

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1509

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Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

Explanatory Note

According to the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, of the more than 70 mangrove species in the world, around 46 species are identified to occur in various parts of the Philippines. Mangroves are a vital part of the coastal and marine ecosystem. They serve as habitat for diverse species of marine creatures and even wildlife. They are also needed for water quality protection and maintenance and as food-web support. Mangrove forests also serve as cushion from impact of strong winds and as protection against soil erosion. These ecological functions of mangroves ultimately have economic benefits.

However, in recent years, the number of mangrove forests has been decreasing. In a 2012 report of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BAFR), there are only 117,000 hectares of mangrove forests remaining from the 500,000 hectares in 1918. Mangrove forests remaining along Philippine coasts today only cover less than one-third of their original area. During the 1960s and 1970s, most mangrove forests were either converted into fishponds or reclaimed for residential and industrial purposes. Aside from this, local government units and residents along the coasts lack the understanding of mangrove management.

Recognizing the ecological and economic benefits of mangroves, it should be the policy of the state to protect and preserve the mangrove forests in the country. Through setting aside specific areas for mangroves, we will be able to ensure that the people will continue to enjoy the benefits offered by mangrove systems.

This measure seeks to establish mangrove reservation areas in all coastal municipalities. It also intends to create a national steering committee that will be responsible in pursuing programs and projects aimed to preserve, protect, and rehabilitate mangrove forests, as well as in drafting a national plan for conservation and rehabilitation. Furthermore, this measure will penalize any act causing the destruction and depletion of mangrove trees.

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


HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

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Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE CONSERVATION, REFORESTATION, AND
REHABILITATION OF MANGROVE FORESTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND
PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** - This Act shall be known as "*National Mangrove*
2 *Forest Conservation and Rehabilitation Act*".

3
4 **Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
5 effectively manage the mangrove resources of the country to restore and conserve
6 biodiversity and to ensure the sustainability of their biological and ecological integrity
7 as well as their ability to provide ecological goods and services.

8
9 **Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** — For purposes of this Act;
10 (a) *Coastal areas* refer to the band of dry land and adjacent ocean space (water
11 and submerged land), the terrestrial processes and uses thereof directly affecting
12 oceanic processes and uses and vice versa and whose geographic extent may include
13 areas within a landmark limit of one (1) kilometer from the shoreline at high tide to
14 include mangrove swamps, brackish water ponds, nipa swamps, estuarines, sandy
15 beaches and other areas within a seaward limit of two *hundred (200) meters* isobaths to
16 include coral reefs, algae flats, seagrass beds and other soft bottom areas;

17 (b) *Illegally constructed fishponds* refer to fishponds constructed within public
18 lands without (he required Fishpond Lease Agreement (FLA) with the Bureau of
19 Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) as well as fishponds which have been built
20 within a greenbelt zone which, as provided by existing laws, are strips of mangrove or

1 swamplands at least fifty (50) meters wide, along shorelines facing oceans, lakes, and
2 other bodies of water, and strips of land at least twenty (20) meters wide facing lakes;

3 (c) *Littoral zone* refers to die part of the sea that is close to die shore which
4 extends from the high water mark, which is rarely inundated, to shoreline areas that are
5 permanently submerged;

6 (d) *Mangrove forest* refers to forested intertidal ecosystems that are occupied by
7 salt-tolerant woody plants with morphological, physiological, and reproductive
8 adaptations that enable them to colonize littoral zones;

9 (e) *Mangrove reservation areas* refer to portions of coastal areas which have
10 been set aside exclusively for the purpose of mangrove forest conservation and
11 reforestation;

12 (f) *REDD-plus* refers to reducing emissions front deforestation and forest
13 degradation. It is a proposed incentive system for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG)
14 emissions in which industrialized countries would provide financial incentives for
15 forested developing countries to manage and protect forests to reduce their GHG
16 emissions. The plus refers to the increased removal of GHGs through conservation of
17 forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest
18 carbon stocks.

