



Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session
HOUSE BILL NO. 632



introduced by
REPRESENTATIVE LOREN B. LEGARDA

AN ACT
DECLARING THE NORTHERN ANTIQUE PROTECTED SEASCAPE AND LANDSCAPE LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF LIBERTAD, PANDAN, SEBASTE, CULASI AND TIBIAO IN THE PROVINCE OF ANTIQUE AS AN ECOTOURISM ZONE TO ENCOURAGE THE RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE USE AS WELL AS FOR THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES FOUND THEREIN, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare the Northern Antique Protected Seascapes and Landscape located in the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi, and Tibiao in the province of Antique as a responsible, community-based ecotourism zone with the goals of developing and promoting the areas into a community-based ecological tourist destination, generating investments, creating livelihood opportunities, and protecting the natural resources within the areas including mangroves, other aquatic plant and migratory birds and local birds.

The vast seascapes and landscapes found in the municipalities mentioned above serve as hosts to a rich marine life, as well as to the diverse species of flora and fauna, some of which are endemic to the province.

Moreover, the Mag-aba Wetland, located in an estuary in the municipality of Pandan, connects to the Pandan Bay, and to the Bugang River, which has been

recognized as one of the cleanest rivers in the Philippines. The area is rich in mangroves that serve as a natural flood control mechanism and is host to biologically-rich ecological habitat. It is home to several endemic mangrove species, beach forest trees and fauna, most notably of which is the Philippine duck (*Anas luzonica*) which has been recognized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) as a “vulnerable species”. Hence, the need to protect, preserve and conserve these natural resources with the help primarily of the host local communities.

In anticipation of the influx of local and foreign tourists, this bill, when enacted into law, will help secure adequate national support for the local government units (LGUs) to realize its vast potential as an eco-tourism zone that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable and ethically and socially equitable for the local community.

In view of the above, support for the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



LOREN B. LEGARDA



Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

introduced by
REPRESENTATIVE LOREN B. LEGARDA

AN ACT

DECLARING THE NORTHERN ANTIQUE PROTECTED SEASCAPE AND LANDSCAPE LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF LIBERTAD, PANDAN, SEBASTE, CULASI AND TIBIAO IN THE PROVINCE OF ANTIQUE AS AN ECOTOURISM ZONE TO ENCOURAGE THE RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE USE AS WELL AS FOR THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES FOUND THEREIN, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

- (b) Ensure the conservation of the biodiversity and the preservation of the said ecotourism site;
 - (c) Develop ecotourism products and programs that will generate employment and livelihood for the local residents concerned, consistent with the preservation and maintenance of the 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, resorts and homestays, micro and small businesses including 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 tour programs by local tour operators, non-government organizations (NGOs), the concerned Local Government Units (LGUs), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the Department of Tourism (DOT); and,
 - (f) Guarantee that in the development and promotion of the local tourism industry, the concerned Local Government Units (LGUs) shall ensure that the needs of the local residents for adequate water supply, food, energy , transportation and local construction materials are first secured and met.

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

- (a) *Buffer Zone* refers to an identified area outside the boundaries of and immediately adjacent to the NAPSL that need special development control in order to avoid or minimize any threat or harm to the NAPSL;

SEC. 5. Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape. — The Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape (NAPSL) located at the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi, and Tibiao in the Province of Antique is hereby declared as a responsible, community-based ecotourism zone. It shall be accorded priority development by the DOT, DENR, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), and Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and shall be subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism zones provided in the national ecotourism strategy jointly issued by the DENR and DOT.

25 **SEC. 6.** *Scope and Coverage.* – The NAPSL, which shall cover an area of
26 364,453.5395 hectares, shall be composed of the following:

- 三
- 1 a) The wetland area located in Brgy. Mag-aba, Pandan, Antique composed of
2 mangrove forest and estuarine river ecosystem with an area of 21,095
3 hectares, located in Brgy. Mag-aba, Pandan Antique;
4 b) The seas, islet and sandbar ecosystem covering the municipalities of
5 Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi, and Tibiao with an area of 213,556.26
6 hectares; and,
7 c) The Pandan Bay with an area of 150,876.25 hectares.

