure our people's  
5 safe access to, enjoyment of, and opportunities to invest in sustaining their benefits  
6 from our blue economy;  
7  
8 (h) Uphold marine science as a foundation of maritime governance, ensuring that all  
9 rules, policies, and plans governing the use of coastal and marine resources will be  
10 based on sound scientific understanding of the marine environment; and  
11  
12 (i) Uphold the value of natural ecosystems and their irreplaceability.  
13

14 **SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** -- As used in this Act:  
15

- 16 (a) Aquaculture refers to fishery operations involving all forms of raising and  
17 culturing fish and other fishery species in fresh, brackish, and marine water  
18 areas  
19  
20 (b) Aquasilviculture refers to a multi-purpose production system that allows  
21 production of fish in a mangrove reforestation project;  
22  
23 (c) Blue economy refers to the practical ocean-based economic model using  
24 green infrastructure and technologies, innovative financing mechanisms, and  
25 proactive institutional arrangements for meeting the twin goals of protecting our  
26 oceans and coasts and enhancing its potential contribution to sustainable  
27 development, including improving human well-being, and reducing  
28 environmental risks and ecological scarcities;  
29  
30 (d) Coast refers to the interface where the land meets the ocean, encompassing shoreline  
31 environments as well as adjacent coastal waters. Its components can include river  
32 deltas, coastal plains, wetland, beaches and dunes, reefs, mangroves forest, lagoons,  
33 and other coastal features;  
34  
35 (e) Fishing refers to the taking of fisheries species by passive or active gear for trade,  
36 business, and profit beyond subsistence or sports fishing, to be further classified as:  
37  
38 (1) Small-scale commercial fishing - fishing with passive or active gear utilizing  
39 fishing vessels of 3.1 gross tons (gt) up to 20 gt;  
40 (2) Medium-scale commercial fishing – fishing utilizing active gears and vessels of  
41 20.1 gt up to 150gt; and  
42 (3) Large commercial fishing – fishing utilizing active gears and vessels of more than  
43 150 gt.  
44  
45 (f) *Ecosystem services* refer to the benefits supplied by the functions of ecosystems  
46 and received by humanity and all elements of living systems, which support life  
47 systems on the planet. Ecosystem services consist of provisioning, regulating,  
48 maintenance, and cultural services;  
49  
50 (f) *Environmental sustainability* refers to responsible use of coastal, marine and  
51 freshwater resources offers protection of the marine ecosystem from harmful effects and  
52 degradation. Environmental sustainability includes stewardship by the government and  
53 local communities to (1) prevent, reduce and control pollution of the coastal, freshwater,  
54 and marine environment; (2) mitigate the impacts of climate change; and (3) protect  
55 biodiversity;  
56  
57 (h) *Integrated marine and coastal area management* refers to coordinated and sustainable

1 management of coastal and marine resources, and a participatory process for planning  
2 and decision-making to prevent, control, or mitigate adverse impacts of human activities  
3 to the marine and coastal environment, biodiversity, and climate, and to contribute to the  
4 restoration of degraded coastal areas, protection of habitats, and reduction of conflicts  
5 among various stakeholders in order to pursue sustainable and inclusive growth, support  
6 jobs and livelihood, and enhance food, energy and water security, climate resilience, and  
7 well-being;

8  
9 (i) *Investment promotion agencies* refer to government entities created by law,  
10 executive order, decree or other issuance, in charge of promoting investments,  
11 granting and administering tax and non-tax incentives, or overseeing  
12 the operations of the different economic zones and freeports in accordance  
13 with their respective special laws;

14  
15 (j) *Land-based pollution* refers to municipal, industrial and agricultural wastes and  
16 run-off, including but not limited to, sewage and waste water, persistent organic  
17 pollutants (including pesticides), heavy metals, oil, nutrients, sediments, and plastic  
18 wastes, whether brought by rivers or discharged directly into coastal waters;

19  
20 (k) Marine resources refer to the diverse range of living and non-living components  
21 found within marine ecosystems, including oceans, seas, and coastal areas;

