Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7689
(In Substitution of House Bill 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 AN ECOTOURISM ZONE TO ENCOURAGE THE RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE USE, AND THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION, OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES THEREIN 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 “Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape 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 Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape (NAPSL) located in the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi and Tibiao in the Province of Antique, is hereby declared as an ecotourism zone, where the responsible and sustainable use of the natural resources therein shall be encouraged and strictly implemented.

SEC. 3. Objectives. - 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 NAPSL;

(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 preferential attention and support to community- and home-based tourism enterprises, such as resorts and home stays, micro and small businesses including restaurants, food and fruit stands, and other similar tourism-oriented industries and businesses;

(e) Ensure the proper and adequate training of local tour operators and tour guides, non-government organizations (NGOs), concerned local government units (LGUs), and the Department of Tourism (DOT) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), which shall be responsible for providing tourists and visitors with educational and enriching activities, tour programs and experiences; and

(f) Guarantee that in the development and promotion of the local tourism industry, the concerned LGUs shall ensure that the needs of 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;

(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 remain 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 practices, environmental education and ethics, as well as economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the enrichment of host communities and the satisfaction of the visitors; and,

(d) **Responsible Ecotourism** refers to a form of sustainable tourism in which both the 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. Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape.—** The Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape located in the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebasté, Culasi, and Tibiao in the Province of Antique is hereby declared 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), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism zones as provided in the national ecotourism strategy jointly adopted and implemented by the DENR and DOT.
SEC. 6. Scope and Coverage. – The NAPSL, which shall cover an area of 364,453.5395 hectares, shall be composed of the following:

a) The wetland area located in Brgy. Mag-aba, Pandan, Antique composed of mangrove forest and estuarine river ecosystem with an area of 21,095 hectares, located in Brgy. Mag-aba, Pandan Antique;

b) The seas, islet and sandbar ecosystem covering the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi, and Tibiao with an area of 213,556.26 hectares; and,

c) The Pandan Bay with an area of 150,876.25 hectares.

The corresponding boundaries shall be as follows:

A. The wetland area

The wetland area pertains to the area beginning at point marked TP - 1, being N 81° 21’ W, 27,787.09 meters from reference BLLM 1, PLS 1107, Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape,

thence S 75° 30' E 3,242.00 meters to corner 2;

thence N 81° 34' E 3,723.95 meters to corner 3

thence S 88° 11' E 4,292.00 meters to corner 4

thence S 70° 26' E 7,759.31 meters to corner 5

thence S 83° 19' E 3,489.57 meters to corner 6

thence N 78° 36' E 2,873.78 meters to corner 7

thence S 40° 19' E 4,925.65 meters to corner 8

thence S 05° 55' W 14,342.35 meters to corner 9

thence S 12° 57' W 4,208.77 meters to corner 10

thence S 20° 40' W 8,176.30 meters to corner 11

thence S 26° 28' E 2,100.83 meters to corner 12

thence S 15° 07' W 3,828.16 meters to corner 13
thence S 14° 11' E 4,552.10 meters to corner 14
thence S 07° 49' W 2,472.18 meters to corner 15
thence N 89° 51' W 17,369.06 meters to corner 16
thence S 19° 13' W 3,169.16 meters to corner 17
thence S 47° 56' W 18,926.52 meters to corner 18
thence S 61° 51' W 6,834.81 meters to corner 19
thence S 88° 08' W 6,837.37 meters to corner 20
thence N 65° 37' W 6,817.66 meters to corner 21
thence N 40° 46' W 6,141.86 meters to corner 22
thence N 16° 52' W 6,841.57 meters to corner 23
thence N 09° 23' E 6,833.87 meters to corner 24
thence N 03° 19' E 32,126.72 meters to corner 25
thence N 31° 53' E 4,886.87 meters to corner 26
thence N 50° 38' E 3,792.90 meters to corner 27
thence N 66° 15' E 6,070.27 meters to corner 28
thence N 83° 30' E 20,309.49 meters to corner 1,

comprising an area of two hundred ninety-nine thousand nine hundred forty two and
542/100 (299,942.542) hectares, more or less.

