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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

 **SECRET**
Office of the Secretary

'22 AUG -9 P5:43

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: _____



S. No. 1117

Introduced by Senator Loren B. Legarda

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL COASTAL GREENBELT ZONES
AND THE NATIONAL COASTAL GREENBELT MANAGEMENT
ACTION PLAN, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Coastal greenbelts refer to strips of natural or artificially created coastal vegetation stretching at least up to 1.5 meters above mean sea level towards the land and up to 1.5 meters below mean sea level towards the ocean. Ecosystems, such as mangrove forests, beach forests, and seagrass beds, serve as natural barriers against storm surges and coastal erosion, therefore mitigating the adverse impacts of natural coastal hazards on human lives and property. They also serve other functions, such as habitats for commercially important fishes and as carbon sinks to mitigate climate change.

For many coastal communities, mangrove forests provide livelihoods, essential sources of protein, and coastal protection and resiliency, amid the climate crisis we face. Conservation and restoration of coral reefs and seagrass beds also add protection against strong waves. In fact, residents of small islands in Siargao were saved by the mangrove forest in the municipality of Del Carmen as Supertyphoon Odette wreaked

havoc on the province last December 16, 2021.¹ This shows that developing coastal greenbelts can enhance disaster risk reduction measures up to the local level.

Compelling evidence also suggests that mangroves play an important role in climate stabilization, possessing carbon storage and sequestration potential considered to be greater than that of tropical forests. The Philippines is estimated to have a total of 509,701,906 metric tons of blue carbon stored in mangroves, a fact largely unappreciated by decision-makers.

Despite their critical role in disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation, coastal greenbelts in the Philippines remain at risk of destruction, with mangrove forests as one of the most severely threatened and undervalued ecosystems. According to a study conducted in 2018, the Philippines has an estimated three hundred fifty-six thousand (356,000) hectares of mangrove forests.² Since 1918, the Philippines has lost about three-fourths of its mangroves owing to a continual deforestation rate of almost 2,000-3,000 hectares every year.³

Among the numerous threats to coastal greenbelts, including land development and reclamation, pollution, deforestation, and illegal conversion, the conversion of mangrove forests to fishponds for aquaculture is the most rampant. Currently, the State, through the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, is not able to implement its mandate for the reversion of abandoned, undeveloped, and underutilized fishponds because there exists a lack of data sharing and collaboration amongst the concerned agencies.

Clearly, mangroves hold tremendous significance, especially for biodiversity conservation, climate mitigation and resiliency, and disaster risk reduction and

¹ <https://opinion.inquirer.net/148213/build-coastal-greenbelts>

² Gevaña, D., Camacho, L., & Pulhin, J. (2018). Conserving mangroves for their blue carbon: Insights and prospects for community-based mangrove management in Southeast Asia. In Makowski C., Finkl C. (Eds.), *Threats to Mangrove Forests* (pp. 579-588). Springer Nature.

³ Nesperos, V., Villanueva, C., Garcia, J., & Gevaña, D. (2021). Assessment of blue carbon stock of mangrove vegetation in Infanta, Quezon, Philippines. In *Ecosystems and Development Journal* (pp. 48-60).

management. However, the management of mangroves at both the local and national levels face a multitude of challenges. Hence, we need to create and implement science-based policies for the restoration and regeneration of mangroves.

Institutionalizing coastal greenbelt zones is a nature-based solution that will provide the protection and resiliency of our natural life support systems and our people and ensure coordination and collaboration amongst agencies, which are urgently needed if we are to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change and mainstream sustainable development for all.