22  
23 (l) *Marine spatial planning* refers to the public process of analyzing and allocating the  
24 spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve  
25 ecological, economic, and social objectives. It is a practical way to create and establish a  
26 more rational organization of marine space and its uses to balance the demand for  
27 development with the need to protect marine ecosystems, and to achieve social and  
28 economic objectives in an open and planned way;

29  
30 (m) *Maritime zones* refer to (1) the maritime zones of the Philippine  
31 archipelago comprising the internal waters, archipelagic waters, territorial sea,  
32 contiguous zone, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and continental shelf; and (2)  
33 the respective maritime zones, as appropriate, of all other territories over which  
34 the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction, in accordance with the 1987  
35 Constitution and international law, particularly the 1982 United Nations  
36 Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);

37  
38 (n) *Ocean accounting* refers to a statistical framework that guides the  
39 compilation and integration of a series of standardized and regular measurements  
40 of stocks and flows of ocean economic, societal and environmental components  
41 through specific accounting table groups and comprehensive indicators critical  
42 for informed and evidence-based decisions;

43  
44 (o) *Ocean-based activities* refer to activities that are undertaken in the ocean, such as  
45 those relating to fisheries and aquaculture, exploration, drilling and production of  
46 offshore oil, gas, and ocean energy, mining, desalination, shipping and marine  
47 transportation, shipbuilding and repair, port operations, marine tourism including  
48 management of tourist resorts, communication, marine construction, maritime insurance  
49 and law enforcement, or maritime technical services;

50  
51 (p) *Ocean-related activities* refer to activities that use products from the ocean such as  
52 seafood processing, marine biotechnology, chemicals and salt production, and produce  
53 products and services for the ocean and for ocean-based activities;

54  
55 (q) *Ocean literacy* refers to an understanding of the ocean's influence on humans, and  
56 human influence on the ocean, as well as the linkage of ocean and climate and its effect  
57 on humans, water, and ecosystems;

1 (r) *Reclamation* refers to any project, permitted or otherwise, that dumps fill materials  
2 from another place into a coastal or marine area to form new land, thereby completely  
3 obliterating the marine habitat and changing the hydrology of the area, whether pursued  
4 for public or private purposes; and  
5

6 (s) *Subsistence fishing* refers to fishing for personal consumption or  
7 traditional/ceremonial purposes; and  
8

9 **SEC. 4. *Scope of Application.*** – For purposes of this Act, the Philippines shall, in  
10 accordance with international law, exercise sovereignty, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction, as  
11 appropriate, in internal waters, archipelagic waters, the territorial sea, contiguous zone, EEZ, and  
12 continental shelf, herein collectively referred to as “coastal and marine zones”, including its  
13 seabed and subsoil, and any and all maritime features within the maritime zones now known or  
14 to be known in the future  
15

## 16 **CHAPTER II** 17 **BLUE ECONOMY COUNCIL** 18

19 **SEC. 5. *Blue Economy Council.*** – The Blue Economy Council, herein referred to as  
20 the “Council,” is hereby established to formulate an integrated strategy to strengthen, grow, and  
21 sustain the Philippines’ blue economy, integrated marine and coastal management, and  
22 ecosystem-based management of coastal and marine resources.  
23

24 **SEC. 6. *Mandates, Powers, and Functions of the Blue Economy Council.*** – The  
25 Council shall be responsible for formulating a clear, coherent, and comprehensive policy  
26 framework and strategic action plan on blue economy. It shall:  
27