8 The corresponding boundaries shall be as follows:

9 A. The wetland area

10 Beginning at point marked TP - 1, being N 81° 21' W, 27,787.09 meters from
11 reference BLLM 1, PLS 1107, Northern Antique Protected Seascape and
12 Landscape;

13	thence	S 75° 30' E	3,242.00	meters to corner 2;
14	thence	N 81° 34' E	3,723.95	meters to corner 3
15	thence	S 88° 11' E	4,292.00	meters to corner 4
16	thence	S 70° 26' E	7,759.31	meters to corner 5
17	thence	S 83° 19' E	3,489.57	meters to corner 6
18	thence	N 78° 36' E	2,873.78	meters to corner 7
19	thence	S 40° 19' E	4,925.65	meters to corner 8
20	thence	S 05° 55' W	14,342.35	meters to corner 9
21	thence	S 12° 57' W	4,208.77	meters to corner 10
22	thence	S 20° 40' W	8,176.30	meters to corner 11
23	thence	S 26° 28' E	2,100.83	meters to corner 12
24	thence	S 15° 07' W	3,828.16	meters to corner 13
25	thence	S 14° 11' E	4,552.10	meters to corner 14

1	thence	S 07° 49' W 2,472.18	meters to corner 15
2	thence	N 89° 51' W 17,369.06	meters to corner 16
3	thence	S 19° 13' W 3,169.16	meters to corner 17
4	thence	S 47° 56' W 18,926.52	meters to corner 18
5	thence	S 61° 51' W 6,834.81	meters to corner 19
6	thence	S 88° 08' W 6,837.37	meters to corner 20
7	thence	N 65° 37' W 6,817.66	meters to corner 21
8	thence	N 40° 46' W 6,141.86	meters to corner 22
9	thence	N 16° 52' W 6,841.57	meters to corner 23
10	thence	N 09° 23' E 6,833.87	meters to corner 24
11	thence	N 03° 19' E 32,126.72	meters to corner 25
12	thence	N 31° 53' E 4,886.87	meters to corner 26
13	thence	N 50° 38' E 3,792.90	meters to corner 27
14	thence	N 66° 15' E 6,070.27	meters to corner 28
15	thence	N 83° 30' E 20,309.49	meters to corner 1.
16	to the point of beginning containing an area of two hundred ninety-nine thousand		
17	nine hundred forty two and 542/100 (299,942.542) hectares, more or less.		

18 B. Seas, Islets and Sandbar Ecosystem

19 Beginning at point marked TP - 1, being S 86° 08' W, 33,925.26 meters from
 20 reference BLLM 1, PLS 1107, Northern Antique Protected Seascapes and
 21 Landscape;

22	thence	S 44° 36' W 14,735.43	meters to corner 2;
23	thence	S 30° 12' E 1,957.43	meters to corner 3;
24	thence	S 57° 20' E 24,725.84	meters to corner 4;
25	thence	N 81° 25' E 4,111.89	meters to corner 5;
26	thence	S 52° 51' E 11,911.68	meters to corner 6;

1	thence	N 84° 22' E	3,904.27	meters to corner 7;
2	thence	S 14° 11' E	4,552.10	meters to corner 8;
3	thence	S 07° 49' W	2,472.18	meters to corner 9;
4	thence	N 89° 51' W	17,369.06	meters to corner 10;
5	thence	S 19° 13' W	3,169.16	meters to corner 11;
6	thence	S 47° 56' W	18,926.52	meters to corner 12;
7	thence	S 61° 51' W	6,834.81	meters to corner 13;
8	thence	S 88° 08' W	6,837.37	meters to corner 14;
9	thence	N 65° 37' W	6,817.66	meters to corner 15;
10	thence	N 35° 22' W	6,930.04	meters to corner 16;
11	thence	N 19° 42' W	5,891.75	meters to corner 17;
12	thence	N 09° 23' E	6,833.87	meters to corner 18;
13	thence	N 03° 19' E	32,126.72	meters to corner 19;
14	thence	N 31° 53' E	4,886.87	meters to corner 20;
15	thence	N 50° 38' E	3,792.90	meters to corner 21;
16	thence	N 66° 15' E	6,070.27	meters to corner 22;
17	thence	N 88° 45' E	5,636.26	meters to corner 23;
18	thence	S 62° 17' E	9,225.27	meters to corner 1.
19	to the point of beginning containing an area of one hundred eighty-six thousand			
20	forty two hundred and 676/100 (186,042.676) hectares, more or less.			