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


LOREN LEGARDA

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ACTION PLAN, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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

1 Section. 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "National Coastal
2 *Greenbelt Act of 2022*".

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby the declared policy of the State:

4 (a) To uphold the people's constitutional right to a healthful and balanced
5 ecology;

6 (b) To recognize that climate change and disaster risk reduction and
7 management are closely interrelated, and effective disaster risk
8 reduction will enhance climate change adaptive capacity;

9 (c) To mainstream the important contribution of mangroves and beach
10 forest species in reducing the impacts of climate change and mitigate the
11 adverse impacts of natural coastal hazards on human lives and
12 property;

13 (d) To integrate, consolidate and institutionalize coastal greenbelt
14 framework strategy and action plans into all development plans,
15 programs, and projects, and all actions and decisions of the national

1 government, local government, business, non-government
2 organizations, local communities, and the public in general;

3 (e) To develop and implement a coherent, comprehensive, integrated,
4 efficient National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan that aims
5 to reduce our vulnerability to climate change and disaster risks, enhance
6 adaptive capacity and build national and local resilience to climate
7 change-related disasters;

8 (f) To enjoin the participation of national and local governments,
9 businesses, nongovernment organizations, local communities, and the
10 public in the development, implementation, monitoring, and
11 assessment of plans, programs, and activities to prevent and reduce the
12 adverse impacts of climate change through the establishment of coastal
13 greenbelt zones; and

14 (g) To adopt the precautionary principle in the planning, conservation,
15 rehabilitation, and management of coastal greenbelt zones.

16 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms and phrases
17 shall mean as follows:

18 (a) *Coastal Greenbelt Zone* refers to specific strips of natural or artificially
19 created coastal vegetation, stretching at least one hundred (100) meters
20 in width from the sea towards land, primarily of mangrove and beach
21 forest species, designed to prevent coastal erosion, and mitigate the
22 adverse impacts of natural coastal hazards on human lives and
23 property.

24 (b) *Coastal Zone* refers to a band of dry land and adjacent ocean space (water
25 and submerged land) in which terrestrial processes and uses directly
26 affect oceanic processes and uses, and vice versa. Its geographic extent
27 may include areas within a landmark limit of one (1) kilometer from the
28 shoreline at high tide to include mangrove swamps, brackish water
29 ponds, nipa swamps, estuarine rivers, sandy beaches, and other areas
30 within a sea ward limit of two hundred (200) meters isobath to include
31 coral reefs, algal flats, seagrass beds and other soft-bottom areas;

- 1 (c) *Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)* refer to non-State actors whose aims
2 are neither to generate profits nor to seek governing power, but to unite
3 people to advance shared goals and interests. Their right to participate
4 at all levels of decision-making is guaranteed by the Constitution and
5 they have a significant role in public life, expressing the interests and
6 values of their members or others, are based on ethical, cultural,
7 scientific, environmental, human rights, religious or philanthropic
8 considerations. CSOs may include nongovernment organizations
9 (NGOs), professional associations, foundations, independent research
10 institutes, community-based organizations, and social movements,
11 whether local, national, or international.
- 12 (d) *Designated areas* refer to site-specific stretches of vegetation in the coastal
13 zone, defined in relation to risk factors and vulnerability to coastal
14 hazards and reserved for protection and maintenance under the
15 National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan. The area may
16 undergo rehabilitation, reforestation, or afforestation with locally
17 appropriate native species. Designated areas with abandoned fishponds
18 require the reversion of these fishponds to mangroves through natural
19 regeneration or replanting with locally and ecologically appropriate
20 species;
- 21 (e) *Fisherfolk Settlement Areas* refer to certain areas of the public domain,
22 specifically near the fishing grounds, granted to or reserved for the
23 settlement of municipal fisherfolks;
- 24 (f) *Integrated Coastal Zone Management* refers to an effective approach to
25 sustainable coastal and marine development with demonstrated
26 benefits in enhancing economic growth, ecosystem protection,
27 promotion of social equity, and the quality of life of the people;
- 28 (g) *Mangroves* refer to a community of intertidal plants in the tropics and
29 subtropics including all species of trees, shrubs, vines and herbs
30 growing along tidal mudflats and shallow water coastal areas extending
31 inland along rivers, streams and their tributaries where the water is
32 generally brackish;

1 (h) *National Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan* (NCGMAP) refers to
2 the operation plan that shall serve as the guide for the Local Coastal
3 Greenbelt Management Action Plan; and

4 (i) *Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan* (LGCMAP) refers to the
5 local action plan of the coastal local governments that shall be based on
6 the NCGMAP. It shall contain the specific goals and targets for the
7 implementation of the program set in the NCGMAP.

