

**[ EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 132, July 30, 1999 ]**

**STRENGTHENING THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON MARITIME AND OCEAN AFFAIRS AND ITS SUPPORTING MECHANISMS, ESTABLISHING ITS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

WHEREAS, the integrated and coordinated administration of the seas and oceans including the delimitation and protection of territorial and maritime jurisdiction of the country is paramount to the national interest and development of the Philippines as an archipelago;

WHEREAS, Article XII, Section 2 of the 1997 Constitution provides that the State shall protect the nation's marine wealth in its archipelagic waters, territorial sea, and exclusive economic zone, and reserve its use and enjoyment exclusively to Filipino citizens;

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 16 of the same Constitution provides that the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature;

WHEREAS, Article XIII, Section 7 of the same Constitution provides that the State shall protect the rights of subsistence fishermen, especially of local communities, to the preferential use of the communal marine and fishing resources, both inland and offshore; provide support to such fishermen through appropriate technology and research, adequate financial, production, and marketing assistance, and other services; protect, develop, and conserve such resources, such protection to extend to offshore fishing grounds of subsistence fishermen against foreign intrusion;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is a signatory or a party to many international agreements on the seas and oceans, principally the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention which entered into force on November 16, 1994, as well as non-binding instruments such as the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21;

WHEREAS, the seas and oceans have in recent history continually increased in importance as the primary source of food, minerals, petroleum and ocean energy, and other resources, as well as the focus of many economic uses such as transportation and tourism;

WHEREAS, as a result of these many benefits and uses, the seas and oceans are beset with serious challenges such as the degradation of coastal and marine resources, loss of bio-diversity and habitat destruction, pollution, improper waste disposal and heightened risks from natural and man-made disasters due to imminent environmental degradation;

WHEREAS, the above conditions exist in the immediate environment and surrounding areas of the archipelago necessitating greater need for information

exchange and coordination among concerned sectors of the country for the efficient administration and effective exercise of jurisdiction of the Government;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is committed to the principle of sustainable development as one of the major pillars of its economic development plans;

WHEREAS, the National Marine Policy (NMP) adopted on November 8, 1994 was an initial effort to create a framework for integrated and coordinated ocean management, and requires periodic evaluation and refinement in the light of national and international developments;

WHEREAS, there is a need to strengthen the mandate of the Cabinet Committee on Maritime and Ocean Affairs created under Executive Order No. 186, Series of 1994, and to provide it with the appropriate structure, composition, and supporting mechanisms to respond to the demands of the administration and management of the seas and oceans especially those within the territorial and maritime jurisdiction of the Philippines.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested upon me by law, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Principles.*- The following are hereby declared to be among the main principles to guide the Government in maritime and ocean affairs, and in the conduct of its foreign policy:

a. In responding to the many challenges and opportunities presented by the archipelagic nature of the country, decisions and actions with respect to national and international maritime and ocean affairs shall be in accordance with a national maritime policy.

b. In the pursuit of sustainable development, the interactions of the terrestrial and marine resource uses in an archipelagic setting shall be recognized, and used as the basis for encouraging all resource users to mutually support and reinforce each other.

c. In consideration of international trends and developments in the management of the maritime and ocean sectors, utmost priority shall be given to the development and enhancement of the country's capabilities to control, utilize, protect, manage, and conserve its marine resources.

SEC. 2. *The Cabinet Committee on Maritime and Ocean Affairs.*- The Cabinet Committee on Maritime and Ocean Affairs (hereinafter referred to as "CABCOM-MOA") is hereby composed of the following:

Secretary of Foreign Affairs	Chairman
Executive Secretary	Member
Director-General of the National Security Council	Member
Secretary of National Defense	Member
Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources	Member
Secretary of Agriculture	Member
Secretary of Socio-Economic Planning	Member

Secretary of Science and Technology	Member
Secretary of Transportation and Communications	Member
Secretary of Energy	Member
Secretary of Trade and Industry	Member
Secretary of Justice	Member
Secretary of Finance	Member
Secretary of Budget and Management	Member
Secretary of Interior and Local Government	Member
Secretary of Labor and Employment	Member
Secretary of Tourism	Member

The CABCOM-MOA, through the Chairman, may recommend to the President the appointment of additional members drawn from the Cabinet as may be necessary.

SEC. 3. *Functions of the CABCOM-MOA.*- The CABCOM-MOA shall have the following functions:

- a. To formulate and recommend a national maritime policy to the President;
- b. To coordinate the implementation of such policy and periodically evaluate and refine it as necessary;
- c. To identify and develop policy options in implementing international agreements on the oceans, as well as non-binding instruments, to which the Philippines is a party or signatory;
- d. To recommend policies, programs, and special projects necessary to advance the national interest and fulfill international commitments relative to the sustainable use of ocean resources and marine environmental protection,
- e. To formulate and recommend programs, and special projects to enhance the integrated and coordinated management of the maritime and oceans interests of the Philippines, particularly in:
  - (1) the protection of the archipelago, including the defense of the national territory, and the development of national capabilities to protect its marine resources;
  - (2) the protection, conservation, and preservation of the marine environment and ocean resources through the proper management of human activities within its maritime jurisdiction;
  - (3) the development and promotion of Philippine interests in shipping, seafaring, fishing, extraction of mineral and energy resources, and other ocean-based industries.
- f. To formulate programs, coordinate and/or undertake activities to promote the archipelagic consciousness in the country especially among the coastal communities.

The CABCOM-MOA shall meet quarterly, or as the need arises. It may constitute itself into such Sub-committees as may be necessary to respond to special and specific issues or problems, and, to this end, formulate such rules of procedure, as