

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Seventeenth Congress
Second Regular Session

6330
HOUSE BILL NO. _____



Introduced by Representative Sharon S. Garin

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Rainfed agriculture or dryland farming refers to the cultivation of crops without irrigation utilizing mainly water that comes from precipitation stored in the unsaturated soil. This is popular in drylands mostly located in Northern Luzon, Central Visayas and Southern Mindanao. In fact, the Philippines has more than 7.5 million hectares of dryland or rainfed areas which accounts for three-fourth of the ten (10) million hectares of total cultivated areas. Furthermore, over five (5) million poor households in the country are dependent on dryland farming and it contributes about 40% of total domestic food production. There is no denying that rainfed agriculture is crucial to the food security of the Philippines, however, it is becoming more and more difficult because of the problems associated with climate change, among others.

This bill seeks to establish the Philippine Rainfed Agriculture Institute (PhilRAI), as an attached agency to the Department of Agriculture (DA) to improve the livelihood of resource-poor rainfed communities and empower them to cope with drought, global warming, rising food prices, land degradation and other risks arising from environmental and climate changes. The institute shall be tasked in preserving natural resources, ensuring food security, and providing socio-economic assistance to resource-poor rainfed agriculture farmers.

In view of the foregoing, passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



SHARON S. GARIN
AAMBIS-Owa Partylist

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1 **AN ACT**
2 **ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE RAINFED AGRICULTURE INSTITUTE AND**
3 **FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

4
5 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress*
6 *assembled:*
7

8 **SECTION 1. Title.** – This Act shall be known as the "**Philippine Rainfed**
9 **Agriculture Institute Act**".

10 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – Pursuant to Article II, Section 16 of the 1987
11 Philippine Constitution, the State hereby declares the policy of protecting and advancing the
12 right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and
13 harmony of nature.

14 It adheres to the principle of protecting natural resources to ensure food security,
15 reducing poverty, protecting the environment and addressing issues such as climate change,
16 community empowerment and improved livelihoods.

17 **SEC. 3. Philippine Rainfed Agriculture Institute.** - The Philippine Rainfed
18 Agriculture Institute, hereinafter referred to as PhilRAI, is hereby established as an attached
19 agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA) to improve the livelihood of resource-poor
20 rainfed communities and empower them to cope with drought, global warming, rising food
21 prices, land degradation and other risks arising from environmental and climate changes.

1 **SEC. 4. Objectives.** – The objectives of this Act are as follows:

- 2 a) Build climate resilient agriculture in the rainfed areas through sustainable and
3 integrated approach by enhancing the impact of natural resources and adapting
4 various coping strategies on climate change and building capacity of different
5 stakeholders;
- 6 b) Develop a robust and innovative farmer-centered, need-based national Rainfed
7 Agriculture research for development and extension corporate programs;
- 8 c) Strengthen and modernize the Philippine Rainfed Agriculture;
- 9 d) Improve the livelihood of resource-poor rainfed farmers and promote the general
10 welfare of rainfed farming communities; and
- 11 e) Develop or strengthen related programs in partnership and consultation with the DA
12 Bureau of Agriculture Research (DA-BAR), DA Regional Research Centers, the
13 Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic Forestry, and Natural Resources Research
14 and Development (PCAARRD), State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), the private
15 sector, civil society organizations and international research organizations.

16 **SEC. 5. Strategic Framework of PhilRAI.** - The PhilRAI shall, within six (6) months
17 from the effectivity of this Act, formulate a Strategic Framework on Philippine Rainfed
18 Agriculture. The Framework shall serve as the basis for developing programs on Rainfed
19 Agriculture, and action plan for research, development, extension and monitoring activities.
20 The Framework shall be reviewed every three (3) years, or as may be deemed necessary.

21 **SEC. 6. Components of the Strategic Framework of PhilRAI.** – The Framework
22 shall include but not limited to the following components:

- 23 a) Building climate resilient communities;
- 24 b) Resilient farming systems innovation;

- c) Integrated natural resources management;
- d) Enabling policy guidelines and institutional arrangements;
- e) Database development and management;
- f) Capacity building;
- g) Productivity enhancement;
- h) Advocacy and information dissemination;
- i) Monitoring and evaluation; and
- j) Gender mainstreaming and development.