19 (g) *Reforestation* refers to the planting of mangrove and mangrove associate
20 species along degraded or denuded mangrove areas; and

21 (h) *Rehabilitation* refers to reforestation of mangrove areas including the
22 physical and ecological restoration of reverted fish ponds to mangrove forests.

23
24 **SEC. 4. *Establishment of Mangrove Reservation Areas.*** - There shall be
25 established and set aside in all coastal areas in each municipality portions of land solely
26 for the conservation, protection, reforestation and rehabilitation of mangrove forests.
27 All natural stands of mangrove forests and regenerating abandoned ponds shall
28 automatically form part of the reservation areas. The local government units (LGUs),
29 together with the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) and
30 the BFAR local office, where the mangrove areas are located shall take the lead in the
31 identification, survey, zonification and mapping of all mangrove areas, segregating
32 areas that are still forested, severely denuded or degraded including abandoned,
33 undeveloped and underutilized fishponds. A resource management plan for these

1 mangrove areas shall be prepared, adopted, and implemented by concerned LGUs in
2 collaboration with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

3 Coastal communities residing within the vicinity of mangrove forests may
4 engage in non-extractive and biodiversity-friendly activities that are compatible with
5 mangrove forest rehabilitation within mangrove reservation areas such as ecotourism,
6 traditional gleaning of shellfish, and collection of honey. For this purpose, LGUs and
7 people's organizations (POs) may enter into agreements such as comanagement and
8 community-based forest management (CBFM) agreements with the DENR,
9 respectively: *Provided*, That the cutting of mangrove trees and other associated plants
10 therein, whether naturally growing or planted, is strictly prohibited.

11
12 *Sec. 5. Establishment of the National Steering Committee for the*
13 *Conservation and Rehabilitation of Mangrove Forests (NSCCRMF).* -There is
14 hereby established a National Steering Committee for the Conservation and
15 Rehabilitation of Mangrove Forests (NSCCRMF), hereinafter referred to as the
16 National Steering Committee, which shall be attached to the DENR. The DENR shall
17 provide secretariat support to the National Steering Committee.

18 The National Steering Committee shall be composed of eleven (11) members
19 consisting of the following or their designated representatives;

- 20 (a) The Secretary of the DENR who shall act as Chairperson;
- 21 (b) The Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local
22 Government (DILG) as Co-chairperson;
- 23 (c) The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) who shall act
24 as Vice Chairperson;
- 25 (d) The Vice Chairperson of the Climate Change Commission;
- 26 (e) The Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology
27 (DOST);
- 28 (f) The Director General of the National Economic and Development
29 Authority (NEDA);
- 30 (g) The Administrator of the National Mapping and Resources
31 Information Authority (NAMRIA);
- 32 (h) A representative from the academe to be appointed by the
33 Commission on Higher Education (CHED) upon the recommendation of
34 the former's peers;

- 1 (i) A representative from accredited nongovernment
2 organization (NGOs) conducting programs on sustainable mangrove
3 forest management to be recommended by the DENR Secretary;
4 (j) A representative from an association of professional marine scientists;
5 and
6 (k) A representative from fisherfolk organizations or cooperatives to be
7 recommended by the National Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
8 Management Council (NFARMC).

9
10 **Sec. 6. Powers and Functions of the National Steering Committee.** - The
11 National Steering Committee shall have the following powers and functions:

- 12 (a) To review existing policies and conduct studies on mangrove forest and its
13 conservation;
14 (b) To prepare a comprehensive plan for the conservation, reforestation, and
15 rehabilitation of mangrove forests and denuded or degraded mangrove areas;
16 (c) To oversee the identification, mapping and reversion of all abandoned,
17 undeveloped, underutilized fishponds covered by FLAs to the jurisdiction of the
18 DENR and the rehabilitation of such areas;
19 (d) To oversee the identification of illegally constructed fishponds and their
20 rehabilitation without prejudice to the filing of appropriate charges against those
21 responsible for their construction;
22 (e) To establish the guidelines in identifying the areas to be declared as
23 mangrove reservation areas;
24 (f) To identify and delineate the boundaries of coastal areas which shall form
25 part of the mangrove reservation areas;
26 (g) To monitor and evaluate the condition of mangrove forests all over the
27 country and to submit a report to Congress every other year;
28 (h) To exercise control and supervision over all the Local Steering Committees;
29 (i) To approve and submit to the People's Survival Fund Board, created under
30 Republic Act No. 10174, proposals for funding of mangrove reforestation and
31 rehabilitation projects submitted by the Local Steering Committees; and
32 (j) To recommend the necessary rules and regulations to be promulgated by the
33 DENR.

