

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11365, August 08, 2019]

**AN ACT DECLARING THE BALANGA WETLAND AND NATURE PARK
LOCATED IN BARANGAY TORTUGAS, CITY OF BALANGA,
PROVINCE OF BATAAN AS A RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY-BASED
ECOTOURISM ZONE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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 "Balanga Wetland and Nature Park Responsible Ecotourism Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - The State is mandated to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and equitable for the local community. Towards this end, the Balanga Wetland and Nature Park (BWNP) is hereby declared a special ecotourism zone. It shall be accorded priority development by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone (TIEZA) and shall be subject of the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism zones provided in the national ecotourism strategy jointly issued by the DENR and the DOT.

SEC. 3. *Objective.* - Pursuant to the above declaration of policy, the State shall endeavor to accomplish the following:

(a) Develop and promote responsible, community-based ecological tourism as the core management strategy in the development of the BWNP;

(b) Ensure the conservation of the biodiversity and the preservation of the said ecotourism park;

(c) Develop ecotourism products and programs that will generate employment and livelihood for the local residents concerned, consistent with the preservation and maintenance of natural resources;

(d) Guarantee that the financial and economic benefits of the tourism industry are equitably shared by, and distributed among the local residents concerned by giving preference and support to community and home-based tourism enterprises, such as, but not limited to, micro and small businesses including local inns, lodges and homestays, restaurants, food and fruit stands, and other similar tourism oriented industries and businesses;

(e) Ensure that the quality of local ecotourism programs and activities are educational and enriching for tourists and visitors through the provision of

orientation, educational and your programs by local tour operators, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), the local government of the City of Balanga, the DENR and the DOT; and

(f) Guarantee that in the development and promotion of the local tourism industry, the local government of the City of Balanga shall ensure that the needs of local residents for adequate water supply, food, energy and local construction materials are first secured and met.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act:

(a) *Buffer zone* refers to identified area outside the boundaries of and immediately adjacent to the BWNP that needs special development control in order to avoid or minimize harm to the BWNP;

(b) *Community-based ecotourism* refers to a form of tourism where the local community and its residents have substantial control and involvement in the development and management of the local tourism industry and a greater portion of the economic gains remains within the community;

(c) *Ecotourism* refers to a form of sustainable tourism within a natural area where community participation, protection and management of natural resources, cultural and indigenous knowledge and practice, environmental education and ethics, as well as economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the enrichment of host communities and the satisfaction of visitors;

(d) *Homestay* refers to a system of tourist accommodation where a tourist stays with local residents and experience the day-to-day life within the local community;

(e) *Responsible ecotourism* refers to a form of sustainable tourism in which both tourism sector and the tourists take responsibility in the protection, respect and conservation of the natural environment and the local culture and ways of life, and where community participation as well as economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the well-being of the local people and visitors.

SEC. 5. *Balanga Wetland and Nature Park Ecotourism Zone.* - The BWNP located in Barangay Tortugas, City of Balanga, Province of Bataan is hereby declared as a responsible, community-based ecotourism zone. It shall be accorded priority development by the DOT, DENR, DPWH, and the TIEZA and shall be subject to the rules and regulations in the national ecotourism strategy jointly issued by the DENR and the DOT.

SEC. 6. *Scope and Coverage.* - The BWNP, which shall cover an area of one hundred fifty-three thousand five hundred seventy-eight (153,578) square meter of mangrove forest and one hundred eighty-seven thousand five hundred (187,500) square meters of foreshore land, is hereby declared an ecotourism zone. Its boundaries shall be as follows:

(a) Mangrove Forest

Beginning at a point marked 1, being N35 55' E, 335.73 meters from MBM 1, Balanga Cadastre, Bataan.

