

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Industrial Hemp Report

Country: Philippines

Post: Manila

Report Category: Product Brief

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Report Highlights:

Hemp, marijuana, and cannabis from the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. are terms interchangeably used in the Philippines. It is a prohibited drug which carries harsh penalties for its importation, sale, manufacture, cultivation, possession, and use. Although there are exceptions to hemp imports (i.e., for medicinal use and in some processed forms), trade is minimal. Post foresees no change in the regulatory environment that would allow hemp trade in the next five years or through 2024.

Section I – Hemp

Cannabis and hemp are commonly known as marijuana in the Philippines. All three terms are interchangeably used by journalists, policy makers, and the general public. Hemp and marijuana are illegal in the country.

Manila hemp, also known as abaca, is a fiber obtained from *Musa textilis* (a relative of edible bananas), and is mostly used for pulping for a range of uses. It is not actually hemp, but named so because hemp is a major source of fiber. Abaca is widely cultivated in the Philippines and was used mainly to make Manila rope. Now it is used for special papers (e.g. teabag tissue) and is more expensive than wood pulp.

Section II – Hemp Production

Hemp is not legally cultivated in the Philippines. Any production is illegally grown.

Section III - Labeling Requirements

Not applicable.

Section IV - Packaging and Container Regulations

Not applicable.

Section V – Hemp/Cannabinoid Regulations

Cannabis is illegal in the Philippines by virtue of Republic Act No. 6425, or the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1972. RA6425 classified marijuana as a prohibited drug, and prohibits its cultivation, manufacture, importation, sale, possession, and use. Likewise, RA6425 created the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB), and gave it jurisdiction over drug-related cases. The DDB is the policy-making body of programs on drug prevention and control. In 2002, the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 or [RA 9165](#) was signed repealing RA6425.

According to [RA 9165](#):

Cannabis or commonly known as “Marijuana” or “Indian Hemp” or by its any other name – Embraces every kind, class, genus, or specie of the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. including, but not limited to, *Cannabis americana*, hashish, bhang, guaza, churrus and ganjab, and embraces every kind, class and character of marijuana, whether dried or fresh and flowering, flowering or fruiting tops, or any part or portion of the plant and seeds thereof, and all its geographic varieties, whether as a reefer, resin, extract, tincture or in any form whatsoever.

Under [RA 9165](#) the importation, sale, maintenance of a den, dive or resort, manufacture, use, and cultivation of marijuana and marijuana-related products shall be met with life imprisonment and a fine.

Section VI – Regulatory Source

The PDEA (<http://pdea.gov.ph/>) is the lead anti-drug law enforcement agency, responsible for preventing and investigating any dangerous drugs and controlled substances within the Philippines. The agency is tasked with the enforcement of the penal and regulatory provisions of [RA 9165](#). It is the implementing arm of the DDB. PDEA and DDB are both under the supervision of the Office of the President of the Philippines.

Section VII - Other Requirements, Regulations, and Registration Measures

Individuals with serious or terminal illness may apply for a special permit from the Philippine Food and Drug Administration (PFDA) (<https://www.fda.gov.ph/>) for drugs unregistered in the Philippines including those containing cannabis. Called a Compassionate Special Permit for Restricted Use of Unregistered Drug and Devices Product, the issuance of such permits began in 1992. As of December 2018, however, only one known application has been filed for the special use of cannabis oil. The requirements and conditions before availing of the permit are specified in [Administrative Order No. 4, series of 1992](#).

In December of 2019 the DDB issued [Board Regulation No. 8 Series of 2019](#), titled the Requirements for the Issuance of a License to Acquire, Possess, and Use Unregistered Drug Products Containing Dangerous Drugs for Personal Use. Similar to the Compassionate Special Permit noted above, persons with a rare or terminal disease can apply for a license at the PDEA. The license applies to “drug products containing dangerous drugs which are currently unregistered or in the process of being registered with the FDA but already registered in FDA reference countries.”

The DDB is currently considering regulations to allow the use of CBD-based medication, provided it does not exceed 0.1 percent tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active chemical responsible for marijuana’s psychological effects.

Hemp is being imported into the Philippines under HS Code 5302, (true hemp (*cannabis sativa l.*), raw or processed but not spun; tow and waste of true hemp (including yarn waste and garnetted stock), hemp). The Philippine Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), however, maintains hemp is outlawed and imports prohibited. DTI has endorsed Post to the PDEA and to the Philippine Customs for further clarification. To date, Post has not received any feedback, beyond Philippine Customs referring us to PFDA.

Section VIII – Other Regulatory and Import Contacts

The [Philippine Fiber Industry Development Administration](#) (PFIDA) was created by Executive Order No.709 on July 27, 1981 (during martial law) to promote the growth and development of the fiber industry in all its aspects including research, production, processing, marketing and trade regulation.

Post foresees no change in the regulatory environment that would allow hemp trade in the next five years or through 2024.

Appendix 1 – HS Chapters and Headings

Philippines5302	true hemp (cannabis sativa l.), raw or processed but not spun; tow and waste of true hemp (including yarn waste and garneted stock)
Philippines530210	true hemp (cannabis sativa l.), raw or retted
Philippines530290	true hemp (cannabis sativa l), processed but not spun; tow and waste of true hemp (including yarn waste and garneted stock)
Philippines530820	yarn of true hemp textile fibers
Philippines53082000	true hemp yarn

Attachments:

No Attachments.