AN ACT
DECLARING THE MUNICIPALITY OF BALABAC, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN, AN ECOTOURISM ZONE, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SEC. 1. The Municipality of Balabac is hereby declared an ecotourism zone. As such, its development shall be prioritized by the Department of Tourism (DOT), subject to the rules and regulations governing the development of ecotourism zones.

Sec. 2. Within one (1) year after the approval of this Act, the DOT shall, in coordination with the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), the municipal government of Balabac, the provincial government of Palawan, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) and other concerned agencies of the government, prepare a development plan that shall include the construction, installation and maintenance of such appropriate facilities and infrastructure to enhance ecotourism in the area. The DOT shall identify well-defined geographic areas within the ecotourism zone, which shall include the existing infrastructure and facilities therein,
and ensure the integrated development of these areas for the optimum utilization of
natural assets and attractions, as well as the preservation and conservation of its natural
beauty and historical significance.

The plan shall be implemented jointly with the municipal government of
Balabac, the provincial government of Palawan, PCSD, TIEZA and other concerned
government agencies.

Sec. 3. The DOT shall take immediate steps to implement the development plan
and incorporate the same in its tourism development program for the calendar year
immediately succeeding the approval of this Act. It shall also include the Municipality
of Balabac in all its national, regional and local promotion programs.

Sec. 4. The Secretary of the DOT shall include in the Department’s program the
implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General
Appropriations Act, and shall augment such allocation with internally generated funds
of the Department.

Sec. 5. Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the DOT shall, in
consultation with the TIEZA, the municipal government of Balabac, the provincial
government of Palawan and the PCSD, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations
for the proper implementation of this Act.

Sec. 6. All laws, rules, regulations, presidential decrees and other issuances
inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed repealed and
amended accordingly.

Sec. 7. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the
Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,