NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER · JANUARY 28, 2004

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF ACTIVITIES IN THE TUBBATAHA REEF NATIONAL MARINE PARL AND WORLD HERITAGE SITE

TPAMB, January 28, 2004

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): https://batas.org/library/7ef33a3d7b3c/

ARTICLE I
Policy and Application

Section 1. Title. These rules shall be known and called the "Rules and Regulations for the Conduct of Activities in the Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park (TRNMP) and World Heritage Site".

Section 2. Purpose. Pursuant to the TRNMP Management Plan approved by the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) during its 70th meeting dated November 26, 1999, these rules are promulgated to prescribe the procedures and guidelines for the conduct of tourism activities in TRNMP in order to ensure achievement of its 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. These rules and regulations shall guide the actions of all visitors to the protected area. Visitors are observers of the park's living processes and visitation is a privilege, not a right. Therefore users are to act responsibly towards the critical environment of TRNMP to ensure the maintenance of its economic, biological, educational, socio-cultural and scientific values.

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 Reef National Marine Park and World Heritage Site and shall serve to guide all Park users and visitors entering TRNMP.

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

(1) "Commercial diving operations" refers to the delivery of scuba diving gears and scuba diving services for a fee;

(2) "Moorings" refers to concrete semi-permanent 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.

(3) "Visitors" shall refer to any individual entering TRNMP for purposes of tourism, research, or official business;

(4) "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;

Turn this case into an audio lecture - facts, issues, ruling and doctrine - at batas.org

(5) "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;

(6) "Local tourists" shall refer to Filipinos visiting the TRNMP;

(7) "Crew" shall refer to all employees of the boat who must possess a seaman's book or other pertinent seaman's papers.

ARTICLE II
Rules and Regulations

Section 7. No vessel less than twenty-five (25) gross tons is allowed to undertake commercial diving operations within the Park.

Section 8. 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 9. All boats shall use mooring buoys provided within TRNMP. Boats above 200 gross tons tie to mooring buoys at their own risk and are required to drift during rough weather. Tying to a moored boat is prohibited. 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. Any damage to moorings due to fault or negligence shall render the user liable for the payment of the cost of damage or reinstallation of the same. The following shall constitute negligence on the part of the user:

9.1 Running over/dragging rope and buoy;
9.2 Failure to untie from moorings during bad weather conditions;
9.3 Other similar acts resulting to damage of moorings.

Section 10. Boats are required to inform the ranger station of the buoy used prior to mooring and upon disengaging. Data on the buoy, and the time and date these are used shall be recorded by the ranger station and on the vessel logbook.

Section 11. All vessels and persons shall secure an entry permit and pay the appropriate charges in accordance with the schedule of fees under Section 12. Applications must be accurately completed prior to the issuance of an entry permit to the Park. Any misrepresentation shall constitute a violation of these rules. The following shall likewise apply:

11.1 Dive operators shall submit a current copy of Philippine MARINA Registry for TRNMP files at the beginning of the diving season prior to issuance of any entry permits;
11.2 All vessels must have the necessary first aid and emergency equipment, including oxygen and SOLAS equipment;
11.3 Diveboat-employed foreign divemasters and/or crew must show certification cards, alien employment permits, and passports;
11.4 The diver to divemaster ratio shall be 8:1.
11.5 All outstanding fines shall be paid, if applicable, prior to the issuance of any entry permit.

Section 12. The schedule of park fees shall be as follows:

Vessel Entry Fees:
100 GT and below -- Php3,000.00
101-200 GT Php4,500.00

Bar review courses, mock exams and a study planner that keeps you on pace - batas.org

201 and above Php6,000.00

Visitor Entry Fees:

Php 2,500 per person
50% discount for local tourists
50% discount for repeat visits within the season
Php 250.00 for divemasters hired to provide diving services

Minors aged 12 years or below, and boat crew are exempt from the payment of park fees. Fees shall be paid in Philippine Currency. Vessel and visitor entry fees are not transferable or refundable.

