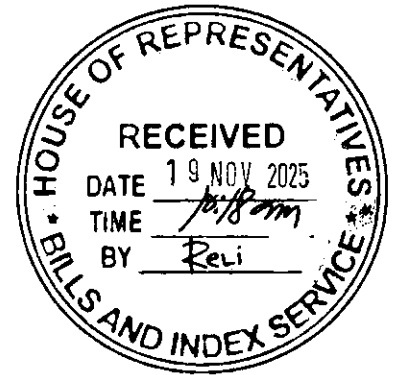


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

6175
House Bill No. _____



Introduced by **REP. RAYMOND ADRIAN E. SALCEDA**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE TRANSITION OF THE
PHILIPPINE OCEAN ECONOMY TO A BLUE ECONOMY, CREATING THE OFFICE
OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER ON THE BLUE ECONOMY, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

For many years, discussions of the “blue economy” in the Philippines have treated it as something already present and ready to be regulated. Recent legislative proposals reflect this misunderstanding. They proceed as if the country possesses a functioning blue economy whose activities simply require consolidation, coordination, or compliance frameworks. This assumption is incorrect.

What the Philippines has today is not a blue economy but a predominantly grey ocean economy. It is an economy that generates value but does so at the cost of degrading marine ecosystems, eroding coastal resilience, and exposing millions of Filipinos to increasing climate and disaster risks. It is an economy where growth often comes at the expense of long-term ecological health and stability. The national challenge is therefore not to regulate a blue economy that does not yet exist, but to create the conditions to transition the current grey ocean economy into a genuinely sustainable one.

This Bill begins from that more honest and more accurate premise. It recognizes that the blue economy is not a collection of industries, nor a list of sectors operating in marine space. It is a developmental outcome. It is the product of deliberate planning, coherent spatial governance, measurable environmental and economic criteria, aligned public investment, and sustained institutional coordination. A blue economy is something a country becomes, not something it already has.

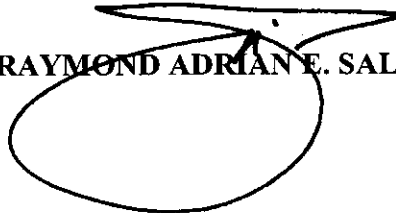
The transition requires the State to see the ocean economy as a system rather than a set of isolated activities, and to understand the link between ecological integrity, economic productivity, social equity, and national resilience. It requires the measurement of both economic output and ecosystem condition through ocean accounts and natural capital accounts. It requires marine spatial planning that aligns the use of ocean space with long-term national development. It requires fiscal alignment through the identification of harmful subsidies and the tagging of public expenditures that support or undermine blue outcomes. It requires the identification and management of transition risks arising from changes in markets, technologies, regulations, and climate.

To drive this transition, the Bill creates the position of Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy, with the rank of Secretary, to serve as the apex coordinating authority for the shift from a grey ocean economy to a blue economy. The Bill does not create new regulatory agencies. Instead, it strengthens existing institutions by providing strategic leadership, coherence, and accountability. It directs the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development to embed the blue economy transition into national, regional, and local development plans, and mandates sectoral transition plans from agencies whose mandates relate to fisheries, ports, tourism, shipping, marine energy, and marine ecosystems.

The Bill establishes the framework for producing Ocean Economy Satellite Accounts and Ocean Natural Capital Accounts. It mandates a national Marine Spatial Plan to align spatial use of marine areas with ecological, economic, and social objectives. It requires periodic transition risk assessments to guide policy design and investments, and provides for blue economy budget tagging and subsidy review to ensure fiscal coherence.

The country's coastlines, marine ecosystems, and ocean resources are too important to be left to fragmented governance and incomplete conceptual frameworks. The transition to a blue economy will not occur by restating existing powers or by adding new layers of regulation. It requires a national transition architecture, rooted in planning, coordination, measurement, and accountability. This Bill establishes that architecture.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this measure is urgently sought.


RAYMOND ADRIAN E. SALCEDA

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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 Blue Economy Transition Act.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to recognize the ocean, seas, and coastal areas of the Philippines as essential foundations of economic productivity, ecological resilience, cultural identity, and social well-being. The State shall ensure that activities within the ocean economy contribute to the long term health and regenerative capacity of marine and coastal ecosystems and support inclusive and decent livelihoods for coastal communities.

The State shall adopt a national framework to guide the transition of the Philippine ocean economy from its present grey configuration, characterized by unsustainable resource use, ecological degradation, and heightened climate and disaster risks, toward a sustainable blue economy that aligns economic activity with ecosystem health, social equity, and national development goals, including Sustainable Development Goal 14 on the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and marine resources.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* — For the purposes of this Act:

(a) Ocean economy refers to all economic activities dependent on the ocean, seas, and coastal areas of the Philippines, including the value of natural assets and ecosystem services.

(b) Blue economy refers to the sustainable ocean economy consistent with ecological health, climate and disaster resilience, inclusive livelihood benefits, and intergenerational responsibility.

(c) Transition refers to the planned shift of policies, institutions, sectors, and practices from grey ocean economy characteristics toward blue economy outcomes.

(d) Blue economy outcomes refer to measurable improvements in ecosystem health, sustainable production, resilience, and social equity.

(e) Marine spatial planning refers to the process of allocating the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives.

(f) Ocean natural capital refers to marine and coastal ecosystems and the ecosystem services they provide.

