

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2404**



INTRODUCED BY HON. NEIL BENEDICT A. MONTEJO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This Bill seeks to establish a Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Research, Training, Development and Product Center in each of the Provinces of Region VIII.

According to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Region 8 profile, there are 1,582 coastal barangays in Region 8. Yet, there is only one BFAR Regional Office (located in Tacloban City), and six technology stations (2 in Leyte, 1 in Easter Samar, and 3 in Northern Samar). In the meantime, BFAR's more recent Fisheries Situationers showed a marked decline in tigerprawn production, seaweed production, grouper ("Lapu-lapu"), anchovies, threadfin bream ("bisugo"), fimbriated sardines ("tunsoy"), carp, bigeye tuna ("bariles"), gourami, and eastern little tuna ("bonito") in Eastern Visayas.

With very little investment going to the fishery sector and 1,582 Eastern Visayas coastal barangays remaining heavily dependent on the fisheries sector as a source of livelihood, there is a need to ensure convenient, direct, and easy access to the research, training, development, and technical assistance that BFAR can provide to spur livelihood, increase major fishery and aquatic resource production in a sustainable manner, and prevent resource depletion resulting from unscientific fishing and aquatic resource harvest practices.

Establishing a Provincial and Aquatic Resources Center devoted to research, training, development, and product access in each province of Region 8 will empower fisherfolk in the region by providing them with more convenient, efficient, and direct access to the technology, information, skills and market access that they need.

NEIL BENEDICT A. MONTEJO
Representative
An Waray Party-List

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AN ACT ESTABLISHING
A PROVINCIAL FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES
RESEARCH, TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT, AND PRODUCT CENTER
IN THE PROVINCES OF LEYTE, SOUTHERN LEYTE, BILIRAN, EASTERN
SAMAR, SAMAR, AND NORTHERN SAMAR AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

Be It Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. There shall be established, under the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and the Department of Agriculture, a Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Research, Training, Development and Product Center (the Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Center) in the Provinces of Leyte, Southern Leyte, Biliran, Eastern Samar, Samar, and Northern Samar.

SECTION 2. Each Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Center shall, at a minimum, provide onsite and online access to the following:

- (a) A research and technology center for innovative and sustainable fish breeding and/or hatchery of high-value marine species,
- (b) A training and technical assistance center to conduct training activities and provide sustainable development and production support, education, and technical

assistance to fisher folk,

(c) A development center to provide sustainable production technical assistance, environmentally sound post-harvest development services, and technical assistance in the establishment, operation, enhancement and maintenance of government operated marine sanctuaries, seaweed nurseries, seaweed processing plants, and mariculture development park facilities,

(d) A fisheries and aquatic resources product center to catalog, display and advertise local fisheries and aquatic products, and provide marketing and product distribution assistance to fisherfolk, and

(e) A database of:

- (i). local and international grants and scholarships for fisheries and aquatic resources studies and research, and
- (ii). available credit assistance for fisher folk

SECTION 3. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources shall issue such rules and regulations necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. The Secretary of Agriculture shall include in the Department's program the funding requirements for the establishment and operation of the Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Centers in Leyte, Southern Leyte, Biliran, Eastern Samar, Samar, and Northern Samar. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for its continued operations and maintenance shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,