- 28 (a) Develop the country’s policy framework and strategic vision for the growth and  
29 sustainable development of the country’s blue economy;  
30
- 31 (b) Institutionalize an integrated marine and coastal management;  
32
- 33 (c) (Enhance the country’s ecosystem-based management of coastal and marine  
34 resources;  
35
- 36 (d) Align Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) plans, fisheries management plans,  
37 coastal resource management plans, climate action plans, and marine spatial plans to  
38 determine zones, and designate allowed, regulated, and restricted activities;  
39
- 40 (e) Strengthen economic and environmental regulations within our coastal and marine  
41 areas to preserve the value and sustainability of ocean resources and protect them  
42 from threats;  
43
- 44 (f) Coordinate and cooperate with the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) to  
45 ensure that the framework shall be in harmony and not overlap with the maritime  
46 industry development plan;  
47
- 48 (g) Identify climate-resilient and environmentally sound investments, infrastructure, and  
49 technologies;  
50
- 51 (h) Ensure an enabling environment for the growth and development of sustainable  
52 investment and finance;  
53
- 54 (i) Identify priority blue economy sectors;  
55
- 56 (j) Institutionalize regular coastal and ocean monitoring and accounting  
57

- 1 (k) Coordinate the development of marine spatial plans;  
2  
3 (l) Coordinate with various sectors and agencies to promote policy and program  
4 coherence;  
5  
6 (m) Develop, expand, and strengthen investments in capacity building and skills  
7 enhancement programs for the blue economy, and encourage such to be featured in  
8 the work plans of governments, the private sector, and civil society organizations;  
9  
10 (n) Coordinate with the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee to Facilitate the  
11 Ratification and Accession to and Implementation of Maritime Conventions  
12 (ICCFRAIMC) and ensure that it will aid in the implementation thereof;  
13  
14 (o) Conduct, support, fund, engage, collaborate, and/or coordinate research and  
15 development in blue economy;  
16  
17 (p) Review, update, and disseminate the policy framework and strategic action plan on  
18 blue economy; and  
19  
20 (q) Perform other functions as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act.  
21

22 **SEC. 7. Composition.** – The Council shall be composed of the following:  
23

- 24 (a) The Executive Secretary as chairperson;  
25 (b) The Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources as co-vice chairperson;  
26 (c) The Secretary of Socio-Economic Planning as co-vice chairperson;  
27 (d) The Secretary of National Defense as member;  
28 (e) The Secretary of Foreign Affairs as member;  
29 (f) The Secretary of Justice as member;  
30 (g) The Secretary of the Interior and Local Government as member;  
31 (h) The Secretary of Agriculture as member;  
32 (i) The Secretary of Tourism as member;  
33 (j) The Secretary of Transportation as member;  
34 (k) The Secretary of Trade and Industry as member;  
35 (l) The Secretary of Energy as member;  
36 (m) The Secretary of Science and Technology as member;  
37 (n) The Secretary of Finance as member; and  
38 (o) The Secretary of Public Works and Highways as member.  
39

40 The Department Secretaries may designate an Undersecretary, whose portfolio covers matters  
41 directly or principally relating to the development or management of coastal and marine  
42 resources and ecosystems, if applicable, to sit in a permanent capacity, and whose acts shall be  
43 considered the acts of his or her principal.  
44

45 Majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.  
46

47 **SEC. 8. Secretariat.** – A Secretariat to the Council shall be established within the  
48 National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), to be headed by an Executive Director  
49 III (Salary Grade 28) who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The Secretariat  
50 shall be under the control and supervision of the NEDA Director General. The Executive  
51 Director III shall have at least seven (7) years of experience and practice in the fields of marine  
52 science and research, blue economy and ecosystem-based management of coastal and marine  
53 resources, environmental economics, environmental accounts, and financial analysis.  
54

55 The initial staffing structure and complement of the Secretariat shall be submitted by the NEDA  
56 to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for funding. The NEDA shall constitute

1 an interim Secretariat within one (1) month from the effectivity of this Act, through the  
2 temporary detail of personnel from its member agencies.

