



Republic of the Philippines

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Fifteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **4243**

Introduced by Honorable Sharon S. Garin

AN ACT
CREATING THE PHILIPPINE COCONUT RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO DEVELOP THE PHILIPPINE
COCONUT INDUSTRY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled.

Section 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Coconut Research Institute Act of 2011."

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is a declared policy of the State to develop a globally competitive, productive, and ecologically sustainable coconut industry supported by a unified, well coordinated, and adequately funded research and development program, complemented by highly skilled manpower.

In support of this, the establishment of the Philippine Coconut Research Institute aims to develop a national coconut research and development initiative so as to further improve coconut production, utilization, and propagation, increase the income and economic condition of coconut farmers, and expand employment opportunities in rural areas.

Section 3. Creation of Philippine Coconut Research Institute. - There is hereby created a Philippine Coconut Research Institute, hereinafter referred to as PCRI, which shall be under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

For the past decades, coconut oil has suffered due to an international smear campaign on its health and medicinal benefits orchestrated by soya oil producers. The Philippines, which is the biggest supplier of coconut oil in the world, has failed to debunk the allegations because we have not funded scientific and medicinal researches to disprove the allegations. What we only have as "evidence" on the benefits and potency of coconut oil are hearsay and anecdotes.

It is, thus, of great consequence that we seriously look into advancing and fortifying research and development for coconut by creating a Philippine Coconut Research Institute (PCRI) with a distinct mandate, separate funding, and sufficient manpower.

Present constraints to coconut R & D include uncoordinated and fragmented researches with short-term perspectives, low and discontinuous R & D funding, inadequate manpower and equipment, and limited public-private partnership. All these basic problems will be addressed by creating the PCRI. With an institutionalized and strong R & D arm, the government can then expect enhanced and expanded knowledge, scientific data, techniques and biotechnologies on coconuts, creating a domino effect on the resolution of other constraints in the industry.

It must also be stressed that the proposed institute is administratively separate and managed differently from the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) so as to branch out from the regulatory and developmental mandate of PCA and direct its vision, goals, and actions wholly on research and development. Accordingly, institutionalizing an agency solely for the said purpose would cultivate a culture of scientific excellence and professionalism, entice and pool the bright minds in the research and scientific communities, and establish credence to the initiatives, findings, and innovations of the institute.

in view of the foregoing, passage of this measure is earnestly sought.



ATTY. SHARON S. GARIN
Representative
Aambis-Owa Party List



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Section 4. Headquarters and Satellite Offices of PCRI. – The headquarters of PCRI shall be based in Zamboanga City with satellite offices in the Municipality of Guinobatan in the Province of Albay, and in Davao City.

Section 5. Powers and Functions of PCRI. – The PCRI shall have the following powers and functions:

- a.) Conduct research on coconut and on all its phases of production, management, distribution, and utilization, towards maximizing its nutritive, economic, and ecological potentials;
- b.) Publish and disseminate research findings of PCRI and to promote the exchange and distribution of research methods and materials to research centers where they may be of significance;
- c.) Develop, package, utilize, promote, and transfer viable techniques and technologies: *Provided however*, that an appropriate royalty or technological transfer fee shall be imposed, the amount of which shall be determined by the PCRI Advisory Board;
- d.) Organize and develop strong training programs for scientists, research managers, and extension workers, especially in the fields of coconut production, post-harvest technology, and other related subjects beneficial to the coconut industry;
- e.) Operate an information center, including a library, which will provide interested scientists and scholars access to an updated collection of the world's literature on coconut;
- f.) Foster collaboration and cooperation among different research institutions in the academe and private sector: *provided however*, that PCRI acts as the official and central research institute on coconut in the country;
- g.) Acquire or obtain from any governmental authority, whether national or local, foreign or domestic, or from any person, corporation, partnership, association or other entity, such charters, franchises, licenses, rights, privileges, assistance, financial or otherwise, and concessions as are conducive to and necessary or proper for the attainment of the purpose of PCRI;
- h.) Receive and acquire from any person and/or government and private entities, whether foreign or domestic, grants, donations and contributions consisting of such properties, real or personal, including funds and valuable effects or things, as may be useful, necessary or proper to carry out its purposes and objectives and administer the same in accordance with the terms of such grants, donations and contributions, as may be useful or necessary in carrying out the purpose and objectives of PCRI;
- i.) Conduct conferences, workshops, seminars, and capacity-building programs for coconut farmers, producers, processors, and cooperatives in order to increase production of quality coconut products and raise the income of the stakeholders, especially small coconut farmers;
- j.) Enter into memoranda of agreement and receive grants from local and foreign funding agencies through DA upon the recommendation of the PCRI Advisory Board; or through respective academic boards and non-government organizations upon the recommendation of the PCRI Board;
- k.) Enter into, make, or execute contracts of any kind as may be necessary or incidental to the attainment of the PCRI's purposes; and
- l.) Do and perform all acts and things as are necessary, expedient, suitable or proper, for the furtherance or attainment of the purpose of PCRI.

Section 6. Executive Director of PCRI. – The PCRI shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall be responsible for the planning, implementation and supervision of the programs and activities of the PCRI. He shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines for a term of six (6) years, upon recommendation of the DA. All other officers and employees shall be appointed by the Executive Director of the PCRI, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Civil Service Commission.

The Executive Director must possess high degree of educational, technical and managerial competencies in research and development, as well as of integrity and proven probity in public service.