1 **Sec. 7. National Mangrove Forests Conservation and Rehabilitation**
2 **Plan (NMFCRP).** - The National Steering Committee shall, within six (6) months
3 from the effectivity of this Act, convene its members and formulate a National
4 Mangrove Forests Conservation and Rehabilitation Plan (NMFCRP),

5 The NMFCRP shall, at the minimum, contain the following;

6 (a) An inventory of the status of mangrove forests all over the country, including
7 those which have been converted to other uses;

8 (b) An inventory of all fishponds covered by FLAs, illegally constructed
9 fishponds, and areas released to BFAR but for which no FLAs were awarded;

10 (c) Identification of mangrove reservation areas for each province, city and
11 municipality to be prioritized for conservation, reforestation, and rehabilitation based on
12 vulnerability to storm surges, tsunamis and similar calamities. Such identification shall
13 be completed within one (1) year from the adoption of the NMFCRP;

14 (d) An operational plan for the rehabilitation or reforestation of mangrove
15 reservation areas with appropriate species and to a level that is sufficient to reduce, if
16 not neutralize, the impact of storm surges, tsunamis and similar calamities to local
17 inhabitants and their properties, as well as to provide their essential ecological services.
18 Such operational plan shall indicate the quantitative or qualitative targets and the time
19 period within which to complete such reforestation or rehabilitation;

20 (e) An operational plan for the reversion of abandoned, undeveloped,
21 underutilized, and illegally constructed fishponds, as well as those released to the
22 BFAR for fishpond purposes but for which no FLAs were issued, to the jurisdiction of
23 the DENR;

24 (f) An operational plan to conserve mangrove forests, determine the causes of
25 their conversion, and prevent their further conversion to other uses; and

26 (g) A monitoring and evaluation system for the reforestation and rehabilitation
27 of mangrove forests all over the country.

28

29 **SEC. 8. Local Steering Committee for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of**
30 **Mangrove Forests (LSCCRMF).** ~ A Local Steering Committee for the
31 Conservation and Rehabilitation of Mangrove Forests (LSCCRMF), hereinafter referred
32 to as the Local Steering Committee, shall be established in each of the municipalities
33 where at least one (1) reservation area has been identified. Each Local Steering
34 Committee shall be chaired by the Community Environment and Natural Resources

Officer(CENRO) under whose jurisdiction the reservation area is located, with the following members:

- (a) A representative of the municipal government concerned;
- (b) A representative or representatives from a barangay or barangays under whose jurisdiction the reservation area is located;
- (c) A representative from an accredited NGO;
- (d) A representative from the private sector; and
- (e) A representative from fisherfolk organizations or cooperatives to be recommended by the Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (MFARMC).

The CENRO shall provide secretariat support to the Local Steering Committee.

SEC. 9. Powers and Functions of the Local Steering Committee. - The Local Steering Committee shall have the following powers and functions:

- (a) To implement and enforce the NMFCRP laid down by the National Steering Committee within its jurisdiction;
- (b) To carry out the general administration and day-to-day implementation of the Local Mangrove Forests Conservation and Rehabilitation Plan (LMFCRP);
- (c) To secure the mangrove reservation area from illegal and destructive activities which would endanger the successful implementation and viability of the NMFCRP and LMFCRP;
- (d) To monitor and evaluate the condition of local mangrove forests and to submit a report to the National Steering Committee every other year;
- (e) To submit proposals to the People's Survival Fund Board, created under Republic Act No. 10174, for funding of mangrove reforestation or rehabilitation projects as part of Climate Change Adaptation through the National Steering Committee; and
- (f) To perform such other powers and functions as may be designated by the National Steering Committee.