8 Sec. 4. *Establishment of the National Technical Advisory Committee on Coastal*
9 *Greenbelt Zones.* - A National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Coastal
10 Greenbelt Zones is hereby established, which shall be an attached agency of the
11 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

12 The Committee shall be composed of seven (7) members, consisting of:

- 13 (a) Secretary of the DENR, who shall act as the Chairperson;
- 14 (b) Secretary of the Climate Change Commission (CCC), who shall act as
15 the Secretariat;
- 16 (c) Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG);
- 17 (d) Director of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR);
- 18 (e) Two (2) Executive Members, to be appointed by the Committee; and
- 19 (f) One (1) Consultant, to be appointed by the Committee;

20 The Executive Members shall be appointed from the ranks of the academe and
21 the scientific community, at least one (1) of whom shall be a woman. An Executive
22 Member shall have at least seven (7) years of relevant experience in the field of
23 mangrove and beach forest ecosystems, oceanography, or other related disciplines,
24 among other criteria that may be set by the Committee.

25 The Consultant must be a representative from a CSO that demonstrates
26 capacity to promote the public interest, with identifiable leadership, membership, and
27 structure, and has been actively involved in mangrove research, among other criteria
28 that may be set by the Committee

29 The Executive Members and Consultant shall serve the Committee without
30 compensation but may be reimbursed for basic expenses to attend meetings and
31 prepare technical reports.

1 The NTAC shall convene within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act.

2 The majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

3 Sec. 5. *Powers and Functions of the National Technical Committee on Coastal*
4 *Greenbelt Zones.* – The NTAC on Coastal Greenbelt Zones shall have the following
5 powers and functions:

6 (1) To review existing relevant policies and to conduct studies on mangrove
7 forests and other coastal resources, and their preservation;

8 (2) To prepare a comprehensive and integrated National Coastal Greenbelt
9 Management Plan (NCGMAP) for the preservation, reforestation,
10 afforestation, and sustainable development of coastal resources;

11 (3) To establish the guidelines in identifying the areas to be declared as
12 Coastal Greenbelt Zones;

13 (4) To identify and delineate the boundaries of Coastal Zones, which shall
14 form part of the Coastal Greenbelt Zones;

15 (5) To exercise control and supervision over the development and
16 implementation of the Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action
17 Plans;

18 (6) To provide Local Government Units (LGUs) with instructional training
19 modules, technical assistance, and other capacity-building programs
20 designed to enhance their competence and proficiency in coastal
21 greenbelt protection and management and other nature-based solutions;
22 and

23 (7) To promulgate the rules and regulations necessary to carry out the
24 provisions of this Act.

25 Sec. 6. *Creation of National Coastal Greenbelt Management Plan.* – The NTAC shall
26 prepare a consolidated and integrated National Coastal Greenbelt Management Plan
27 (NCGMAP) not later than twelve (12) months from the effectivity of this Act.

28 The NCGMAP shall, at the minimum, contain the following:

29 (a) Spatial representation, or if feasible, quick/rapid inventory of the status
30 of coastlines and foreshores, including the status of mangroves, beach
31 forests, settlements, structures, and fishponds within one hundred (100)
32 meters therein;

