



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KAGAWARAN NG KAPALIGIRAN AT LIKAS NA YAMAN

AUG 27 2025



DENR ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. 2025 - 27

**SUBJECT: PROMOTION OF INTEGRATED GOVERNANCE
TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL
OCEAN ENVIRONMENTS MANAGEMENT POLICY
AND DEFINING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF DENR
OFFICES AND BUREAUS FOR THIS PURPOSE**

Section 1. Rationale

The entire ocean economy consists of: (a) the economic activities with dependence on the ocean and coastal and marine resources (ocean industry), and (b) natural assets, goods and services of marine ecosystems upon which these industries depend on, and people rely on for, among others, food, income, livelihood, recreation, shoreline protection.

Supporting the ocean-based and ocean-related industries is the ocean environment and coastal and marine ecosystems. They also provide services that are not usually quantified and captured in the national income accounts, such as regulating services (e.g., carbon storage, shoreline protection, waste assimilation, nutrient cycling), supporting services (e.g., habitat, nursery), and cultural services.

Ocean environments are increasingly threatened by biodiversity loss, climate change impacts such as sea-level rise and ocean acidification, emerging ocean-based industries, over-fishing, eutrophication, and pollution.

Hence, a national ocean environments policy that takes into consideration the ridge-to-reef-to-shelf approach towards enhancing our ocean-based blue economy is imperative and an institutional set-up within the Department that will promote integrated ocean governance needs to be strengthened.

Section 2. Legal Basis and Considerations

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) mandate with respect to the ocean, including marine and coastal environment, is pursuant to Section 4, Executive Order No. 192, Series of 1987 as the "primary government agency responsible for the conservation, management, development, and proper use of the country's environment and natural resources." Specifically, among its objectives is to "conserve specific ... marine areas representative of the Philippine natural and cultural heritage for present and future generations."

Further, Republic Act (RA) No. 7586, or the National Integrated Protected Areas System, as amended by RA 11038, places the NIPAS under the "control and administration of the DENR through the Biodiversity Management Bureau,"

and Section 4, RA 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation Act provides that the DENR shall have jurisdiction over all terrestrial plant and animal species, all turtles and tortoises and wetland species, including but not limited to crocodiles, waterbirds and all amphibians and dugong.

RA 9147 gives DENR the jurisdiction that covers the establishment of critical habitats, conservation breeding or propagation, scientific research, issuance of permits for culture, collection, local transport, export/import/re-export, and commercial breeding or propagation.

Executive Order No. 533, Series of 2006, titled, "Adopting Integrated Coastal Management as a National Strategy to Ensure the Sustainable Development of the Country's Coastal and Marine Environment and Resources and Establishing Supporting Mechanisms for its Implementation," mandated the DENR to develop a National Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Programme in consultation with other concerned agencies, sectors, and stakeholders.

RA 11995, or the Philippine Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System (PENCAS) Act, mandated the establishment of natural capital accounts to determine the value of our ecosystems and services they provide, and to inform the management thereof.

RA 12064, or the Philippine Maritime Zones Act, stipulates that all states have the obligation to protect and preserve the marine environment and thus, the country shall enforce its laws and regulations on the protection and preservation of the marine environment.

RA 12065, or the Philippine Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act, declares that the country should ensure the protection of its maritime domain and safeguard its sovereignty and the integrity of the national territory.

DENR issued guidelines to implement the above mandates, among others:

- a. DENR Administrative Order (DAO) 2016-26, or the "Guidelines for the Implementation of the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP)";
- b. DAO 2025-08 or the "Guidelines on the Establishment, Operation, Management, Maintenance, and Implementation of the Program of Work of the Marine Scientific Research Stations"; and
- c. DENR Special Order No. 2025-98, which created the Ocean Environments Task Force (OETF).

Section 3. Objectives

This Administrative Order aims to promote an integrated ocean governance through the ridge-to-reef-to-shelf approach by:

- a. Mandating the formulation of a National Ocean Environments Policy, through the OETF created under DENR Special Order No. 2025-98, in

- coordination with concerned National Government Agencies and in consultation with relevant stakeholders; and
- b. Streamlining the roles and responsibilities of the DENR Offices and Bureaus for this purpose.

Section 4. Mandated Functions on Ocean Governance

To effectively carry out its mandated functions on ocean governance, the DENR shall undertake a strategic enhancement of the CMEMP including the progressive expansion of its implementation beyond areas covered under the National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS), to encompass the full spectrum of coastal and marine ecosystems under the Department's jurisdiction. For this purpose, the necessary amendments to DENR Administrative Order No. 2016-26 shall be proposed, in order to reflect and formalize these expanded roles and mandates.

