

[TRNP PARK RULES 01-08, January 28, 2009]

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE ENTRY AND THE CONDUCT OF ALL ACTIVITIES IN THE TUBBATAHA REEFS NATURAL PARK AND WORLD HERITAGE SITE

ARTICLE I POLICY AND APPLICATION

SECTION 1. Title . These rules shall be known and called the "Rules and Regulations for the Entry and the Conduct of All Activities in the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (TRNP) and World Heritage Site".

SECTION 2. Purpose. Pursuant to the TRNP Management Plan approved by the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) during its 70th meeting dated November 26, 1999, these rules are promulgated by the Tubbataha Protected Areas Management Board (TPAMB) to prescribe the procedures and guidelines for the entry and the conduct of tourism and all other activities in TRNP in order to ensure achievement of conservation objectives.

SECTION 3. Declaration of Policy. Primordial consideration to the natural living processes of the park, the conservation of its resources, and the protection of all flora, fauna and abiotic resources within it shall be the guiding principle for these rules. Authorized entry into the park is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, entrants are to act responsibly towards the critical environment of TRNP to ensure the maintenance of its economic, biological, educational, socio-cultural and scientific values. Consistent with this policy, TRNP shall be considered a no-take zone.

SECTION 4. Construction. All doubts in the interpretation and implementation of these Rules and Regulations shall be resolved in the light of the Declaration of Policies contained herein.

SECTION 5. Scope of Application. These Rules shall apply in the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park and World Heritage Site.

SECTION 6. Definition of Terms . As used in these Rules, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (1) "*Commercial diving operations*" refers to operations involving delivery of scuba diving gears and scuba diving services to either local or foreign tourists for a fee;
- (2) "*Boat Operator/manager*" shall refer to a person, either natural or juridical, who conducts diving or snorkeling operations in TRNP, either for a fee or for free;
- (3) "*Entrants*" shall refer to any person, either natural or juridical, or vessel entering TRNP, with or without a permit and further classified as

follows:

- a. " *Visitors*" shall refer to any person entering TRNP for purposes of tourism allowed under the Management Plan, research, or official business;
 - b. " *Crew*" shall refer to all employees of the boat who must possess a seaman 's book or other pertinent seaman 's papers.
 - c. " *Unauthorized Entrants*" refers to any person, either natural or juridical, who enter TRNP, either accidentally or deliberately, without a permit from the TPAMB.
- (4) " *Grounding*" shall refer to the accidental or unintentional hitting or striking of the reef or substrate with a watercraft. Although the act itself is not punishable, damage to the substrate will be penalized;
- (5) " *Beaching*" shall refer to the deliberate or intentional hitting of the reef or substrate with a watercraft. Although the act itself is not punishable, damage caused to the sub-strate shall be penalized;
- (6) " *Moorings*" refers to fixtures on the sea bottom installed by the TPAMB to provide sea crafts and vessels a steady position on which to tie to avoid damaging corals and drifting. " *Moorings*" shall include ropes, chains, buoys, and all other attendant components attached to the concrete blocks necessarily used by the boats for tying.
- (7) " *Fishing*" means the taking of fishery species from their wild state or habitat, with or without the use of fishing vessels. The mere casting or deployment of fishing gear consummates " *fishing*," whether or not any fishery species are actually caught;
- (8) " *Fishing gear*" means any instrument or device and its accessories utilized in taking fish and other fishery species. " *Fishing gear*" includes, but are not limited to, fishing rods, tackles, hooks, fishing lines, nets, catch bags, gaffs, bait, and equipment used for spear fishing, whether or not these fishing gears are in their assembled form or in separate parts;
- (9) " *Repeat Offender*" shall refer to a person, either natural or juridical, who have previously violated Park rules and have a pending case with, or have been finally judged by the TPAMB, the PCSD Adjudication Board or a court of law.

ARTICLE II

ENTRY AND CONDUCT OF ALL ACTIVITIES

SECTION 7. It is the responsibility of boat operators/managers to ensure that all passengers and crew are cognizant of these Rules and Regulations.

SECTION 8. Only tourism allowed under the Management Plan, Research and Park management-related activities duly authorized by the TPAMB shall be allowed in TRNP;

SECTION 9. All dive operators or their representatives must register with the Ranger Station by radio (VHF Ch16) upon entering the Park. If this is not possible, they

must report in person.

SECTION 10. All boats shall use mooring buoys provided within TRNP. Boats above 200 gross tons tie to mooring buoys at their own risk and are required to drift during rough weather. The TPAMB shall not be responsible for any loss or damage that may result in the use of mooring buoys. Users are therefore advised to check all lines and accessories prior to use.

SECTION 11. Boats are required to inform the ranger station of the buoy used prior to mooring and upon disengaging. Data on the buoy, the time and date these are used, shall be recorded by the ranger station and on the vessel logbook.

ARTICLE III PERMITS AND FEES

SECTION 12. Applications for an entry permit must be accurately completed prior to the issuance of a permit to enter the Park. Any misrepresentation shall constitute a violation of these rules. The following shall likewise apply:

12.1 Dive operators shall submit a current copy of Philippine MARINA Registry for TRNP files at the beginning of the diving season prior to issuance of any entry permits;

12.2 All vessels must have the necessary first aid and emergency equipment, including oxygen and SOLAS equipment;

12.3 Foreign divemasters and/or crew working in any diving boat must submit a copy of certification cards, alien employment permits, and passports;

12.4 The diver to divemaster ratio shall be 8:1.

12.5 All outstanding fees and charges shall be paid, if applicable, prior to the issuance of any entry permit.

SECTION 13. The rate of park fees shall be as follows:

Vessel Entry Fees:

100 GT and below	Php3,000.00
101-200 GT	Php4,500.00
201 and above	Php6,000.00

Visitor Entry Fees:

Php 3,000 per person

50% discount for repeat visits within the season

Php 250.00 for divemasters hired to provide diving services