3  
4 The Secretariat shall have the following functions:

5  
6 (a) Provide secretariat support to the Council, including the preparation of draft  
7 strategies, priorities, and other outputs to be adopted by the Council;

8  
9 (b) Consult with experts who can offer insights on blue economy and ecosystem-based  
10 management of coastal and marine resources policymaking and priority setting;

11  
12 (c) Coordinate with various agencies of the government, private sector, academe,  
13 scientific community, civil society organizations, indigenous peoples, local communities,  
14 and the public;

15  
16 (d) Design and implement a blue economy development program and promote its use and  
17 adoption in the government bureaucracy;

18  
19 (e) Develop recommendations for consideration by the Council; and

20  
21 (f) Perform other functions as may be directed by the Council.

22  
23 **SEC. 9. Support Agencies.** – The following agencies shall provide material or technical  
24 support to the Council, as may be necessary:

25  
26 (a) Climate Change Commission (CCC);

27 (b) Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP);

28 (c) Board of Investments (BOI);

29 (d) Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC);

30 (e) Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA);

31 (f) National Mapping and Resources Information Authority (NAMRIA);

32 (g) Environmental Management Bureau (EMB);

33 (h) Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB);

34 (i) Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR);

35 (j) National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI);

36 (k) Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA);

37 (l) Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF);

38 (m) MARINA;

39 (n) Philippine Ports Authority (PPA);

40 (o) Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and  
41 Development (PCAARRD);

42 (p) Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration  
43 (PAGASA);

44 (q) Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA);

45 (r) Philippine Coast Guard (PCG);

46 (s) Philippine National Police - Maritime Group (PNP-MG);

47 (t) Philippine Navy (PN);

48 (u) National Museum - Maritime and Underwater Cultural Heritage Division (NM-  
49 MUCHD);

50 (v) Commission on Higher Education (CHED);

51 (w) Relevant institutions and components of the University of the Philippines (UP); and

52 (x) Investment promotion agencies.

53  
54 In order to ensure the efficient and effective discharge of its responsibilities, the Council may  
55 create working groups and call upon other departments, bureaus, offices, and instrumentalities of  
56 the Government, and academic and research institutions engaged in marine science and ocean-  
57 based or ocean-related activities, to participate therein, as it may deem necessary.

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**CHAPTER III**  
**THE BLUE ECONOMY FRAMEWORK**

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**SEC. 10. Policy Development Framework on Blue Economy.** – The Council shall, within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, formulate a policy framework on blue economy, herein referred to as the Framework. The Framework is a development model that aims to help the country define a roadmap for a diversified and sustainable ocean economy in a manner that provides long-term economic and social benefits while building resilience to climate change and without compromising the safety of our marine ecosystems. The Framework shall be subject to mandatory review and modification every five (5) years.

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**SEC. 11. Components of the Policy Framework on Blue Economy.** – The Framework shall include the following components:

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(a) Review of all existing policies, plans, programs, projects, rules, and regulations on ocean-based and ocean-related activities;

(b) Adherence to international maritime laws;

(c) Analysis of current and emerging trends and changes in demography, consumption, trade, energy, technology, environmental quality, and climate that show the interaction between the economy and the environment, present and future threats and pressures on coastal and marine environments, and damage estimation

(d) Environmental-economic accounting of coastal and marine assets, living and non-living resources, and ecosystem services from coastal and marine environments, including assessment of losses due to degradation or major pollution events such as oil spills;

(e) The Integrated Marine and Coastal Area Management (IMCAM) framework to address human impact on marine and coastal biological diversity and promote the conservation and sustainable use of this biodiversity. The national IMCAM framework shall consider the following elements:

(1) Capacity-building for stakeholders, at both national and local levels, to apply relevant policy instruments to address legal issues, institutionalize participatory processes, and develop strategies to promote multidisciplinary and multisectoral ecosystem-based management of coastal and marine environments;

(2) Protection of coastal and marine environments from negative impacts, such as:

(i) Alteration and destruction of coastal and marine habitats, particularly areas important for reproduction, coral reef systems, sea grass areas, and the sea bed;

(ii) Marine and land-based pollution;

(iii) Improper coastal land use, and the mismanagement of watersheds;

(iv) Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, by-catch especially of threatened species; and

(3) Establishment of mechanisms and guidelines for research, monitoring, assessment, and valuation of coastal and marine ecosystems and resources, including indicators to measure natural and human-induced impacts;