Towards this end, the Biodiversity Management Bureau, through its Coastal and Marine Division (BMB-CMD) shall lead the following activities related to ocean governance:

- a. development of a **National Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Programme**, in consultation with other concerned agencies, and carry out the rest of the DENR's mandate under EO 533, s. 2006, building on the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP) under DAO 2016-26, and defining an **Integrated Marine and Coastal Area Management (IMCAM) strategy**;
- b. development of policies, plans, and projects for the formulation and adoption of a **Blue Economy Framework**, identifying priority strategic and sustainable ocean-based and ocean-related economic activities such as marine and coastal tourism;
- c. formulation of technical standards for **Marine Spatial Planning**, process for developing and integrating National and Local Marine Spatial Plans into LGU plans and defining use of Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) for decision-making; and
- d. formulation of policies, plans, programs, and projects on facilitated access to, and equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of digital sequence information on **marine genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge**.

4.1. Provision of Technical Services to Field Offices

The BMB-CMD shall provide guidance and technical assistance to DENR offices, particularly the Conservation and Development Division / Coastal Resources and Foreshore Management Section of the Regional Office and the respective sections under the Field Offices in promoting and coordinating ocean governance at the local and community level.

4.2 Alignment within BMB and other Agencies on Ocean Governance

- 4.2.1 Develop policies and guidance on conservation of coastal and marine wildlife resources and their habitats or sustainability, including:

- a. Collaborate on plans, projects, and programs with the Wildlife Resources Division of the BMB and the Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, on the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine wildlife species;

4.2.2 Strengthen and widen the application of area-based management tools, including:

- a. Facilitate the establishment, strengthening, and scaling up the expansion and effective management of ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of marine protected areas (MPAs), MPA Networks (MPANs), coastal and marine critical habitats, other effective area-based conservation measures, and other area-based management tools, including in areas beyond national jurisdiction, collaborating on plans, projects, and programs of the National Parks Division of the BMB.

Section 5. Strengthening Ocean Governance through the OETF

To support the effective performance of the BMB in advancing integrated ocean governance in the Department as stipulated in Section 4 of this DAO, the OETF shall serve as both:

- a. the principal body for harmonizing policy and decision-making on ocean environments matters; and
- b. the source of professional and expert advice through its pool of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).

The composition of the OETF may be expanded to include representatives from other Bureaus, Services, and Offices of the DENR, as may be deemed necessary.

5.1 Functions of the OETF

As such, it shall provide policy advice to the Secretary and extend scientific expertise to the Department on the following:

- a. Formulating a National Ocean Environments Policy through an Executive Order mandating its development and implementation, including recommendations on a legislative measure outlining the organization, structure, and mandate of the proposed Ocean Environments Management Bureau or a similar institutional arrangement to focus on the management of ocean environments;
- b. Mainstreaming scientific advice for ocean environments-related policy development and program management of scientific programs, projects, and activities (PPAs) such as the Marine Scientific Research Stations (MSRS) Program into the DENR's institutional and regulatory frameworks, including establishing a National Program Steering Committee to oversee the effective implementation of the MSRS;

- c. Facilitating institutional, legal, and inter-agency coordination and consultations with partner agencies on the enabling mechanisms required for the implementation of a National Ocean Environments Policy;
- d. Formulating recommendations for strategic communication and capacity building for the implementation of the National Ocean Environments Policy;
- e. Developing a logical framework, monitoring indicators, and performance measures, and recommending revisions of the policy based on feedback, periodic assessments, and emerging needs; and
- f. Analyze current and emerging trends and changes in demography, consumption, trade, energy, technology, environmental quality, and climate that show the interaction between the economy and the environment, present and future threats and pressures on coastal and marine environments, and damage estimation.

5.2 Policy Recommendation Process

Policy recommendations of the OETF shall be submitted directly to the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources. These recommendations shall be subject to vetting by the DENR Executive Committee (EXECOMM), or where necessary, referred to the Policy Technical Working Group (PTWG) for further review and deliberation prior to final approval.

5.3 Secretariat and Technical Support

The BMB, through its CMD, shall serve as the Secretariat of the OETF and shall facilitate its operations and coordination.

The Technical Working Group of the OETF, created under SO No. 2025-98, shall continue to provide support to the OETF and the BMB.

