



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 7881

BY REPRESENTATIVES UMALI, NOGRALES (K.A.) AND ABU,
PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 793

AN ACT DECLARING VERDE ISLAND PASSAGE A MARINE
PROTECTED AREA (MPA) AND ECOTOURISM ZONE AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the
2 policy of the State to protect its natural resources in relation to the
3 promotion of a sustainable tourism industry. Towards this end, the
4 country shall formulate effective strategies, conserve its resources
5 and enable the tourism industry to become a major source of
6 livelihood and employment, as well as rationalize all efforts
7 pertaining to environmental protection. Henceforth, aggressive
8 measures seeking to restore the country's share in the global tourist
9 market shall be undertaken, consistent with the preservation of the
10 natural environment and the ecosystem.

11 Pursuant to public policy, the Verde Island Passage is hereby
12 declared a marine protected area (MPA) and ecotourism zone. As
13 such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of

1 Tourism (DOT) and the Department of Environment and Natural
2 Resources (DENR), and shall be subject to the rules and regulations
3 governing the development of ecotourism zones. Protection in
4 various areas of the Verde Island Passage shall range from limits in
5 development, fishing gear types, fishing seasons, catch limits,
6 moorings, to complete ban on removing marine life of any kind.

7 SEC. 2. *Marine Protected Area (MPA) and Ecotourism Master*
8 *Plan.* – Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the
9 DENR, in coordination with the DOT, the local government units,
10 and other concerned agencies of the government, shall prepare the
11 marine protected area and ecotourism master plan for the Verde
12 Island Passage, and review and strengthen existing local structural
13 framework to enhance cooperation and support: *Provided*, That
14 said development plan shall ensure the preservation of the natural
15 resources in the area.

16 SEC. 3. *Implementing Agencies.* – The DENR, in coordination
17 with the DOT, shall take immediate steps to implement said
18 development program for the ensuing calendar year.

19 SEC. 4. *Appropriations.* – The Secretaries of the DOT and
20 the DENR shall include in their respective Department's programs
21 the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be
22 included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

23 SEC. 5. *Promulgation of Rules and Regulations.* – Within
24 sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DENR, in
25 coordination with the DOT, shall issue rules and regulations for the
26 proper implementation of this Act.

1 SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* – Should any provision herein
2 be declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity
3 of other provisions of this Act.

4 SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules
5 and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are
6 hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

7 SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)
8 days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in any newspaper
9 of general circulation.

Approved,

O