SEC. 7. *Programs and Action Plans.* – The PhilRAI shall formulate a Program and Action Plan in accordance with the Framework within one (1) year after its formulation. This shall include but not limited to the following components:

- a) Assessment of benchmark information on Philippine Rainfed Agriculture, Assess the climate vulnerability/change in selected communities and identify natural resources management strategies with high probability of success in the context of climate variability and change;
- b) Designing the biophysical landscape of the agro-ecosystem that will incorporate water harvesting and management, soil erosion prevention and social preparation for community-based shared water use arrangements;
- c) Developing appropriate farming systems where crops and livestock are identified, together with farmers that are adapted to such environment situations as well as responding to market opportunities;
- d) Understanding socio-culture and socio-economic dynamics towards better farmer participation and commitment on its programs;

- e) Developing community and institution capabilities for shared management of resources and products;
- f) Common understanding and capability among program proponents (researches, extension personnel, development managers and local political leaders) of the program approaches, goals, and expected outputs and impacts;
- g) Obtaining support from local government, private institutions and international research organizations; and
- h) Develop enabling policy guidelines and institutional arrangements for integrated agro-ecosystem development and management, and increasing resilience of rural communities to climate variability/change for sustainable intensification and livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

SEC. 8. *Principal Office and Branches.* – The PhilRAI shall have a principal office in Metro Manila or elsewhere as its Board of Trustees may decide. It may also establish offices, branches, satellite stations or networks in geographically suitable regions in the Philippines as may be necessary or proper for the accomplishment of its goal and objectives.

SEC. 9. *Duties and Functions.* – The PhilRAI shall exercise duties and functions which shall include but not limited to the following:

- a) Lead and coordinate a national network for Rainfed Agriculture research for development and extension programs in different agro-ecological regions of the country;
- b) Plan, monitor, evaluate, conduct, and fund research for development and extension activities on Rainfed Agriculture;
- c) Create an information database, collect, package and share new knowledge and

1 innovations through modern information and communication technology and other
2 innovative approaches;

3 d) Enhance income of farmers through sustainable and market-linked rainfed production
4 systems, genetic improvement by conventional and biotechnology approaches, and
5 natural resources management;

6 e) Develop and implement a robust social mobilization, communication and capacity
7 building program among farmers, rural women, researchers, extension workers,
8 development managers, local administrators and entrepreneurs towards the conduct of
9 on-farm demonstration, technology utilization and technology commercialization
10 activities;

11 f) Identify and map out development pathways towards efficient and productive rainfed
12 agro-industries through appropriate socio-economic measures and public-private
13 partnerships; and

14 g) Develop databases, guide public policy formulation and pursue policy advocacy that
15 will stimulate, modernize and sustain Rainfed Agriculture, food crops production,
16 processing and marketing systems and put these in the hands of farmers through their
17 organizations.

18 **SEC. 10. Corporate Powers.** – PhilRAI shall exercise the corporate powers, but not
19 limited to the following:

20 a) Exercise all the powers of a corporation under the general corporation law in so far as
21 such powers are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act;

22 b) Enter into, make and execute contracts and agreements of any kind or nature, and to
23 sue and be sued in its corporate name;

24 c) Borrow funds and obtain loans from all sources, whether local or foreign and whether

1 government or private, to help finance its research for development and extension
2 programs and its capital and operating expenditures;

3 d) Invest in, purchase or otherwise acquire own, hold, use, lease, mortgage, pledge,
4 encumber, sell, assign, convey, exchange, or otherwise deal in real or personal
5 properties of whatever kind of nature, or any interest therein including shares of stock,
6 bonds, notes, securities, and other evidences of indebtedness of natural or juridical
7 persons, whether domestic or foreign and whether government and private;

8 e) Acquire from the government, whether national or local or from any person,
9 corporation, partnership, association or other entity, such characters, franchises,
10 licenses, rights, privileges, assistance, financial or otherwise and concessions as may
11 be conducive to and necessary for proper for the attainment of the goal and objectives
12 of PhilRAI; and

13 f) Receive and acquire from any person, government and private entities, whether
14 foreign or domestic, grants, donations and contributions consisting of such properties,
15 real or personal, including funds and valuable effects, as may be useful, necessary or
16 proper to carry out its purposes and objectives and administer the same in accordance
17 with the terms of such grants, donations, and contributions and consistent with its
18 purposes and objectives.

19 **SEC. 11. *Board of Trustees.*** – The corporate functions and powers of PhilRAI shall
20 be exercised, and all its business activities and properties shall be controlled by a Board of
21 Trustees, hereinafter referred to as the Board.

22 The Board shall be composed of the Secretary of Agriculture as ex-officio Chair and
23 fourteen (14) members. The members of the Board shall be appointed by the President of the
24 Philippines upon recommendation of the Secretary of Agriculture.