- 1 (b) Assessment of priority areas to be designated as Coastal Greenbelt
2 Zones for each coastal province, city, and municipality. The criteria for
3 designation of a priority area shall be based on its vulnerability to storm
4 surges, waves, tsunamis, and the like. This shall be completed within
5 one (1) year from the adoption of the NCGMAP;
- 6 (c) Designation as priority areas for Coastal Greenbelt Zones all those that
7 are declared as a protected area under the Expanded National
8 Integrated Protected Areas System (Republic Act No. 11038), a fish
9 refuge or sanctuary under the Amended Fisheries Code (Republic Act
10 No. 10654), or as a local marine protected area as declared by
11 municipalities and cities through ordinances. The designation shall be
12 completed within six (6) months from the completion of the assessment.
13 The designation shall be done through the proposal of the appropriate
14 agency, municipality, or city as may be necessary. No structures shall be
15 allowed in the designated area. Designation as a priority area, however,
16 shall not affect structures found in fisherfolk settlement areas reserved
17 for the settlement of municipal fisherfolks and shall not impair existing
18 foreshore leases and other similar agreements: *Provided*, that grantees
19 shall be tasked to implement the plans and conditions laid down under
20 the NCGMAP and LCGMAP;
- 21 (d) Operational Plan Part I, or the operational plan for the rehabilitation,
22 reforestation, or afforestation of designated priority coastal greenbelts
23 with ecologically appropriate mangrove and beach forest species, not
24 less than one hundred (100) meters in width, existing forests or
25 plantations greater than the minimum width shall not be reduced. The
26 program for rehabilitation, reforestation, or afforestation shall be
27 community-based, long-term, and implemented through the
28 municipality or city government. The Operation Plan shall indicate that
29 the program for rehabilitation, reforestation, and afforestation must
30 cover a minimum target area of twenty percent (20%) of the designated
31 priority areas in the first five (5) years for maximum protection of the
32 most vulnerable communities in the city or municipality. The remaining

1 priority areas must be completed within ten (10) years from the
2 designation as priority areas;

3 (e) Operational Plan Part II, or the operational plan for the reversion of all
4 abandoned fishponds to mangroves through natural regeneration or
5 replanting with locally appropriate species. The NCGMAP shall
6 indicate that the identification and recovery of possession from
7 delinquent fishpond lease agreement holders shall be completed within
8 twelve (12) months from the adoption thereof. All fishpond areas to be
9 reverted to mangroves shall form part of the minimum target for the
10 first year of implementation of the NCGMAP;

11 (f) Operational Plan Part III, or the operational plan for the removal of
12 illegal structures (such as breakwaters, permanent
13 residential/commercial structures, and the like) in the identified
14 priority coastal greenbelts. The NCGMAP shall indicate that the
15 declaration and notice to persons responsible for the removal of illegal
16 structures shall be completed within twelve (12) months from the start
17 of rehabilitation, reforestation, or afforestation of these areas shall form
18 part of the minimum target for the first year of implementation of the
19 NCGMAP; and

20 (g) Monitoring and evaluation plan, with quantitative and qualitative
21 targets consistent with subparagraphs (d), (e), and (f) of this Section,
22 appropriate indicators, and reasonable means of verification. The plan
23 shall become an integrated part of the NCGMAP and Annual Report to
24 Congress.

25 *Sec. 7. Roles of Key Implementing Agencies.* – The following agencies shall take
26 the lead in implementing components of the NCGMAP that are relevant to their
27 mandates:

28 (a) The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall
29 be responsible for convening the NTAC, facilitating public participation
30 in the crafting of the NCGMAP and the integration of the NCGMAP into
31 the Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan (LCGMAP), and
32 preparing the integrated report to Congress, especially with regard to

1 the expenditure of the appropriation and other pertinent matters under
2 Section 9 of this Act;

3 (b) DENR shall likewise be responsible for Sections 6 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e),
4 and (f) of this Act in line with existing laws and mandates, and it shall
5 provide the NTAC with all the relevant information to aid in the
6 monitoring and evaluation of the NCGMAP. In particular, the DENR
7 shall identify the designated areas that must be expropriated by the
8 government and recommend the expropriation plan to the Committee;

9 (c) The Climate Change Commission (CCC) shall assist DENR as
10 Secretariat in convening the NTAC and preparing the integrated report
11 to Congress. In line with its mandate to facilitate capacity building for
12 local adaptation planning, implementation, and monitoring of climate
13 change initiatives in vulnerable communities and areas, CCC shall also
14 develop and deliver instructional training modules, technical assistance,
15 and other capacity-building programs designed to enhance the
16 competence and proficiency of national and local policymakers and
17 planners on coastal greenbelt protection and management and other
18 nature-based solutions, particularly in the policy development,
19 planning, programming, budgeting and implementation thereof;