| | | | |
|--------|--------------|--------|----------------------|
| thence | N 56 5'0" W | 25.64 | meters to corner 2; |
| thence | N 43 19'0" E | 30.05 | meters to corner 3; |
| thence | N 31 29'0" E | 40.25 | meters to corner 4; |
| thence | N 44 10'0" W | 399.86 | meters to corner 5; |
| thence | S 57 37'0" W | 190.74 | meters to corner 6; |
| thence | N 64 12;0" W | 5.16 | meters to corner 7; |
| thence | N 5 45'0" W | 35.99 | meters to corner 8; |
| thence | N 69 0'0" E | 17.38 | meters to corner 9; |
| thence | N 13 38'0" E | 15.10 | meters to corner 10; |
| thence | N 63 45'0" W | 30.47 | meters to corner 11; |
| thence | N 17 14'0" E | 10.23 | meters to corner 12; |
| thence | N 40 29'0" W | 29.61 | meters to corner 13; |
| thence | N 25 46'0" E | 28.71 | meters to corner 14; |
| thence | S 74 22'0" E | 37.57 | meters to corner 15; |
| thence | N 29 15'0" E | 17.33 | meters to corner 16; |
| thence | N 57 34'0" W | 39.85 | meters to corner 17; |
| thence | N 12 42'0" E | 62.68 | meters to corner 18; |
| thence | N 5 5'0" E | 36.88 | meters to corner 19; |
| thence | N 37 55'0" W | 18.14 | meters to corner 20; |
| thence | N 13 35'0" E | 49.81 | meters to corner 21; |
| thence | N 23 41'0" E | 122.08 | meters to corner 22; |
| thence | N 40 26'0" E | 141.26 | meters to corner 23; |
| thence | S 72 36'0" E | 29.09 | meters to corner 24; |
| thence | S 17 56'0" E | 14.59 | meters to corner 25; |
| thence | S 12 20'0" E | 24.52 | meters to corner 26; |
| thence | S 44 59'0" E | 34.11 | meters to corner 27; |
| thence | S 13 40'0" E | 41.09 | meters to corner 28; |
| thence | S 4 8'0" W | 26.47 | meters to corner 29; |
| thence | S 14 22'0" W | 31.53 | meters to corner 30; |
| thence | S 32 51'0" W | 24.32 | meters to corner 31; |
| thence | S 8 20'0" W | 33.87 | meters to corner 32; |
| thence | S 17 3'0" E | 69.51 | meters to corner 33; |
| thence | S 28 36'0" E | 139.68 | meters to corner 34; |
| thence | S 37 16'0" E | 42.45 | meters to corner 35; |
| thence | S 46 20'0" E | 36.79 | meters to corner 36; |
| thence | S 67 42'0" E | 22.58 | meters to corner 37; |
| thence | N 88 35'0" E | 12.59 | meters to corner 38; |
| thence | S 62 9'0" E | 54.78 | meters to corner 39; |
| thence | S 89 29'0" E | 6.71 | meters to corner 40; |
| thence | N 45 32'0" E | 5.34 | meters to corner 41; |
| thence | N 82 23'0" E | 8.90 | meters to corner 42; |
| thence | S 68 57'0" E | 10.75 | meters to corner 43; |
| thence | S 54 29'0" E | 15.36 | meters to corner 44; |
| thence | S 34 53'0" E | 19.55 | meters to corner 45; |

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| thence | S 13 19'0" W | 9.46 | meters to corner 46; |
| thence | S 33 47'0" E | 44.67 | meters to corner 47; |
| thence | S 59 14'0" E | 17.48 | meters to corner 48; |
| thence | N 83 51'0" E | 25.33 | meters to corner 49; |
| thence | S 39 17'0" E | 152.54 | meters to corner 50; |
| thence | S 63 16'0" W | 225.50 | meters to corner 1. |

to the point of beginning containing an area of one hundred fifty-three thousand five hundred seventy-eight (153,578) square meters, more or less.

(b) Foreshore Land

Beginning at a point marked "1" on the map, being N 46 59' E, 565.88 meters from MBM #1, Balanga Cadastre, Bataan.