21 C. Pandan Bay

22 Beginning at point marked TP - 1, being N 81° 21' W, 27,787.09 meters from
 23 reference BLLM 1, PLS 1107, Northern Antique Protected Seascape and
 24 Landscape;

25	thence	S 75° 30' E	3,242.00	meters to corner 2;
26	thence	N 81° 34' E	3,723.95	meters to corner 3;

1	thence	S 88° 11'E	4,292.00	meters to corner 4;
2	thence	S 70° 26' E	7,759.31	meters to corner 5;
3	thence	S 83° 19' E	3,489.57	meters to corner 6;
4	thence	N 78° 36' E	2,873.78	meters to corner 7;
5	thence	S 40° 19' E	4,925.65	meters to corner 8;
6	thence	S 05° 55' W	14,342.35	meters to corner 9;
7	thence	S 12° 57' W	4,208.77	meters to corner 10;
8	thence	S 20° 40' W	8,176.30	meters to corner 11;
9	thence	S 26° 28' E	2,100.83	meters to corner 12;
10	thence	S 15° 07' W	3,828.16	meters to corner 13;
11	thence	S 84° 22' W	3,904.27	meters to corner 14;
12	thence	N 52° 51' W	11,911.68	meters to corner 15;
13	thence	S 81° 25' W	4,111.89	meters to corner 16;
14	thence	N 57° 20' W	24,725.84	meters to corner 17;
15	thence	N 30° 12' W	1,957.43	meters to corner 18;
16	thence	N 44° 36' E	23,817.36	meters to corner 1.

17 to the point of beginning containing an area of one hundred nine thousand sixty
 18 seven hundred and 405/100 (109,067.405) hectares, more or less.

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

24 **SEC. 7. Establishment of a Buffer Zone.** – There shall also be established buffer
 25 zones surrounding the NAPSL for the purpose of providing extra protection around the
 26 area, where restrictions shall apply and communities can assist in repealing threats to

1 the NAPSL. Such buffer zones shall be managed according to the ecotourism and
2 management plan formulated pursuant to this Act.

3 Such buffer zone shall be included in the ecotourism development and
4 management plan of the NASPL: Provided, that no build up or reclamation detrimental
5 to the diversity in the NASPL shall be done within the designated buffer zone. The
6 Council shall exercise its authority over the designated buffer zone.

7 **SEC. 8. Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape Ecotourism**
8 *Development and Management Plan.* – The DENR and the DOT, in coordination with
9 the DPWH and TIEZA, shall jointly assist the Northern Antique Protected Seascape
10 and Landscape Development Council, herein created, in the formulation of the
11 ecotourism development and management plan for the NAPSL that shall be
12 complemented by a set of guidelines for a responsible, community-based ecotourism.
13 The tourism development and management plan shall ensure the preservation of the
14 seascapes and landscapes and shall include the following components:

- 15 (a) Carrying capacity of the seascapes and landscapes and its endemic and
16 migratory birds species;
- 17 (b) Specific site assessment, including terrestrial, underwater (biotic and
18 abiotic), oceanographic and other scientific site assessment;
- 19 (c) Identification of strategic priorities;
- 20 (d) Product development for local income generation;
- 21 (e) Capacity building for the local community to allow residents therein to ably
22 manage economically viable and responsible, community-based
23 ecotourism business enterprises;
- 24 (f) Support for the formulation of local groups and networks, including the
25 marketing and pricing of products;

- (g) Marketing strategies that reflect the natural, social and environmental integrity of the NAPSL;
- (h) Regular water quality monitoring of the seascapes;
- (i) Management and maintenance of the mangrove areas; and
- (j) Proper solid waste management in accordance with Republic Act No. 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act; and,
- (k) Proper use, protection, preservation and revival of water resources and implementation of a proper sewerage system in accordance with Republic Act No. 9275, or the Clean Water Act;

10 The process of developing the ecotourism development and management plan
11 for the NAPSL shall be participatory, from the bottom up, with the framework to be
12 provided by the DOT and DENR in consultation with the Northern Antique Protected
13 Seascapes and Landscape Protected Area Management Board herein created.

14 In order to protect the mangroves and forest in NAPSL, the foreshore areas
15 shall not be leased to any private entity; Provided, that Special Agreements on
16 Protected Area (SAPA) may be availed upon Protected Area and Management Board
17 (PAMB) Clearance.

18 **SEC. 9. Formation of the Northern Antique Protected Seascape and**
19 *Landscape Protected Area Management Board.* - A multi-sectoral board to be
20 known as the "Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape Protected Area
21 Management Board", hereinafter referred to as the Board, shall be created. It shall be
22 composed of the following members:

- (n) One representative from the private sector, a resident of the Province of Antique, who is distinguished in a profession or field of interest relevant to protected seascapes and landscapes management; and,
 - (o) One representative from either a non-government organization (NGO) or People's Organization (PO), duly accredited both by the DENR and the provincial government of Antique. The NGO or PO represented should have been in existence for at least five (5) years with a proven track record in or related to seascapes and landscapes management.

