

slower rate in the sea than in the air, and so persist for considerable periods of time. Floating net fragments, monoline rope, can carriers, and packaging bands can entangle individual animals. Smaller plastic particles may be ingested by marine mammals, seabirds, turtles and fish, possibly blocking the digestive tract or causing ulcerations and damage to the stomach lining.

Marine debris is also a hazard to navigation, putting mariners and rescuers, their vessels, and consequently the marine environment at risk, and can cause economic loss due to entanglement of vessel systems.

Like many global environmental problems, marine pollution requires proper environmental planning. Insufficient knowledge and data on the source, movement, and effects of plastics and other marine debris in marine ecosystems has hampered efforts to develop effective approaches for addressing marine debris.

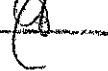
Lack of resources, inadequate attention to this issue, and poor coordination at the national level has undermined the development and implementation of a national program to address marine debris, both domestically and regionally.

The purpose of this bill is to establish programs within the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to (1) help identify, determine sources of, assess, reduce, and prevent marine debris and its adverse impacts on the marine environment and navigation safety, in coordination with other national and local entities; (2) develop a national information clearinghouse to enable researchers to study the sources, scale and impact of marine debris more efficiently; and (3) take appropriate action in the international community to prevent marine debris and reduce concentrations of existing debris on a global scale.


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

RECEIVED BY: 

SENATE
S. B. No. 2227

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A MARINE DEBRIS RESEARCH, PREVENTION, AND
REDUCTION PROGRAM

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act.”

SECTION 2. *Implementing Agency.* – The Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources shall implement the provisions of this act; the acting Bureau Director shall be designated as program administrator.

SECTION 3. *Program Components* - The EMB with the assistance of the Philippine Coast Guard and the Department of Interior and Local Government and in coordination with other relevant agencies shall:

- (1) Develop and implement a Marine Debris Prevention and Removal Program to reduce and prevent the occurrence and adverse impacts of marine debris on the marine environment and navigation safety.
- (2) Undertake marine debris mapping, identification, impact assessment, prevention, and removal efforts, with a focus on marine debris posing a threat to living marine resources, particularly species identified as endangered or threatened or protected, and navigation safety, including:
 - (A) The establishment of a process, building on existing information sources maintained by other government agencies,

educational institutions and non-government organizations for cataloguing and maintaining an inventory of marine debris and its impacts found in the internal waters of the Philippines and the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, including location, material, size, age, and origin, and impacts on habitat, living marine resources, human health, and navigation safety;

(B) The creation of measures to identify the origin, location, and projected movement of marine debris within the Philippines internal waters, the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, and the high seas, including the use of oceanographic, atmospheric, satellite, and remote sensing data; and

(C) The development and implementation of strategies, methods, priorities, and a plan for preventing and removing marine debris from Philippines' internal waters and within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, including development of local or regional protocols for removal of derelict fishing gear.

(3) Improve efforts and actively seek to prevent and reduce fishing gear losses, as well as to reduce adverse impacts of such gear on living marine resources and navigation safety, including--

(A) research and development of alternatives to gear posing threats to the marine environment, and methods for marking gear used in specific fisheries to enhance the tracking, recovery, and identification of lost and discarded gear; and

(B) development of voluntary or mandatory measures to reduce the loss and discard of fishing gear.

(4) Establish outreach activities and education of the public and other stakeholders, such as the fishing industry, fishing gear manufacturers, and other marine-dependent industries, on sources of marine debris, threats

associated with marine debris and approaches to identify, determine sources of, assess, reduce, and prevent marine debris and its adverse impacts on the marine environment and navigational safety, including outreach and education activities through public-private initiatives.

SECTION 4. *Grants-* Financial assistance, in the form of grants, shall be provided through the Marine Debris Prevention and Removal Program for projects to accomplish the purposes of this Act.

(1) Fifty percent (50%) Percent Matching Requirement-

(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), national funds for any project under this section may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of such project. For purposes of this subparagraph, the project proponent's share of the project costs may be provided by in-kind contributions and other noncash support.

(B) Waiver- The Environment Management Bureau may waive all or part of the matching requirement under subparagraph (A) if the Administrator determines that no reasonable means are available through which applicants can meet the matching requirement and the probable benefit of such project outweighs the public interest in such matching requirement.

(2) Eligibility - Any natural resource management authority of a local government unit or other government authority whose activities directly or indirectly affect research or regulation of marine debris, and any educational or nongovernmental institutions with demonstrated expertise in a field related to marine debris, are eligible to submit to the EMB a marine debris proposal under the grant program.

(3) Grant Criteria and Guidelines - Within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the EMB shall promulgate necessary guidelines for implementation of the grant program, including development of criteria and priorities for grants. Such priorities may include proposals that would

reduce new sources of marine debris and provide additional benefits to the public, such as recycling of marine debris or use of biodegradable materials. In developing those guidelines, the EMB shall consult with--

(A) national, regional, and local governmental entities with marine debris experience;

(D) marine-dependent industries; and

(E) non-governmental organizations involved in marine debris research, prevention, or removal activities.

(4) Project Review and Approval- The EMB shall review each marine debris project proposal to determine if it meets the grant criteria and supports the goals of the Act. Not later than 120 days after receiving a project proposal under this section, the EMB shall--

(A) Provide for external merit-based peer review of the proposal;

(B) After considering any written comments and recommendations based on the review, approve or disapprove the proposal; and

(C) Provide written notification of that approval or disapproval to the person who submitted the proposal.

(5) Project Reporting - Each grantee under this section shall provide periodic reports as required by the Administrator. Each report shall include all information required by the Administrator for evaluating the progress and success in meeting its stated goals, and impact on the marine debris problem.

SECTION 5. *Appropriations.* – To carry out the provisions of this Act, an amount of Fifty million pesos (P50,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continuous operation of the program shall be included in the annual appropriations of the Environment Management Bureau.

SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision, or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* — Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 8. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

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