(f) Priority strategic and sustainable ocean-based and ocean-related economic activities, which may include:

- (1) Fisheries, including commercial fishing, seafood processing, and commercial research and development, with preference to subsistence fisheries, as mandated under Section 7, Article XIII of the Constitution;
- (2) Aquaculture, mariculture, and aquasilviculture;
- (3) Marine and coastal tourism;
- (4) Shipping, logistics, and maritime transport;
- (5) Shipbuilding and ship repair;
- (6) Production of renewable energy from marine sources;
- (7) Installation of submarine cables and pipelines;
- (8) Bioremediation, marine biotechnology, and bioprospecting;
- (9) Desalination; and
- (10) Underwater cultural heritage and maritime archaeology;

(g) Guiding framework for IMCAM;

(h) Guiding framework for blue finance;

(i) Priority research and development agenda that maximizes opportunities created for pollution control, remediation, used water economics, and other industries that address threats;

(j) Promotion of ocean literacy and social responsibility towards the protection of coastal and marine environments;

(k) Enhancement of the capability of the relevant agencies to enforce laws, rules, and regulations to protect our marine wealth;

(l) Goals, targets, and indicators for growth, resilience, and sustainability of priority strategic and sustainable coastal, ocean-based and ocean-related activities, including their contribution to gross domestic product, job creation, and livelihood;

(m) Mainstreaming of circular and resource efficiency approaches on the blue economy framework to address the longstanding problem on marine litter and microplastics;

(n) Integration of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCAM) strategies to help operationalize the country's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC); and

(o) Strengthening of management capacities of national and local governments, including relevant sectors, to enhance the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems and such other components as may be determined by the Council.

## **CHAPTER IV OCEAN ACCOUNTING**

**SEC. 12. *Ocean Accounting.*** – The PSA shall undertake environmental-economic accounting of the ocean, maritime ecosystems, and resources, based on the United Nations System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and in accordance with Republic Act No. 11995, otherwise known as the “Philippine Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System (PENCAS) Act”. Members of the Council and heads of support agencies shall contribute data and submit reports on environmental-economic accounts relating to their mandates including damage estimation and sea level rise projections.

The Integrated Marine and Coastal Area Management (IMCAM) framework to address human impact on marine and coastal biological diversity and promote the conservation and sustainable use of this biodiversity. The national IMCAM framework shall consider the following elements:

1 (1) Capacity-building for stakeholders, at both national and local levels, to apply relevant  
2 policy instruments to address legal issues, institutionalize participatory processes, and  
3 develop strategies to promote multidisciplinary and multisectoral ecosystem-based  
4 management of coastal and marine environments;

5  
6 (2) Protection of coastal and marine environments from negative impacts, such as:

7  
8 (i) Alteration and destruction of coastal and marine habitats, particularly areas  
9 important for reproduction, coral reef systems, sea grass areas, and the sea bed;

10  
11 (ii) Marine and land-based pollution;

12  
13 (iii) Improper coastal land use, and the mismanagement of watersheds;

14  
15 (iv) Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, by-catch especially of threatened  
16 species; and

17  
18 (3) Establishment of mechanisms and guidelines for research, monitoring, assessment,  
19 and valuation of coastal and marine ecosystems and resources, including indicators to  
20 measure natural and human-induced impacts;

21  
22 **CHAPTER V**  
23 **PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES**

24  
25 **SEC. 13. *Protection of Endangered Species.*** – The Council shall monitor,  
26 coordinate, and ensure the conservation, protection, and rehabilitation of rare, threatened, and  
27 endangered aquatic species as it may determine, including their habitats and migratory routes, in  
28 coordination with BFAR and in accordance with existing laws, rules, and regulations. It shall  
29 recommend to the President and Congress the designation of coastal and marine areas as  
30 protected areas under Republic Act No. 11038 or the “Expanded National Integrated Protected  
31 Areas System Act of 2018”, or sanctuaries of local conservation areas under Republic Act No.  
32 8550 or The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998”, as amended, and Republic Act No. 7160 or the  
33 “Local Government Code of 1991”, as amended, and in compliance with the relevant provisions  
34 of international treaties and agreements, such as the UNCLOS, the Convention on Biological  
35 Diversity, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, and the  
36 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