Sec. 10, Local Mangrove Forests Conservation and Rehabilitation Plan (LMFCRP). - The Local Steering Committee shall, within six (6) months from the receipt of the NMFCRP, convene its members and come up with an LMFCRP.

The LMFCRP shall, at the minimum, contain the following:

1 (a) An inventory of the status of mangrove forests within the municipality,
2 including those which have been converted to other uses;

3 (b) An inventory of all fishponds covered by FLAs, illegally constructed
4 fishponds, and areas released to the BFAR but for which no FLAs were awarded;

5 (c) Identification of mangrove reservation areas within the municipality to be
6 prioritized for conservation, reforestation, and rehabilitation based on vulnerability to
7 storm surges, tsunamis and similar calamities. Such identification shall be completed
8 within one (1) year from the adoption of the LMFCRP;

9 (d) An operational plan for the reforestation or rehabilitation of mangrove
10 reservation areas with appropriate species and to a level that is sufficient to reduce, if
11 not neutralize, the impact of storm surges, tsunamis and similar calamities to local
12 inhabitants and their properties, as well as to provide their essential ecological services.
13 Such operational plan shall indicate the quantitative or qualitative targets and the time
14 period within which to complete such reforestation or rehabilitation;

15 (e) An operational plan for the reversion of abandoned, undeveloped,
16 underutilized, illegally constructed fishponds, as well as those released to the BFAR for
17 fishpond purposes but for which no FLAs were issued, to the jurisdiction of the DENR;

18 (f) An operational plan to conserve mangrove forests, determine the causes of
19 their conversion, and prevent further conversion of mangroves to other uses; and

20 (g) A monitoring and evaluation system for the reforestation and rehabilitation
21 of mangrove forests within the municipality.

22
23 **Sec. 11. *Abandoned, Undeveloped, Underutilized Fishponds in Mangrove***
24 ***Areas Covered by FLAs Awarded by BFAR, Illegally Constructed Fishponds, and***
25 ***Areas Released to BFAR but for Which No FLAs Were Awarded.*** - The FLAs of all
26 abandoned, undeveloped, underutilized (AUU) fishponds shall be cancelled by the DA
27 through the BFAR and the area turned over to the jurisdiction of the DENR. All
28 illegally constructed fishponds within mangrove forests shall also be identified by the
29 DENR with the assistance of the Local Steering Committee, without prejudice to the
30 filing of appropriate charges against the offending parties. Mangrove areas that were
31 released to the BFAR but for which no FLAs were awarded shall also revert to the
32 jurisdiction of the DENR for reforestation and rehabilitation. The DENR shall exert all
33 efforts to rehabilitate such fishponds or mangrove areas which have been reverted to its
34 jurisdiction or illegally converted to other uses.

1

2 **SEC. 12. Validation.** - Validation of the results of monitoring and
3 evaluation of reforestation and rehabilitation of mangrove forests, including the survival
4 rate in each municipality or city, shall be done by a disinterested private entity.

5

6 **SEC. 13. Proper Valuation and Compensation for Ecosystems Services.** - The
7 DENR shall formulate and institute appropriate mechanisms for proper valuation and
8 fair and comprehensive pricing of ecosystems services provided by mangrove forests.

9

10 **SEC.14. Prohibited Acts.** - The following acts shall be prohibited;

- 11 (a) Cutting, uprooting or destroying any mangrove tree;
12 (b) Dumping of waste within mangrove reservation areas;
13 (c) Construction or reclamation activity within mangrove reservation
14 areas;
15 (d) Illegal fishing activities that will result in the damage and destruction
16 of mangrove forests;
17 (e) Conversion of mangrove forests into ponds;
18 (f) Maintenance of illegal fishponds;
19 (g) Preventing DENR personnel from removing illegal structures or
20 QFAR personnel from reverting abandoned fishponds;
21 (h) Planting mangroves on seagrass beds, mud flats and sand flats; and
22 (i) Other acts or activities that will result in the damage or destruction of
23 mangrove forests.