CHAPTER II GOVERNANCE OF THE BLUE ECONOMY TRANSITION

SEC. 4. *Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy.* — There is hereby created the position of Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy, with the rank of Secretary, under the Office of the President.

The Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy shall serve as the principal adviser of the President on matters relating to the transition of the ocean economy to a blue economy. The Presidential Adviser shall act as the apex coordinating authority for all policies, plans, and programs that influence such transition.

The Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy shall exercise strategic, coordinating, and oversight functions. The Presidential Adviser shall not exercise regulatory, licensing, or permitting powers and shall not diminish or duplicate the mandates of existing agencies.

SEC. 5. *Blue Economy Steering Committee.* — A Blue Economy Steering Committee is hereby created, chaired by the Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy and composed of officials with at least the rank of Undersecretary from the following:

- (a) Department of Economy, Planning, and Development;
- (b) Department of Finance;
- (c) Department of Budget and Management;
- (d) Department of Environment and Natural Resources;
- (e) Department of Agriculture through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources;
- (f) Department of Energy;
- (g) Department of Transportation through the Maritime Industry Authority and the Philippine Ports Authority;
- (h) Department of Tourism;
- (i) Department of Science and Technology;
- (j) National Mapping and Resource Information Authority; and
- (k) Philippine Statistics Authority.

The Committee shall assist the Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy in coordinating, harmonizing, and monitoring the transition from the ocean economy to the blue economy.

CHAPTER III NATIONAL TRANSITION FRAMEWORK

SEC. 6. *National Blue Economy Transition Strategy.* — The Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy shall direct and the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development shall prepare a National Blue Economy Transition Strategy covering a period of ten years. The Strategy shall be approved by the President.

The National Blue Economy Transition Strategy shall:

- (a) establish a baseline of the ocean economy and marine ecosystem conditions;
- (b) identify pathways and interventions to expand the sustainable share of the ocean economy;
- (c) define measurable medium term and long term blue economy targets;
- (d) integrate marine spatial planning, fiscal alignment, investment priorities, and sectoral transition measures; and
- (e) provide guidance for incorporation into national, regional, and local development plans and public investment programs.

SEC. 7. *Sectoral Blue Economy Transition Plans.* — Within one year from the approval of the National Blue Economy Transition Strategy, the following agencies shall prepare Sectoral Blue Economy Transition Plans under the guidance of the Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy and in coordination with the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development:

- (a) Department of Agriculture through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources for fisheries and aquaculture;
- (b) Maritime Industry Authority and Philippine Ports Authority for maritime transport and ports;
- (c) Department of Tourism for coastal and marine tourism;
- (d) Department of Energy for offshore and marine energy;
- (e) Department of Environment and Natural Resources for marine ecosystems and blue carbon; and
- (f) Department of Science and Technology for marine science and innovation.

Each Sectoral Plan shall:

- (1) identify harmful grey practices to be reformed or phased down;
- (2) define sustainable pathways for the sector; and
- (3) provide livelihood and social transition measures for affected communities.

CHAPTER IV DATA, ACCOUNTS, AND FISCAL ALIGNMENT

SEC. 8. *Ocean Economy and Natural Capital Accounts.* — The Philippine Statistics Authority, in coordination with the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development and concerned agencies, shall prepare and publish every two years:

- (a) Ocean Economy Satellite Accounts; and
- (b) Ocean Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services Accounts.

The accounts shall distinguish, where practicable, between grey and blue components of the ocean economy and shall guide planning, budgeting, and transition monitoring.

SEC. 9. *Blue Economy Budget Tagging and Subsidy Review.* — The Department of Budget and Management, in coordination with the Department of Finance, the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development, and the Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy, shall implement

blue economy budget tagging in the National Expenditure Program and the General Appropriations Act.

The Department of Finance shall conduct periodic reviews of subsidies and fiscal incentives that support grey practices and recommend reforms or phase-out measures to support the blue economy transition.

SEC. 10. *Blue Economy Transition Risk Assessment.* — The Department of Economy, Planning, and Development and the Department of Finance, in coordination with the Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy, shall undertake a periodic assessment of regulatory, climate, technological, market, and socioeconomic risks arising from the transition to a blue economy. The results shall guide the Strategy and Sectoral Plans.

CHAPTER V MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING AND LOCAL INTEGRATION

SEC. 11. *National Marine Spatial Planning System.* — The Department of Economy, Planning, and Development, in coordination with the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the Department of Energy, the Maritime Industry Authority, and other concerned agencies, shall prepare a National Marine Spatial Plan consistent with the National Blue Economy Transition Strategy.

The National Marine Spatial Plan shall guide spatial allocation of uses in marine areas and shall be incorporated into national, regional, and local development plans.

SEC. 12. *Integration into Regional and Local Development Plans.* — Regional development plans, provincial development plans, city and municipal development plans, and Comprehensive Land Use Plans shall integrate the National Blue Economy Transition Strategy and the National Marine Spatial Plan. The Department of Economy, Planning, and Development shall ensure such integration.

CHAPTER VI FINAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 13. *Monitoring and Reporting.* — The Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy shall submit a comprehensive transition progress report to the President and Congress every three years.

SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within ninety days from effectivity of this Act, the Presidential Adviser on the Blue Economy, in coordination with concerned agencies, shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions shall not be affected.

SEC. 16. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 17. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,