Section 13. Prohibited Acts. The following acts are prohibited inside the Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park and World Heritage Site:

13.1 All forms of fishing, whether catch-and-release, for recreation or for consumption;
13.2 Not stowing fishing gear. All fishing gear, whether in their assembled form or separated into parts, shall be stowed in a locked container prior to entry into the TRNMP. Each fishing gear, component or accessory found not stowed shall constitute a distinct violation and shall be fined accordingly.
13.3 Handling, touching or feeding marine or terrestrial life forms;
13.4 Willfully approaching and/or chasing marine animals, or any analogous acts which would harass or cause stress to marine animals;
13.5 Gathering/collection of any flora or fauna, their parts or derivatives;
13.6 Introducing any non-native species to the Park;
13.7 Use of jet-skis or other motorized sports equipment;
13.8 Constructing or installing any kind of structure, fence or enclosure;
13.9 Cruising around South and North Islets without obtaining clearance from the marine park rangers. Boats shall not approach the islets closer than 100 meters. Any unnecessary noise such as shouting or clapping, which disturbs the wildlife on the islets is strictly prohibited and shall constitute harassment;
13.10 Landing a boat or setting foot on the North and South Islets;
13.11 Swimming, snorkeling or diving around North and South Islets and in the lagoons;
13.12 Polluting or littering;
13.13 Vandalism in any form;
13.14 Anchoring on the reefs;

Section 14. A special permit must be obtained from the TPAMB to cover commercial filming activities, subject to the terms and conditions which the TPAMB may impose upon prior evaluation of the proposed activities. No filming may restrict or interfere with operations in the Park. All film crew and staff must follow directions, instructions and orders from Park staff or lose permission to film. Violation of the terms and conditions of the special permit shall be subject to penalties provided for under Section 17. Commercial use of the film should acknowledge the TPAMB and where the film was taken.

Section 15. The conduct of research in the TRNMP shall be covered by a permit from the TPAMB and shall comply with the Philippine Wildlife Act and all applicable PCSD resolutions and guidelines. The TPAMB may include any additional terms and conditions on the permit. Violation of these terms and conditions shall be subject to penalties under Section 17 and/or cancellation of the permit.

ARTICLE III
Regulatory Functions

Section 16. The TPAMB or its representatives reserves the right to board and inspect vessels at any time. Official reports filed by the marine park rangers, TPAMB members and TRNMP representatives may be considered as

complaints by the TMO for the purposes of summoning violators for administrative hearings before the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IV
Penal Provisions

Section 17. Any violation of the above Rules and Regulations or the commission of prohibited acts within the Park, shall be sufficient ground for the imposition of administrative fines, cancellation/non-issuance of permit, without prejudice to prosecution under applicable laws, rules and regulations. Any violation of these rules or the commission of prohibited acts shall subject violators to the following:

17.1 Restoration and payment of actual damages, if any;
17.2 Fine in the amount of not less that Php5,000.00 for every violation;
17.3 Payment of 200% surcharge in the case of non-payment of fees;
17.4 Cancellation of permit in the case of the commission of any prohibited acts. Violation of Sections 13.10 and 13.14 shall cause the immediate expulsion of the dive boat, its complement and passengers from the TRNMP;
17.5 Prohibition from operating within TRNMP for one year from the date of the imposition of the penalty for repeated violations;
17.6 Non-issuance of permit to persons, vessel owners and/or crew with pending cases in other marine protected areas.
17.7 Banning of individuals identified to have repeatedly violated any of the prohibited acts under Section 13.

Section 18. Dive operators/charterer, ship's captains, and owners of the vessel shall all be solidarily liable for the payment of fines for any violation or damage to the reef caused by their crew and/or passengers. It is the responsibility of dive operators to ensure that all guests and crew are cognizant of these Rules and Regulations.

Section 19. Individuals who have been identified to have repeatedly committed prohibited acts shall be banned from entering TRNMP.

Section 20. These rules shall be effective 15 days after its publication in a national newspaper of general circulation.

(SGD.) ANGELIQUE M. SONGCO
Park Manager

Turn this case into an audio lecture - facts, issues, ruling and doctrine - at batas.org

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at https://batas.org

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.