20 (d) The Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Fisheries and
21 Aquatic Resources (BFAR), shall coordinate with the NTAC for Section
22 6(e) above or Operation Plan Part II which provides for the reversion of
23 all abandoned fishponds to mangroves through natural regeneration,
24 replanting with locally appropriate species, and implementation of
25 fisherfolk settlement program in line with existing laws and mandate,
26 and it shall provide the Committee with all relevant information to aid
27 in the monitoring and evaluation of the NCGMPA;

28 (e) The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) through its
29 relevant offices, shall, in coordination with CCC, provide technical
30 guidance and supervision for provinces, cities, and municipalities to
31 establish their local Coastal Greenbelt Zones and develop appropriate
32 LCGMAPs, design and implement community-based and ecologically

1 appropriate rehabilitation, reforestation, and afforestation programs,
2 and monitor and evaluate the implementation of programs and action
3 plans by LGUs; and

4 (f) The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development
5 (DHSUD), in coordination with concerned LGUs, shall provide for the
6 relocation of the families or individuals who will be affected by the
7 designated areas.

8 Other implementing agencies that participated in the preparation of the
9 NCGMAP shall implement their commitments as provided therein within a period of
10 six (6) months. The actions required of implementing agencies are immediately
11 executable, based on the agreed NCGMAP, and on their existing mandates, programs,
12 and budgets that are aligned with the NCGMAP, without the need of formulating
13 implementing guidelines, rules, and regulations for this Act.

14 *Sec. 8. Establishment of Local Technical Advisory Committee on Coastal Greenbelt*
15 *Zones and Creation of Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan.* - A Local
16 Technical Advisory Committee (LTAC) on Coastal Greenbelt Zones shall be
17 established in each coastal city and municipality identified as priority Coastal
18 Greenbelt Zones in the NCGMAP. The LGUs, through their respective LTACs, shall
19 be the frontline agencies in the formulation, planning, and implementation of Local
20 Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plans in their respective areas, consistent with
21 the provisions of the Local Government Code and the NCGMAP.

22 Each LTAC on Coastal Greenbelt Zones shall be chaired by the Regional
23 Executive Director of the DENR, under whose jurisdiction the reservation area is
24 located, with the following members: (1) A representative of the Municipal
25 Government concerned; (2) A representative from each Barangay under whose
26 territory the reservation area is located; (3) A representative from a CSO; and (2) A
27 representative from either the academe or the scientific community.

28 The LTAC shall have the following powers and functions:

29 (1) To implement and enforce all programs and policies laid down by the
30 NTAC;

31 (2) To prepare a Local Coastal Greenbelt Management Action Plan
32 (LCGMAP) that shall facilitate the following, among others:

- 1 (a) Implementation of the mandated actions in the NCGMAP;
- 2 (b) Implementation of the mandates of the Key Implementing
3 Agencies under Section 7, by providing local data and other
4 supporting measures; and
- 5 (c) Implementation of complementary programs to assist local
6 communities and local businesses affected by the actions under
7 Sections 6 and 7, such as, but not limited to, relocations sites with
8 basic services like livelihood and transportation programs, zoning,
9 or re-zoning of the priority coastal greenbelt areas, as appropriate,
10 and the like;
- 11 (3) To provide an actual inventory of affected families in designated areas
12 to ensure that a legal, just, fair, and humane process of relocation is
13 carried out;
- 14 (4) To lead in the actual implementation of rehabilitation, reforestation, and
15 afforestation, through the coastal barangays;
- 16 (5) To integrate the identified Coastal Greenbelt Zones in the
17 Comprehensive Land-Use Plan;
- 18 (6) To provide data and qualitative feedback to the NTAC as may be
19 relevant;
- 20 (7) To secure the Coastal Greenbelt Zones from illegal and destructive
21 activities which would endanger the successful implementation and
22 viability of the program; and
- 23 (8) To perform such other powers and functions as may be designated by
24 the NTAC.