Section 7. Functions and Powers of the PCRI Executive Director. - The following are the functions and powers of the Executive Director of the PCRI:

- a.) Exercise over-all supervision and direction over the implementation of all research and development programs of PCRI, and in general to supervise and direct the management, operation and administration of PCRI;
- b.) Execute contracts, incur obligations, acquire assets and deliver documents on behalf of PCRI within the limits of the authority delegated by the PCRI Advisory Board;
- c.) Implement and enforce policies, decisions, orders, rules and regulations adopted by the PCRI Advisory Board; and
- d.) Recommend the creation of divisions and sections including the staffing pattern of the PCRI;
- e.) Recommend to the PCRI Advisory Board the appointments of personnel and consultants;
- f.) Prepare and consolidate the overall budget of the PCRI; and
- g.) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the PCRI Advisory Board.

Section 8. Appointments of Division Chiefs and Unit Heads of the PCRI. - Division chiefs, unit heads, coordinators, project leaders and other positions in the PCRI shall be recommended by the Executive Director, and appointed by the Secretary of the DA. Appointments to various positions in the PCRI are subject to corresponding qualification standards established by the PCRI, and to rules and regulations set by the Civil Service Commission.

Section 9. Creation of the PCRI Advisory Board. - There is hereby created an Advisory Board, hereinafter referred to as the Board, composed of nine (9) Members, to wit:

- a.) Secretary of the DA or his representative as Chairman;
- b.) Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, Research and Development of the DA as Vice-Chairman;
- c.) Undersecretary for Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology;
- d.) Executive Director of the Bureau of Agricultural Research;
- e.) Administrator of the Philippine Coconut Authority;
- f.) Executive Director of the PCRI; and

- g.) One (1) representative from the coconut farmers and two (2) representatives from the coconut industry, as members, to be appointed by the President of the Philippines, upon recommendation of the DA, for a term of six (6) years.

Section 10. Functions and Powers of the PCRI Advisory Board. - The Advisory Board shall perform the following functions and powers:

- a.) Define, evaluate and approve the research programs, plans, policies, procedures and guidelines of PCRI in accordance with its purposes and objectives;
- b.) Evaluate the implementation, efficiency, and effectiveness of the programs and projects of the PCRI;
- c.) Determine the research priorities of PCRI consistent with the framework of its purposes and objectives;
- d.) Approve PCRI's organizational structure, staffing pattern, operating and capital expenditure, and financial budgets, prepared in accordance with the purposes of PCRI;
- e.) Approve salary ranges, benefits, privileges, bonuses, and other terms and conditions of service for all officers and employees of PCRI, upon recommendation of the Executive Director;
- f.) Create committee, division, or office, and appoint members thereof, or designate officers as may be necessary for the proper management of PCRI;
- g.) Recommend the establishment or abolition of satellite units or branches as may be deemed necessary; and
- h.) Exercise such other powers and functions and perform such other acts as may be necessary or proper for the attainment of the purposes and objectives of PCRI.

Section 11. Coordination among Stakeholders of PCRI and Linkages with other Research Institutions. - The PCRI shall monitor and evaluate the coconut research programs and identify the immediate needs and essential concerns of the coconut industry in consonance with the local and national economic development. It shall likewise coordinate with other government agencies in order to formulate strategies that would further the growth of the coconut industry.

The PCRI and the local government units where there are suitable areas for the planting of coconut trees shall jointly implement projects and programs necessary to achieve the goals of this Act.

Section 12. Transfer of Agencies and Personnel. - All offices, services, units, divisions, and personnel in the Philippine Coconut Authority, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Science and Technology which directly undertake research and development initiatives, activities, and programs on coconut production, distribution, utilization, techniques, technology, and products shall be transferred and absorbed by the PCRI.

The foregoing transfer of powers and functions shall include all applicable appropriations, funds, records, equipment, property, facilities, rights, other assets, and personnel as may be necessary: *provided however*, that there shall be no gap or adjustment in tenure or service record, and no diminution of salary, salary step or salary level.

Section 13. Transitory Provision. - The creation of PCRI shall be carried out in such a manner that the personnel of the offices, services, units, or divisions absorbed into PCRI

shall continue to perform their respective duties and responsibilities in a holdover capacity so as not to unduly delay programs and activities on coconut research and development.

Section 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The PCRI and PCRI Advisory Board, in consultation with the Department of Agriculture, the Philippine Coconut Authority, the Department of Science and Technology and other concerned agencies of the government shall formulate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within one hundred and twenty days (120) days after its approval. Such rules and regulations shall take effect fifteen (15) days after their publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Section 15. Allocation of Funds. - Not more than forty percent (40%) of funds allocated under this Act and in subsequent annual appropriations shall be used for personnel services, and maintenance and operating expenses; thirty-five percent (35%) for research and development as well as training and information; and twenty-five percent (25%) for seedling propagation and dispersal of coconut trees.

Section 16. Annual Report. - The PCRI shall submit an annual report to the Office of the President, the Senate and the House of Representatives indicating among others, the administration and institutional development of the PCRI, and the progress of programs and projects on coconut research and development.

Section 17. Appropriations. – An amount of One Billion Pesos (P1,000,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated for the initial implementation of this Act. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the operations of PCRI shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

Section 18. Separability Clause. - – If any provision, or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

Section 19. Repealing Clause. - All laws or parts thereof, decrees, orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 20. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect immediately following its publication in a newspaper of general circulation or in the Official Gazette, whichever comes first.

Approved,