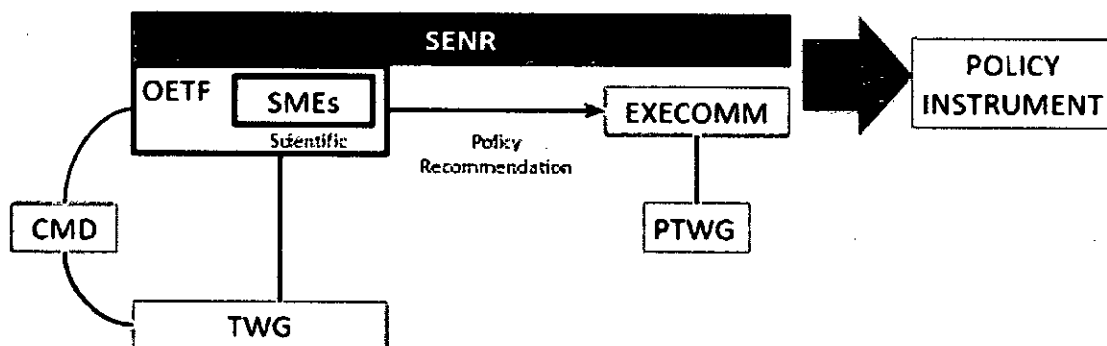


Figure 1. Lines of coordination among the relevant bodies and offices

Section 6. Responsibilities of DENR Offices and Bureaus in Promoting Ocean Governance

To enhance policy coherence and strengthen program coordination within the Department in the exercise of ocean-related functions, the responsibilities of

relevant Offices and Bureaus are hereby reiterated and aligned with the mandate of the BMB-CMD and the OETF. All contributions and outputs shall feed into the OETF's policy and decision-making processes through the BMB-CMD.

6.1. Forest Management Bureau (FMB)

- 6.1.1. Develop policies and provide guidance on the conservation and sustainable use of watersheds, mangroves, and beach forests in exercise of the DENR's mandate under Presidential Decree 705, or the Revised Forestry Code, as amended; and
- 6.1.2. Develop rules and regulations to ensure that mangrove areas that serve coastal protection purposes are not subjected to tree-cutting.

6.2. Land Management Bureau (LMB)

- 6.2.1. Develop policies and provide guidance on the conservation and sustainable use of relevant public land, including foreshore land and reclaimed land.

6.3. Environmental Management Bureau (EMB)

- 6.3.1. Enhance environmental impact assessment of activities in marine and coastal areas, including:
 - a. in emerging industries, such as offshore wind, other renewable energy resources, and seabed mining; and
 - b. establishing institutional mechanisms and capacities to address environmental impact assessment in areas beyond national jurisdiction.
- 6.3.2. Enhance policies, capacities, and coordination to address both land and marine-based coastal and marine pollution, including:
 - a. Plastic pollution, mainstreaming circular and resource efficiency approaches on the blue economy framework to address the longstanding problem of marine litter and microplastics;
 - b. Eutrophication; and
 - c. Oil Spill.

6.4. Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB)

- 6.4.1. Strengthen coastal and marine scientific research by assisting BMB-CMD in the formulation of priority research and development agenda that maximizes opportunities created for pollution control, bioremediation, used water economics, and other industries that address threats and ensure the use of results of scientific research;

- 6.4.2. Develop mechanisms and guidelines for research, monitoring, assessment, and valuation of coastal and marine ecosystems and resources, including indicators to measure natural and human induced impacts, in coordination with BMB-CMD and the OETF; and
- 6.4.3. Facilitate and promote the development and transfer of technology, such as marine biotechnology.

6.5. Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB)

- 6.5.1. Coordinate with relevant Offices, Bureaus, and Agencies regarding the assessment, monitoring, mapping and valuation of offshore environments and natural resources; and
- 6.5.2. Enhance policy development and monitoring methodologies for the management of offshore environments and natural resources.

6.6. National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA)

- 6.6.1. Enhance the development and use of oceanography, including hydrographic and coastal surveys to support integrated ocean governance; and
- 6.6.2. Enhance mapping of, and consolidation of resource information on, the seabed and seafloor.

6.7. Policy and Planning Service (PPS)

- 6.7.1. Ensure alignment of OETF initiatives with the Department's Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Framework and key national plans, such as the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) and the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP);
- 6.7.2. Conduct regular monitoring, evaluation, and review of all existing policies, plans, programs, projects, rules, and regulations on ocean-based and ocean-related activities;
- 6.7.3. Widen and strengthen the areas of national, and international cooperation on environmental security, the law of the sea, marine biological diversity, and maritime concerns, among others; and
- 6.7.4. Develop frameworks for environmental-economic accounting of coastal and marine assets, including living and non-living resources and ecosystem services, to support valuation and policy integration in accordance with the PENCAS Act.

6.8. Climate Change Service (CCS)

- 6.8.1. Address synergies and interlinkages in addressing climate change, including:
 - a. Integrate Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCAM) strategies, addressing loss and damage, and

ensuring complementarity with the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan, and other relevant climate change plans;

- b. Promote the development and mainstreaming of nature-based solutions for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actions, and addressing loss and damage; and
- c. Support BMB-CMD in the development and implementation of a blue carbon strategy.

