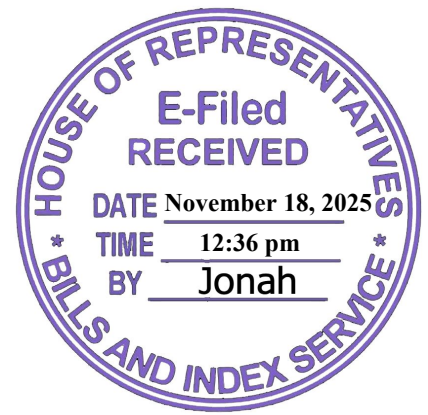


TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE BILL No. 6113

INTRODUCED BY HON. RICARDO S. CRUZ, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In 2024, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) estimated that 40 million Filipinos still do not have access to a public water system and rely on rainwater, rivers, or creeks to meet their daily needs. Many regions in the Philippines still lack the infrastructure to deliver safe drinking water to underserved communities. This is largely due to the substantial investment required, with the DENR estimating that around Php 250 billion is needed to ensure basic water access nationwide.¹

The Philippines, highly vulnerable to climate change, has experienced extreme and unusual droughts and floods caused by the El Niño and La Niña phenomena. El Niño often leads to reduced rainfall and elevated temperatures, resulting in drought conditions, increased risk of wildfires, and water shortages. On the other hand, La Niña typically brings above-average rainfall, increasing the likelihood of flooding, landslides, and the spread of waterborne diseases.² These recurring climate extremes underscore the urgent need for comprehensive water sustainability strategies that include efficient water resource management, climate-resilient infrastructure, watershed protection, and community education to ensure reliable and safe water access amid a changing climate.

¹ Zaldarriaga, J. (2025, February 25). *Ensuring Water Access*.

<https://www.pna.gov.ph/opinion/pieces/1018-ensuring-water-access>

² Resilient.PH. (2024, June 20). *Navigating El Niño and La Niña: Safe Guarding Your Family and Environment*

<https://resilient.ph/2024/06/navigating-el-nino-and-la-nina-safeguarding-your-family-and-environment/#:~:text=El%20Ni%C3%B1o%20and%20La%20Ni%C3%B1a%20are%20phases%20of%20the%20El,at%20home%20and%20in%20gardens.>

As a signatory to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the country is committed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 6, which focuses on ensuring access to clean water and sanitation for all. This goal plays a critical role in advancing health, reducing inequalities, and supporting sustainable livelihoods, particularly in marginalized and water-scarce areas.

Despite the principles and policies outlined in the Republic Act No. 9275, or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004, access to safe and sustainable water remains a pressing challenge. While various initiatives, such as the Philippine Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan and the Integrated Water Resource Management Plan, have been introduced, these efforts must be fully institutionalized to ensure long-term continuity, effective implementation, and resilience beyond political and administrative changes.³

This bill recognizes water sustainability and its direct impact on public health and quality of life. There is an urgent need to address water sustainability in Metro Manila and in the rest of the country to ensure that Filipinos will always have safe and clean sources of water. It is also incumbent to guarantee the availability of these resources for future generations through their responsible and sustainable management. The proposed measure seeks to address these issues through the creation of a framework on water sustainability, which institutionalizes SDG 6, provides yearly targets, and the corresponding annual budgetary requirements in order to achieve them.

In line with the policy adopted by its original proponent Senator Pia S. Cayetano, this bill therefore serves as a counterpart measure. It is for the reasons stated above that the passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


RICARDO S. CRUZ, JR.

³ DENR. (2024, April 18). *Integrated Water Resource Management*.
<https://denr.gov.ph/priority-program/integrated-water-resource-management/>

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE)
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE BILL No. 6113

INTRODUCED BY HON. RICARDO S. CRUZ, JR.

AN ACT
PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK ON WATER SUSTAINABILITY

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Water Sustainability Act.”

Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State affirms the declared principles and policies in Republic Act No. 9275, or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004, which includes pursuing a sustainable development framework for the protection, preservation, and revival of the quality of our fresh, brackish, and marine waters.

The State also recognizes that water sustainability and the provision of clean water and sanitation are inseparable from public health and hygiene, and directly impact the quality of life. It acknowledges their essential role in enabling Filipinos to live dignified, healthy, and secure lives.

As a party to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the State remains committed to the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 6, which calls on the State to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

It shall be the policy of the State to establish a framework for water sustainability, which shall be used by the relevant agencies to ensure that Filipinos will always have safe and clean sources of water, and guarantee the availability of

these resources for future generations through their responsible and sustainable management.

Sec. 3. *Philippine Water Sustainability Framework.* – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in coordination with the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEVDep) and Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and in consultation with other relevant agencies, shall update and consolidate all existing frameworks prepared by all government agencies for water management and sustainability into the Philippine Water Sustainability Framework. The Framework shall provide policies and set annual targets to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all Filipinos pursuant to SDG 6 under the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It shall also indicate the necessary annual budgetary requirements to achieve the yearly targets for every component under Section 4 of this Act.

Sec. 4. *Components.* – The Framework shall include policies and targets with specific timelines on the following components, including the roles and responsibilities of relevant government agencies:

- a) *Safe and Affordable Drinking Water* – The Framework shall ensure universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water nationwide.
- b) *Sanitation and Hygiene* – It shall provide steps to achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and end open defecation, with special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.
- c) *Water Quality, Wastewater Treatment, and Safe Reuse* – The Framework shall also include measures to improve water quality, including reducing pollution, eliminating dumping, and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, as well as dividing the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse.
- d) *Water-Use Efficiency and Freshwater Supplies* – It shall substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and

substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.

- e) *Integrated Water Resources Management* – It shall support and facilitate the implementation of existing integrated water resources management plans at all levels, including through inter-LGU cooperation, as may be appropriate and practicable.
- f) *Water-Related Ecosystems* – The Framework shall encompass all water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers, and lakes. It shall prioritize and provide measures for their protection and restoration while allowing for their use and development in accordance with existing laws, rules, and regulations.
- g) *International and Private Linkages and Cooperation* – The Framework shall encourage cooperation and capacity-building support in partnership with other countries and private stakeholders in water-and sanitation-related activities and programs, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling, and reuse technologies.
- h) *Local Engagement and Support* – It shall likewise encourage, support, and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.

Sec. 5. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, decrees, executive orders, presidential issuances, rules and regulations or any part thereof, which are inconsistent herewith, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Sec. 6. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason or reasons, any part or provisions of this Act shall be declared or held unconstitutional or invalid, other provision or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Sec. 7. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,