The *ex-officio* members of the Board by virtue of their elective or appointive government positions as specified in the immediately preceding subsections (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), and (l) shall serve for the duration of their respective terms of office in their respective elective or appointive government positions.

The members of the Board specified under subsections (m), (n), and (o) of this section shall be elected by the *ex-officio* members of the Board in a transparent and fair selection process. They shall each serve a term of three (3) years and may be reappointed for another term.

The members of the Board shall serve without compensation, except for the actual and necessary travelling and subsistence expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, either in their attendance in meetings of the Board or in connection with other official business authorized through a resolution of the Board, subject to existing rules and regulations. Each member shall have the full capacity and accountability for decisions binding to the member's sector.

The members of the Board duly elected or appointed prior to the effectiveness of this Act shall continue their term until the expiration of their term or appointment. Thereafter, members of the Board shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

1 A member of the Board may be removed for any of the following grounds:

2 (a) More than three (3) consecutive unexcused absences from regular

3 meetings of the Board;

4 (b) Commission of acts prejudicial to the development and management of

5 NAPSL as embodied in existing rules and regulations governing NAPSL;

6 (c) Disassociation from the office or organization being represented;

7 (d) Termination of relationship with the office or organization being

8 represented; or

9 (e) Conviction by final judgment of any criminal act.

10 The local government of the Province of Antique shall provide a secretariat for

11 the Board including the funding necessary to cover the expenses for the performance

12 of its official functions and activities.

13 ***SEC. 10. Functions and Responsibilities of the PAMB Council.*** – The PAMB

14 Council shall be responsible for the following:

- 15 (a) Formulation and the implementation of the ecotourism development and
- 16 management plan in consultation with the local residents, businesses,
- 17 and other stakeholders;
- 18 (b) Assessment and evaluation of the potential impact of the development to
- 19 the environmental safety and well-being of the seascapes and
- 20 landscapes, communities, and enterprises;
- 21 (c) Provision of technical and financial assistance to the communities within
- 22 the seascapes and landscapes;
- 23 (d) Implementation of a monitoring plan for the water birds and their habitats to
- 24 ensure their presence and well-being in NAPSL;
- 25 (e) Formulation of the rules and regulations in relation to the maintenance
- 26 and security of the ecotourism areas; and

(f) Performance of other functions as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act.

SEC. 11. Formulation of Guidelines and Standards. – The DENR and DOT assist the PAMB Council in the formulation of local ecotourism standards ensuring environmental protection is integrated in the development and management of the tourism plans.

The guidelines and standards shall:

(a) Raise the capacity of all stakeholders and ensure that best practices are followed;

(b) Ensure optimal use of water and energy;

(c) Reduce waste and pollution through the encouragement of recycling and other environmentally-sound waste management reduction and disposal schemes;

(d) Prevent vandalism in the facilities of the eco-park; and

(e) Encourage the use of local produce and services, and support the employment of local people.

SEC. 12. Coordination with National Agencies. - The DENR and the DOT

18 shall closely coordinate with the Council, as well as the relevant regional offices of
19 the DPWH, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of
20 Transportation (DOTr), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of
21 Education (DepEd), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of
22 the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Philippine National Police
23 (PNP), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) and other line agencies of the
24 government in the implementation of this Act.

1 **SEC. 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** — Within thirty (30) days
2 from the effectivity of this Act, the DENR and the DOT, in consultation
3 with the Council, other concerned government agencies, and stakeholders,
4 shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper and
5 effective implementation of this Act.

6 **SEC. 14. Appropriations.** — The Secretaries of the DENR, DOT, and DPWH
7 and the Chief Operating Officer of TIEZA shall include in their subsidy
8 programs, support for the capital outlay requirements of the NAPSL for
9 the preliminary implementation of this Act and enhancement of the facilities of
10 the ecotourism zone which shall be taken from the budget of their
11 respective agencies for the current fiscal year.

12 The budgetary allocations for the succeeding years shall be included in
13 the General Appropriations Act, subject to government audit.

14 **SEC. 15. Separability Clause.** — If, for any reason, any provision of
15 this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions hereof
16 which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

17 **SEC. 16. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, executive orders,
18 proclamation and administrative regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent
19 herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

20 **SEC. 17. Effectivity Clause.** — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
21 its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation or in the
22 Official Gazette.

Approved ,