24

25 **SEC. 15. Penalties.** - Any person, natural or juridical, found guilty of
26 violating any provision of this Act or its implementing rules and regulations shall, upon
27 due process, be penalized with a fine in the amount of not less than two hundred
28 thousand pesos (P200,000.00) but not more than one million pesos (P1,000,000.00), or
29 with imprisonment of not less than one (1) year but not more than six (6) years, or both,
30 at the discretion of the court: *Provided*, That if the area requires rehabilitation or
31 restoration, as determined by the court, the offender shall also be required to restore or
32 compensate for the restoration of the damage.

33 If the offender is an association or corporation, the president or manager and the
34 officer who has direct knowledge over the offense shall be held liable under this Act.

1 **Sec. 16. *Citizen's Suit.***- Any citizen may file an appropriate civil, criminal, or
2 administrative action in the proper court against;

3 (a) Any person who violates or fails to comply with the provisions of this Act or
4 its implementing rules and regulations;

5 (b) The DENR or other implementing agencies with respect to orders, rules and
6 regulations issued inconsistent with this Act; or

7 (c) Any public officer who willfully or grossly neglects the performance of an
8 act specifically enjoined as a duty by this Act or its implementing rules and
9 regulations; or abuses authority in the performance of duty; or in any manner
10 improperly performs duties under this Act or its implementing rules and
11 regulations. However, no suit can be filed until after thirty (30) days notice has
12 been given to the public officer or the alleged violator concerned and such
13 officer or violator does not take appropriate action upon such notice.
14

15 **Sec. 17. *Forest Guards.*** - In order to secure the mangrove reservation area from
16 illegal and destructive activities, the Local Steering Committee and the LGU, under
17 whose jurisdiction the mangrove reservation area is located, shall employ the services
18 of forest guards who shall be tasked with the responsibility to guard and police the
19 areas. The Local Steering Committee and the LGU may also deputize members of POs
20 as mangrove reservation area forest guards. The forest guards and deputized members
21 of POs shall undergo orientation and training with the DENR. They shall also have the
22 authority to arrest those caught violating the provisions of this Act or its implementing
23 rules and regulations under the following circumstances:

24 (a) When the person to be arrested has committed, or is actually committing a
25 violation, in the presence of the forest guard or deputized member of PO; and

26 (b) When an offense has, in fact, just been committed and the forest guard and
27 the deputized member of the PO has personal knowledge of facts indicating that the
28 person to be arrested has committed the violation.

29 In the event that any of the forest guards or a member of the deputized PO is
30 found to be guilty of nonfeasance, misfeasance or malfeasance, the forest guard or
31 guards or member of the deputized PO concerned and the officials of the Local Steering
32 Committee and the LGU, by virtue of the principle of command responsibility, shall be
33 held liable for the violations and shall be prosecuted in accordance with administrative

1 laws without prejudice to any criminal and/or civil liabilities provided for under
2 existing laws.

3
4 **SEC, 18. *Special Account for Mangrove Management and Mangrove***
5 ***Conservation and Rehabilitation Fund.***- The valuation mentioned in Section 13 of this
6 Act shall serve as the basis of the Local Steering Committee for charging fees for the
7 use of mangrove forest ecosystem services such as ecotourism, permits for fishing
8 boats, docking fees, and carbon trading.

9 For mangrove forests inside protected areas, revenues generated from the
10 abovementioned activities shall accrue to the corresponding Integrated Protected Areas
11 Fund (IPAF) created under Republic Act No. 7586, as amended by Republic Act No
12 10629, or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act.

13 For mangrove forests outside protected areas, revenues generated from the
14 abovementioned activities shall be managed under the following scheme:

15 (a) Seventy-five percent (75%) of the revenues generated shall accrue to a
16 Special Account for Mangrove Management created by the LGU where the mangrove
17 forest is located. The Special Account under the LGU Fund shall be created through an
18 ordinance indicating that the revenues accruing to the Special Account shall be utilized
19 solely for mangrove management including, but not limited to:

20 1) Employment of forest guards;

21 (2) For the general administration and day-to-day operation, protection,
22 maintenance, management, and implementation of the LMFCRP; and

23 (3) Duly approved projects endorsed by the National Steering Committee.