37  
38 **SEC. 14. *Policy Coordination.*** – The Council shall harmonize the rules and  
39 regulations of all agencies responsible for the implementation and enforcement of laws to  
40 prevent and eliminate illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing under Republic Act No. 8550,  
41 as amended, setting strategic and measurable targets and ensuring the best use of technology  
42 such as vehicle monitoring system. Further, the Council shall act as the coordinating and  
43 monitoring arm of the government in ensuring other government agencies’ compliance with  
44 these laws.

45  
46 **CHAPTER VI**  
47 **DEVELOPMENT PLANNING**

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49 **SEC. 15. *Marine Spatial Planning.*** – The Council shall undertake a nationwide  
50 Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) with the participation of key stakeholders to identify the spatial  
51 and temporal distribution of priority activities, uses and interactions thereof in maritime zones, to  
52 reduce conflict among uses; facilitate complementary uses; mitigate environmental impacts;  
53 prevent marine dead zones; rehabilitate dead zones or non-attainment areas, if any; reduce  
54 wastage and ensure efficiency in marine supply chains; preserve ecosystem services with the  
55 national MSP providing the guiding principles and overarching delineations, and identifying the  
56 spatial and temporal distribution of allowed, restricted, and regulated human activities and  
57 priority uses and the interactions thereof in the coastal and marine zones; and encourage and

1 support the development of regional and local MSPs, which can provide a level of granularity  
2 that can be linked to actionable investments, regulations and enforcement, coastal and marine  
3 resource management and conservation measures, and reduction of risks from climate change  
4 and natural disasters.

5  
6 **SEC. 16. *Blue Economic Zones.*** – Investment promotion agencies shall encourage  
7 the establishment of blue economic zones (BEZs) and the transformation of existing special  
8 economic zones into BEZs. Registered business enterprises engaged in ocean-based or ocean-  
9 related activities as listed under the Strategic Investment Priority Plan (SIPP) shall enjoy the  
10 privileges, benefits, advantages, or exemptions granted to economic zones and freeports in  
11 accordance with their respective special laws, Republic Act No. 11534 or the “Corporate  
12 Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act (CREATE)”, and other applicable laws, rules,  
13 and regulations.

14  
15 In addition, registered business enterprises operating within BEZs may also qualify for financing  
16 under Republic Act No. 11293 or the “Philippine Innovation Act”, as applicable.

17  
18 **SEC. 17. *Promotion of Sustainable Livelihoods and Employment.*** – The Council  
19 shall, in consultation with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Department  
20 of Agriculture-BFAR, and other concerned agencies and stakeholders, develop a policy to  
21 ensure the enhancement and sustainability of municipal fisheries as well as the promotion and  
22 generation of sustainable livelihood in the blue economy towards the creation of more  
23 employment and equal opportunities for all, and to strengthen investments in capacity building  
24 and skills enhancement programs, in accordance with Republic Act No. 10771 or the “Philippine  
25 Green Jobs Act of 2016.”

## 26 27 **CHAPTER VII** 28 **BLUE FINANCE**

29  
30 **SEC. 18. *Role of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.*** – In the exercise of its  
31 regulatory powers over financial institutions, the BSP shall provide an enabling regulatory  
32 environment to promote the development of the country’s blue economy, in line with its  
33 sustainable finance framework and considering international standards and best practices.