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|--------|--------------|--------|----------------------|
| thence | N 12 20'0" W | 19.64 | meters to corner 2; |
| thence | N 34 53'0" W | 31.95 | meters to corner 3; |
| thence | N 67 41'0" W | 14.62 | meters to corner 4; |
| thence | N 39 17'0" W | 163.37 | meters to corner 5; |
| thence | N 28 36'0" W | 136.14 | meters to corner 6; |
| thence | S 81 23'0" W | 21.17 | meters to corner 7; |
| thence | N 55 31'0" E | 181.64 | meters to corner 8; |
| thence | S 88 36'0" W | 13.61 | meters to corner 9; |
| thence | N 32 50'0" E | 23.23 | meters to corner 10; |
| thence | N 13 19'0" E | 9.69 | meters to corner 11; |
| thence | N 62 9'0" W | 50.35 | meters to corner 12; |
| thence | N 33 47'0" W | 31.44 | meters to corner 13; |
| thence | N 72 36'0" W | 39.42 | meters to corner 14; |
| thence | N 68 56'0" W | 18.40 | meters to corner 15; |
| thence | N 46 20'0" W | 31.44 | meters to corner 16; |
| thence | N 17 56'0" | 25.90 | meters to corner 17; |
| thence | N 13 40'0" W | 49.83 | meters to corner 18; |
| thence | N 54 30'0" W | 21.35 | meters to corner 19; |
| thence | N 37 16'0" W | 39.34 | meters to corner 20; |
| thence | N 14 22'0" E | 36.57 | meters to corner 21; |
| thence | N 17 3'0" W | 62.98 | meters to corner 22; |
| thence | S 83 51'0" W | 29.49 | meters to corner 23; |
| thence | S 63 16'0" W | 152.57 | meters to corner 24; |
| thence | N 59 14'0" W | 6.29 | meters to corner 25; |
| thence | N 44 59'0" W | 33.85 | meters to corner 26; |
| thence | S 32 39'0" E | 877.51 | meters to corner 27; |
| thence | N 8 20'0" E | 25.02 | meters to corner 28; |
| thence | N 4 8'0" E | 31.40 | meters to corner 1. |

to the point of beginning containing an area of one hundred eighty-seven thousand five hundred (187,500) square meters, more or less.

The metes and bounds of the BWNP shall be indicated on maps and/or natural charts. Any modification of the coverage of this Act due to such factors as changing ecological situation, new scientific or archaeological findings, or discovery of traditional boundaries not previously taken into account shall be made through an act of Congress, after consultation with the concerned government agencies.

SEC. 7. *Establishment of a Buffer Zone.* - There shall also be established buffer zones surrounding the BWNP for the purpose of providing extra protection around the area, where restrictions shall apply and communities can assist in repealing threats to the BWNP. Such buffer zones shall be managed according to the ecotourism development and management plan formulated pursuant to this Act.

Such buffer zone shall be included in the ecotourism development and management plan of the BWNP: *Provided,* That no build up or reclamation detrimental to the biodiversity in the BWNP shall be done within the designated buffer zone. The Council shall exercise its authority over the designated buffer zone.

SEC. 8. *Balanga Wetland and Nature Park Ecotourism Development and Management Plan.* - The DENR, and the DOT, in coordination with the DPWH and the TIEZA, shall jointly assist the Balanga Wetland and Nature Park Development Council, herein created, in the formulation of the ecotourism development and management plan for the BWNP that shall be complemented by a set of guidelines for a responsible, community-based ecotourism. The ecotourism development and management plan shall ensure the preservation of the eco-park and shall include the following components:

- (a) Carrying capacity of the eco-park and its migratory birds;
- (b) Specific site assessment;
- (c) Identification of strategic priorities;
- (d) Product development for local income generation;
- (e) Capacity-building for the local community to allow residents, therein to ably manage economically viable and responsible, community-based ecotourism business enterprises;
- (f) Support for the formulation of local production groups and networks, including the marketing and pricing of products;
- (g) Marketing strategies that reflect the natural, social and environmental integrity of the BWNP;
- (h) Regular water quality monitoring of the Talisay River;
- (i) Management and maintenance of the mangrove areas;
- (j) Solid and liquid waste management; and
- (k) Solutions addressing the problem of the declining population of the waterbirds as reflected in the annual waterbird census.