25 LGUs with coastal areas which are uninhabited or are not generating resources
26 for the LGUs shall, instead of formulating a separate LCGMAP, incorporate their
27 plans in their respective Comprehensive Land Use Plans and Annual Investment
28 Programs. These Coastal Greenbelt Zones shall be conserved at its natural state.

29 The Provincial Government shall provide technical and budgetary support to
30 its component coastal cities and municipalities and ensure consistency across
31 contiguous cities and municipalities sharing common priority coastal greenbelt areas.

1 Highly urbanized cities shall likewise provide support to component barangays
2 under their jurisdiction.

3 Sec. 9. *Incentives.* – Local government units (LGUs) whose LCGMAP have been
4 submitted and/or approved to DILG and DENR, or those LGUs that have been
5 recognized by the DILG and DENR for their effective establishment and/or
6 management efforts for coastal greenbelts, may be entitled to receive grants and
7 incentives for the purpose of building technical capacities in implementing the
8 LCGMAP and supporting programs which are in line with the objectives of this Act.
9 The LGUs shall also be entitled to receive instructional training modules, technical
10 assistance, and other capacity-building programs designed to enhance their
11 competence and proficiency in coastal greenbelt protection and management and
12 other nature-based solutions. The incentive program, which shall encourage the
13 participation of LGUs in the implementation of this Act, shall be included in the
14 NCGMAP.

15 Sec. 10. *Coastal Greenbelt Incentive Fund.* – There is hereby created a special
16 account under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) called “Coastal Greenbelt
17 Fund” (CGIF). The fund shall be utilized to pay out the incentives granted to LGUs
18 which qualify for the CGIF.

19 Sec. 11. *Enforcement Actions.* –

20 (a) In addition to the penalties provided under existing laws, any person
21 who obstructs the LGU, DENR, or any other authorized agency or officer
22 in the removal of illegal structures, or BFAR in the process of reversion
23 of abandoned fishponds, shall be liable to that agency for an
24 administrative fine of Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php 50,000.00) per day that
25 the agency is prevented from performing its function.

26 (b) No structures shall be built within the identified coastal greenbelt zones
27 without permits from the LGU, DENR, or BFAR, consistent with their
28 mandates. Any person who violates this prohibition shall be liable for
29 an administrative fine of Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php 50,000.00) per day
30 from the time the structure was built until its removal.

1 (c) Proceeds from administrative fines under this Section shall be retained
2 by the agency imposing such fines and used exclusively for the
3 implementation of its mandate under this Act.

4 (d) Legal actions filed in the exercise of rights and enforcement of
5 obligations under this Act shall also be covered by the Fisheries Code,
6 as amended by R.A. No. 10654, and the 2010 Supreme Court Rules of
7 Procedure for Environmental Cases.

8 Sec. 12. *Annual Report to Congress.* - The Key Implementing Agencies
9 enumerated in Section 7 of this Act shall report to NTAC on their progress in meeting
10 the quantitative and qualitative targets under the NCGMAP for each year. The reports
11 shall be consolidated by DENR and CCC, as Chairperson and Secretariat of the
12 Committee, respectively, for presentation to the appropriate Committee in Congress
13 at a meeting called for that purpose.

14 Sec. 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within sixty (60) days from the
15 effectivity of this Act, the NTAC shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations
16 for the effective implementation of this Act.

17 Sec. 14. *Appropriations.* - The relevant government agencies and LGUs shall
18 draw from their existing programs and budgets to implement their responsibilities
19 under the NCGMAP, and through the People's Survival Fund under R.A. No. 10174,
20 where appropriate, subject to additional funding in the annual national
21 appropriations, to meet the targets agreed in the NCGMAP.

22 Sec. 15. *Separability Clause.* - Should any provision of this Act be declared
23 invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other
24 provisions of this act.

25 Sec. 16. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or
26 other issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
27 repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

28 Sec. 17. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
29 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
30 circulation.

Approved,