

MALACAÑANG  
MANILA

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 899

AUTHORIZING THE FORMATION OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PHILIPPINE ACTION PLAN ON ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW IN HOTSPOTS: TURTLE ISLANDS, TAWI-TAWI AND BALABAC, PALAWAN, 2009-2013.

**WHEREAS**, in 2001, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines formed a common 50-year vision for biodiversity and an Ecoregion Conservation Plan (ECP) for the Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion (SSME) and in 2004, a tri-national Memorandum of Understanding was signed adopting the ECP and providing for the formation of a tri-national governance arrangement for its implementation;

**WHEREAS**, in May 2009, heads of states from the six countries including Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines met for the first Leaders Summit to adopt the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI), a regional plan of action (RPOA) for the largest marine conservation initiative in history;

**WHEREAS**, the Balabac Strait Corridor is a highly important *Corridor* linking the Sulu Sea with the South China Sea and serves as a passageway for plankton, fishes, sea turtles, cetaceans, nutrients, as well as pollutants and large ocean-going vessels. The Strait is also used as an entry point of foreign fishing vessels involved in illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing which includes massive direct takes of endangered sea turtles;

**WHEREAS**, the Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary harbors the largest aggregation of nesting green turtles in the ASEAN region, significant nesting populations of hawksbill turtles as well as a major source of prized fish and shellfish including prawns, crabs and groupers;

**WHEREAS**, both the above-mentioned areas are considered hotspots for environmental law violations, with threats to the rich marine biodiversity they host;



**WHEREAS**, in July 2009, the agencies with mandates in marine environmental law protection of these hotspot areas convened to come up with a common action plan to reduce the incidence of illegal fishing therein;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO**, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order and direct the following:

Section 1. *Adoption of the Philippine Action Plan.*- Philippine Action on Enforcement of Environmental Law in Hotspots: Turtle Islands, Tawi-Tawi and Balabac, Palawan, 2009 -2013 is hereby adopted.

Section 2. *Lead Agency.* – The Philippine Coast Guard shall be the lead agency tasked to appoint a Coordinator for the Ad Hoc Committee, undertake activities for its dissemination and implementation at the different levels, make representations to cooperating agencies and seek private support as well as update the action plan as needed in order to achieve the objectives of the CTI and SSME on environmental law enforcement in the region.

Section 3. The following agencies are hereby directed to integrate the Action Plan in their respective yearly budget proposals and are further directed to have specific performance indicators against their approved budgets.

- a. Department of Environment and Natural Resources
  - b. Department of Agriculture
  - c. Department of Interior and Local Government
  - d. Department of Justice
  - e. Department of National Defense
  - f. Department of Transportation and Communication
  - g. Department of Finance
  - h. Department of Foreign Affairs
- and in particular, the law enforcement agencies under these departments;

Section 4. All Local Government Units in the said hotspots are hereby enjoined to integrate the Action Plan in their Local Development Plans and charging the related programs and activities against their Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA);





Section 5. *Participation of Civil Society.* – Non-Government Organizations, People’s Organizations, Children’s Organizations, Church-based Organizations and other concerned groups are encouraged to contribute to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the PAP and to make full use of the new Rules of Procedure in Environmental Cases to ensure enforcement. The Business Sector is also encouraged to support the programs, services and activities for the attainment of the objectives of the PAP.

Section 6. *Department Orders.* – All member agencies of the Ad Hoc Committee shall issue department orders adopting and implementing programs and projects to achieve the goals and target of the RPOA of the CTI and the ECP of the SSME as indicated in their Sectoral/Agency Plans.

Section 7. The sum of Two Million (P2,000,000.00) Pesos is hereby appropriated from the President’s Social Fund to defray the expenses of Ad Hoc Committee under the PCG in the implementation of this Executive Order. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for this purpose shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act for the Committee and other concerned agencies.

Section 8. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Manila, this 22nd day of June in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Ten.



By the President:



**LEANDRO R. MENDOZA**  
Executive Secretary



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