B. Seas, Islets and Sandbar Ecosystem

The sea, islets and sandbar ecosystem pertains to the area beginning at point marked
TP - 1, being S 86° 08' W, 33,925.26 meters from reference BLLM 1, PLS 1107,
Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape,

thence S 44° 36' W 14,735.43 meters to corner 2;
thence S 30° 12' E 1,957.43 meters to corner 3;
thence S 57° 20' E 24,725.84 meters to corner 4;
thence N 81° 25' E 4,111.89 meters to corner 5;
thence S 52° 51' E 11,911.68 meters to corner 6;
thence N 84° 22' E 3,904.27 meters to corner 7;
thence S 14° 11' E 4,552.10 meters to corner 8;
thence S 07° 49' W 2,472.18 meters to corner 9;
thence N 89° 51' W 17,369.06 meters to corner 10;
thence S 19° 13' W 3,169.16 meters to corner 11;
thence S 47° 56' W 18,926.52 meters to corner 12;
thence S 61° 51' W 6,834.81 meters to corner 13;
thence S 88° 08' W 6,837.37 meters to corner 14;
thence N 65° 37' W 6,817.66 meters to corner 15;
thence N 35° 22' W 6,930.04 meters to corner 16;
thence N 19° 42' W 5,891.75 meters to corner 17;
thence N 09° 23' E 6,833.87 meters to corner 18;
thence N 03° 19' E 32,126.72 meters to corner 19;
thence N 31° 53' E 4,886.87 meters to corner 20;
thence N 50° 38' E 3,792.90 meters to corner 21;
thence N 66° 15' E 6,070.27 meters to corner 22;
thence N 88° 45' E 5,636.26 meters to corner 23;
thence S 62° 17' E 9,225.27 meters to corner 1,

comprising an area of one hundred eighty-six thousand forty two hundred and 676/100 (186,042.676) hectares, more or less.

C. Pandan Bay

Pandan Bay pertains to the area beginning at point marked TP - 1, being N 81° 21' W, 27,787.09 meters from reference BLLM 1, PLS 1107, Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape,
thence S 75° 30' E 3,242.00 meters to corner 2;
thence N 81° 34' E 3,723.95 meters to corner 3;

thence S 88° 11'E 4,292.00 meters to corner 4;

thence S 70° 26' E 7,759.31 meters to corner 5;

thence S 83° 19' E 3,489.57 meters to corner 6;

thence N 78° 36' E 2,873.78 meters to corner 7;

thence S 40° 19' E 4,925.65 meters to corner 8;

thence S 05° 55' W 14,342.35 meters to corner 9;

thence S 12° 57' W 4,208.77 meters to corner 10;

thence S 20° 40' W 8,176.30 meters to corner 11;

thence S 26° 28' E 2,100.83 meters to corner 12;

thence S 15° 07' W 3,828.16 meters to corner 13;

thence S 84° 22' W 3,904.27 meters to corner 14;

thence N 52° 51' W 11,911.68 meters to corner 15;

thence S 81° 25' W 4,111.89 meters to corner 16;

thence N 57° 20' W 24,725.84 meters to corner 17;

thence N 30° 12' W 1,957.43 meters to corner 18;

thence N 44° 36' E 23,817.36 meters to corner 1,

comprising an area of one hundred nine thousand sixty seven hundred and 405/100

(109,067.405) hectares, more or less.

The metes and bounds of NAPSL shall be indicated on maps and nautical 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 Buffer Zones. – There shall also be established buffer zones
surrounding the NAPSL for the purpose of providing extra protection around the area, where restrictions shall apply and communities can assist in repelling threats to the NAPSL. Such buffer zones shall be managed according to the ecotourism and management plan formulated pursuant to this Act.

Such buffer zones shall be included in the ecotourism development and management plan of the NASPL: Provided, That no build up in, or reclamation of, any part of the designated buffer zone that is detrimental to the biodiversity in the NASPL shall be made. The Council shall exercise its authority over the designated buffer zone.

SEC. 8. Northern Antique Protected Seascapes and Landscape Ecotourism Development and Management Plan. – The DENR and the DOT, in coordination with the DPWH and TIEZA, shall jointly assist the Northern Antique Protected Seascapes and Landscape Protected Area Management Board herein created in the formulation of the ecotourism development and management plan for the NAPSL that shall be complemented by a set of guidelines to promote responsible, community-based ecotourism. The tourism development and management plan shall ensure the preservation of the seascapes and landscapes within the NAPSL and shall include the following components:

(a) Carrying capacity of the seascapes and landscapes and its endemic and migratory birds species;

(b) Specific site assessment, including terrestrial, underwater (biotic and abiotic), oceanographic and other scientific 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 groups and networks, including the 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 sea water that surround the protected seascape and landscape;

(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;”

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

In order to protect the mangroves and forests in NAPSL, the foreshore areas shall not be leased to any private entity: *Provided, That Special Agreements on Protected Area (SAPA) as defined under Republic Act No. 7586, or the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992, may be availed of, which shall be implemented upon the issuance of a Protected Area and Management Board (PAMB) Clearance.