24
25 *Provided, That, except for hiring of forest guards, the Special Account shall not*
26 *be used to cover other Personnel Services expenditures. Expenditures chargeable*
27 *against said Special Account shall be subject to existing accounting, budgeting, and*
28 *auditing rules and regulations.*

29 (b) Twenty-five percent (25%) of the revenues generated will accrue to the
30 Mangrove Conservation and Rehabilitation Fund which shall be managed by the
31 National Steering Committee. The criteria and conditions for the utilization of the Fund
32 shall also be determined by the National Steering Committee subject to existing
33 accounting, budgeting, and auditing rules and regulations.

1 Disbursement from the Mangrove Conservation and Rehabilitation Fund shall
2 be made solely for the protection, maintenance, administration, and management of
3 mangrove forest areas, operational expenses of the National Steering Committee,
4 expenses on the preparation of the NMFCRP, and duly approved projects endorsed by
5 the National Steering Committee in the amounts authorized by the DENR; *Provided,*
6 That the Fund shall not be used to cover Personnel Services expenditures and
7 purchase of motor vehicles.

8 The Local Steering Committee, the LCDs, and the DENR may solicit and
9 receive donations, endowments, and grants in the form of contributions for the Special
10 Account for Mangrove Management and the Mangrove Conservation and Rehabilitation
11 Fund.

12
13 **Sec. 19. Tax Exemption.** - AH grants, bequests, endowments, donations, and
14 contributions made to the Local Steering Committee, the LCDs, and the DENR to be
15 used actually, directly, and exclusively for the Special Account for Mangrove
16 Management and the Mangrove Conservation and Rehabilitation Fund shall be exempt
17 from donor's tax and the same shall be allowed as deduction from the gross income of
18 the donor for purposes of computing the taxable income of the donor in accordance
19 with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

20
21 **SEC. 20. Payments for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest**
22 **Degradation (REDD-plus).** - All LGUs and POs involved in preventing deforestation
23 and sequestering carbon in mangrove forests shall have an equitable share in the
24 proceeds of the United Nations Programme on REDD-plus payments. The capacity of
25 the Local Steering Committee and the POs shall be developed to enable them to
26 properly value and monitor their mangrove forest resources as basis for equitable
27 sharing in REDD-plus payments.

28
29 **Sec. 21. Appropriation.** - The Secretary of the DENR shall immediately include
30 in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall
31 be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

32
33 **SEC. 22. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** ~ The DENR shall
34 promulgate the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for this Act within six (6)

1 months after the effectivity of this Act; *Provided*, That rules and regulations issued by
2 other government agencies and instrumentalities for the conservation, reforestation, and
3 rehabilitation of mangrove forests not inconsistent with this Act shall supplement the
4 rules and regulations issued by the DENR pursuant to the provisions of this Act.

5 The draft of the IRR shall be published and be subject to public consultation
6 with affected sectors. There shall be a mandatory review of the IRR and standards set
7 pursuant to the provisions of this Act by the National Steering Committee every five (5)
8 years.

9
10 **SEC, 23, Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.** - There is hereby created a
11 Joint Congressional Oversight Committee (JCOC) to monitor the implementation of
12 this Act and to review the IRR promulgated by the DENR for a period not exceeding
13 three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act. The JCOC shall be composed of five (5)
14 Senators and five (5) Representatives to be appointed by the Senate President and the
15 Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively. The JCOC shall be cochaired by
16 the Chairpersons of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources of the
17 Senate and the Special Committee on Reforestation of the House of Representatives.

18 The secretariat of the JCOC shall be drawn from existing personnel of the
19 Senate and House of Representatives committees comprising the JCOC,

20
21 **SEC. 24. Separability Clause.** — If, for any reason, any section or provision of
22 this Act shall be declared to be unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or
23 provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

24
25 **Sec. 25. Repealing Clause.** ~ All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
26 rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this
27 Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

28
29 **Sec. 26. Effectivity.** - This Act shad take effect fifteen (15) days after its
30 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,