34  
35 **SEC. 19. *Role of Securities and Exchange Commission.*** – The SEC shall encourage the  
36 issuance of blue bonds, the proceeds of which will be exclusively applied to finance or refinance,  
37 in part or in full, eligible blue Programs, Activities, and Projects (PAPs) in accordance with SEC  
38 guidelines, and ASEAN Green Bonds Standards and Green Bonds Principles, as developed and  
39 may be revised from time to time by the SEC, the ASEAN Capital Markets Forum and the  
40 International Capital Market Association. All designated blue PAPs must provide clear benefits  
41 to ocean health and the blue economy and must contribute substantially to United Nations  
42 Sustainable Development Goals 6 and 14, which shall be assessed together with compliance with  
43 environmental laws and standards, and, where feasible, quantified by the corporation that will  
44 issue the blue bonds.

45  
46 The eligibility of these blue PAPs shall be subject to the guidelines to be issued by the SEC.

47  
48 **SEC. 20 *Role of Government Financial Institutions.*** – The Land Bank of the  
49 Philippines and the Development Bank of the Philippines shall provide credit to enterprises  
50 engaged in strategic and sustainable ocean-based or ocean-related activities.

## 51 52 **CHAPTER VIII** 53 **ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

54  
55 **SEC. 21. *Role of Local Government Units (LGUs).*** – Cities and municipalities shall  
56 continue to exercise jurisdiction over municipal waters, pursuant to Republic Act No. 7160, as  
57 amended, and Republic Act No. 8550, as amended. Consistent with this mandate, LGUs in

1 coastal and marine areas shall act as the frontline agencies in the formulation, planning, and  
2 implementation of the IMCAM framework in their respective jurisdictions. The LGUs shall  
3 develop their local Marine Spatial Plan in accordance with the National Maritime Spatial Plan,  
4 and integrate them in their Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Comprehensive Development Plan,  
5 and Annual Investment Plan, ICM or Coastal Resource Management Plan, Climate Change  
6 Action Plan, and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan, and opportunities such as the  
7 National Sewage and Septage Management Plan and the funds under the Republic Act No. 9275  
8 or the “Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004”.

9  
10 **SEC. 22. *Inter-LGU Cooperation.*** – Consistent with the provisions of Republic Act  
11 No. 7160, as amended, LGUs may group themselves and consolidate or coordinate their efforts,  
12 services, and resources for the accomplishment of the objectives of this Act.

13  
14 **CHAPTER IX**  
15 **FINAL PROVISIONS**  
16

17 **SEC. 23. *Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.*** – There shall be a Joint  
18 Congressional Oversight Committee on Blue Economy (JCOC-BE). The President of the Senate  
19 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall designate five (5) Senators and five (5)  
20 Members of the House of Representatives, respectively, as members of the JCOC-BE: Provided,  
21 That the minority in the Senate and the House of Representatives shall each have at least one (1)  
22 seat in the JCOC-BE. The JCOC-BE shall be jointly chaired by the Chairpersons of the Senate  
23 Committee on Economic Affairs and the House Committee on Economic Affairs. The JCOC-BE  
24 shall conduct a semi-annual hearing to oversee, monitor, and evaluate the implementation of this  
25 Act and identify other necessary legislation.

26  
27 **SEC. 24. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days from the  
28 approval of this Act, the Council shall issue the implementing rules and regulations: Provided,  
29 That failure to issue rules and regulations shall not in any manner affect the executory nature of  
30 the provisions of this Act.

31  
32 **SEC. 25. *Construction.*** – In the implementation of this Act, any conflict with the  
33 Republic Act No. 8550, as amended, shall be resolved in favor of the latter, to ensure the  
34 ecological and environmental safeguards therein and with a presumption in favor of subsistence  
35 fisherfolk.

36  
37 **SEC. 26. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is declared  
38 unconstitutional, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and  
39 effect.

40  
41 **SEC. 27. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,  
42 letters of instruction, proclamations, or administrative regulations that are inconsistent with the  
43 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly: Provided, That  
44 any inconsistency with Republic Act No. 8550, as amended, shall be construed in favor of the  
45 said law unless there is a cogent ecological rationale for resolving the inconsistency in favor of  
46 this Act.

47  
48 **SEC. 28. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its  
49 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

50  
*Approved,*