SEC. 9. Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape Protected Area Management Board. – There shall be created a multi-sectoral board, to be known as the “Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape Protected Area Management Board”, hereinafter referred to as the Board. It shall be composed of the following members:
(a) Mayors of the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi and Tibiao who shall take turns serving as Chairperson;

(b) Heads of the Municipal Tourism Offices of the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi and Tibiao who shall take turns serving as Vice-chairperson;

(c) Heads of the Municipal Environmental and Natural Resources Office of the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi and Tibiao who shall take turns serving as member;

(d) Presidents of the Association of Barangay Chairpersons (ABC) of the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi and Tibiao who shall also serve alternately as member;

(e) Chairpersons of the Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Councils of the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi and Tibiao who shall also serve alternately as member;

(f) Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) of the Province of Antique;

(g) Director of the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB);

(h) Chief Operating Officer of the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA);

(i) Regional Director of DOT-Region 6;

(j) Regional Director of DENR-Region 6;

(k) Regional Director of DPWH-Region 6;

(l) Representative from an academic institution, preferably from a state university or college in the Province of Antique, with proven track record in or related to protected seascapes and landscapes management;
(m) 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,

(n) 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 Mayor-member acting as Chairperson of the Board shall serve together with the heads of the respective municipal tourism office, municipal environmental and natural resource office, President of the ABC, and the Chairperson of the Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council.

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), and (k) shall serve for the duration of their respective terms of office.

The members of the Board specified under subsections (l), (m), and (n) of this section shall be elected by the ex-officio members of the Board in a transparent and fair manner. 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, but shall be granted actual and necessary travelling and subsistence expenses to be 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. The members shall represent their respective sectors with utmost fidelity and accountability. The decision of each member shall be binding upon the sector that he or she represents.
The members of the Board duly elected or appointed prior to the effectivity of this Act shall continue to serve until the expiration of their term or appointment. Thereafter, members of the Board shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

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

(a) More than three (3) consecutive unexcused absences from regular meetings of the Board;

(b) Commission of acts prejudicial to the development and management of NAPSL as embodied in existing rules and regulations governing NAPSL;

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

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

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

The local government of the Province of Antique shall provide a secretariat for the Board and the funding necessary to cover the expenses for the performance of its official functions and activities.

SEC. 10. Functions and Responsibilities of the Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape Protected Area Management Board (PAMB). — The PAMB shall be responsible for the following:

(a) Implementation of the ecotourism development and management plan in consultation with the local residents, businesses, and other stakeholders;

(b) Assessment and evaluation of the potential impact of the development plan on environmental safety including the biodiversity in the seascapes and landscapes, and the safety and wellbeing of communities and enterprises located within the NAPSL;

(c) Provision of technical and financial assistance to the communities within the seascapes and landscapes;
(d) Implementation of a monitoring plan to ensure the well-being of water birds and
the preservation of their habitats;

(e) Formulation of rules and regulations in relation to the maintenance 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
shall assist the PAMB in the formulation of local ecotourism standards that shall integrate
environmental protection in the development and management of ecotourism plans.

The guidelines and standards shall:

(a) Promote the observance of best practices in environmental preservation through
capacity-building activities;

(b) Ensure optimal use of water and energy;

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

(d) Include security enforcement measures to prevent crime and vandalism within 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
shall closely coordinate with the PAMB, as well as the relevant regional offices of the
DPWH, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of
Transportation (DOTr), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of
Education (DepEd), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of the
Interior and Local Government (DILG), Philippine National Police (PNP),
Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) and other line agencies of the government in the implementation of this Act.

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

SEC. 14. Appropriations. — The Secretaries of the DENR, DOT and DPWH and the Chief Operating Officer of the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) shall include in their respective programs the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act and from internally generated funds of the DOT.

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

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

SEC. 17. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,