6.9. Knowledge and Information Systems Service (KISS)

- 6.9.1. Assist BMB-CMD in developing appropriate tools, such as databases and an information system, for access and analysis of data by decision-makers;
- 6.9.2. As focal office in the compilation of ecosystem accounts within the DENR, support the implementation of environmental-economic accounting for coastal and marine ecosystems through tools and data infrastructure; and
- 6.9.3. Assist in assessing losses due to environmental degradation or major pollution events (e.g., oil spills), and ensure timely reporting and visualization of impacts to support enforcement and response.

6.10. Foreign-Assisted and Special Projects Service (FASPS)

- 6.10.1. Adopt public, private, and innovative sources of financing, such as the formulation of a guiding framework for blue finance; and
- 6.10.2. Assist BMB-CMD in developing projects and mobilizing resources from development partners and other funding facilities.

6.11. Strategic Communications and Information Service (SCIS)

- 6.11.1. Formulation of a Communications Program in coordination with relevant agencies to promote ocean literacy and social responsibility towards the protection of coastal and marine environments.

All other Offices and Bureaus not mentioned above shall likewise adhere to integrated governance and provide support towards the implementation of this Order.

Section 7. Regional Operations and Enforcement

The Office of the Undersecretaries for Field Operations shall oversee and cascade policies to DENR Regional Offices in the enforcement of marine and coastal environmental laws, in coordination with BMB and the OETF. Field Operations shall ensure alignment and coordination at all levels. The Environmental Law Enforcement and Protection Service (ELEPS) shall support field offices through

intelligence gathering and coordination with enforcement agencies such as the Philippine Coast Guard and other relevant authorities.

Section 8. Capacity-building Program

A Capacity-building Program for DENR Offices and Bureaus, stakeholders at both national and local levels, shall be developed to apply relevant policy instruments to address legal issues, institutionalize participatory processes, and develop strategies to promote multidisciplinary and multisectoral ecosystem-based management of Coastal and marine environments.

The Human Resource Development Service (HRDS) shall assist BMB-CMD in formulating and implementing the Program. This shall include collaboration with academic institutions such as but not limited to the University of the Philippines – Marine Science Institute (UP MSI) in the implementation of the Professional Masters in Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management (PM-TMEM) and Professional Masters in Operational Oceanography (PM-OO), and identification and development of scholarship, learning, and/or exchange programs in relevant ocean-related fields, such as Marine Spatial Planning, Ocean Science, and other emerging areas of science-policy integration relevant to ocean governance, for DENR employees.

Section 9. Organizational Transformation Plan for DENR on Ocean Governance

The OETF, BMB-CMD, and HRDS shall formulate an Organizational Transformation Plan to review the current structure of the DENR, its Bureaus and Regional Offices, and recommend restructuring or reorganization in accordance with current developments on the management, protection, and conservation of ocean-based natural resources, ecosystems, and biodiversity. The Plan shall include a proposed new Staffing Pattern, which will be submitted to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), as appropriate.

The Organizational Transformation Plan shall also articulate an alternative strategic direction for establishing and long-term vision of establishing a dedicated Ocean Environments Management Bureau to strengthen institutional capacity for integrated ocean governance, marine biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience in the coastal and marine sector.

Section 10. Funding and Human Resources Requirements

The budgetary requirements for the operations of the OETF and BMB-CMD shall be included in the regular budget and Work and Financial Plan (WFP) of the Office of the Secretary and the BMB, respectively, as may be proposed and approved in the General Appropriations Act and other appropriate sources, in accordance with existing budgeting, accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

In addition, the Human Resource Development Service, in coordination and collaboration with relevant Offices and Bureaus, shall identify, consolidate, and secure human resources requirements, including, but not limited to, the detailing or secondment of personnel, engagement of SMEs, hiring of additional personnel, and the implementation of a comprehensive capacity-building program to support the implementation of the DAO.

Section 11. Separability Clause

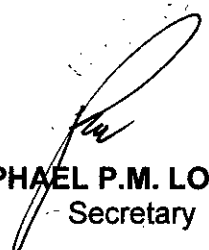
If any provision of this Order is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or provisions that are not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 12. Repealing Clause

All Administrative Orders and similar orders or parts thereof that are contrary to or inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Section 13. Effectivity

This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation and upon acknowledgement of receipt of a copy by the Office of the National Administrative Register (ONAR) of the University of the Philippines Law Center.


RAPHAEL P.M. LOTILLA
Secretary



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November 5, 2025