1 The members of the Board shall be composed of the following:

- 2 a) Director of the DA Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR);
- 3 b) Director of the DA Bureau of Soils and Water Management (DA-BSWM); Director of
- 4 the DA Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI);
- 5 c) Executive Director of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic, Forestry and
- 6 Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD);
- 7 d) Executive Director of the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC);
- 8 e) Deputy Director-General of the National Economic and Development Authority
- 9 (NEDA);
- 10 f) Undersecretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM);
- 11 g) Commissioner of the Climate Change Commission (CCC);
- 12 h) President of the League of Provinces;
- 13 i) Representative from the academe;
- 14 j) Representative of farmers' organization operating in rainfed areas;
- 15 k) Representative of women's self-help group operating in rainfed areas;
- 16 l) Representative from private sector engaged in agribusiness; and
- 17 m) Representative from Philippine scientists association working on natural resources
- 18 management.

19 The PhilRAI Executive Director shall act as the Secretary of the Board. All
20 government officials in the Board shall serve ex-officio members and shall not receive any
21 additional salary or compensation.

22 The representatives shall be appointed by the President from a list of nominees
23 submitted by their respective groups/associations. They shall serve for a term of two (2) years

1 without reappointment unless their representation is withdrawn by the sector they represent.

2 Appointment to any vacancy shall only be for the unexpired term of the predecessor.

3 **SEC. 12. *Per Diem.*** – The Chair and members of the Board shall receive per diem, as
4 the Board may determine, for each meeting actually attended. Such members shall also be
5 entitled to reimbursable transportation and representation allowances in going to and coming
6 from board meetings and in transacting official business for PhilRAI.

7 **SEC. 13. *Meetings of the Board.*** – The Board shall meet once every three (3)
8 months, or as often as may be deemed necessary by the Chairperson. The Chairperson may
9 likewise call meetings upon government agencies for the proper implementation of this Act.

10 **SEC. 14. *Powers and Functions of the Board.*** – The Board shall exercise the
11 following powers and functions:

- 12 a) Guide the formulation of the vision, mission, strategy and research for development
13 and extension priorities of PhilRAI;
- 14 b) Approve policies, programs, plans and operational procedures of PhilRAI;
- 15 c) Approve PhilRAI's organizational structure, staffing pattern, operating and capital
16 expenditures, and budget in accordance with its corporate plan;
- 17 d) Approve salary ranges, benefits, privileges, bonuses and other terms and conditions of
18 service for all officers and employees of PhilRAI upon the recommendation of the
19 Executive Director;
- 20 e) Appoint, transfer, promote, suspend, remove or discipline any officer or employee of
21 PhilRAI, upon the recommendation of the Executive Director;
- 22 f) Create relevant committees and appoint members thereof as may be necessary and
23 proper for the management of PhilRAI; and

1 g) Exercise such other powers and functions and perform such other acts as may be
2 necessary for the attainment of the goals and objectives of PhilRAI or as may be
3 delegated by the Secretary of Agriculture.

4 **SEC. 15. *Executive Director.*** – PhilRAI shall be headed by an Executive Director
5 who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines, upon the recommendation of the
6 Board, and based on the evaluation of a Search Committee through the office of the Secretary
7 of Agriculture.

8 a) The Executive Director shall serve for a term of six (6) years, subject to only one term
9 extension of six (6) years or less for very meritorious performance, or a maximum
10 term of twelve (12) years; and

11 b) The Executive Director shall be assisted by Deputy Executive Directors, division
12 heads and program directors as the Board may determine to carry out the objectives of
13 PhilRAI.

14 **SEC. 16. *Duties of the Executive Director.*** – The Executive Director shall be directly
15 responsible to the Board, and shall have the following duties:

16 a) Exercise dynamic leadership, create a vision, map out the mission, provide strategic
17 direction, and supervise the implementation of all research for development and
18 extension programs and, in general, to supervise the operations of PhilRAI;

19 b) Execute contracts, incur obligations, acquire and dispose assets, and deliver
20 documents on behalf of PhilRAI within the framework of the authority delegated by
21 the Board;

22 c) Implement and enforce policies, decisions, orders, rules and regulations that are
23 promulgated or adopted by the Board; and

24 d) Exercise such other powers and functions and perform such other duties as may be

1 authorized, delegated or assigned by the Board.

2 **SEC. 17. *Technical Advisory Committee.*** – A Technical Advisory Committee
3 (TAC), organized and approved by the Board, shall assist the Executive Director, Deputy
4 Executive Directors, division heads and program directors in pursuing inter-agency activities
5 and participation of the national agriculture research development and extension networks.

6 The TAC shall be composed of not more than nine (9) members who are heads or
7 representatives of agencies, government, private or international, that are actively involved in
8 Rainfed Agriculture research, production, processing, marketing, policy formulation and
9 advocacy, and capacity building.

10 **SEC. 18. *Facilities and Manpower.*** - PhilRAI shall undertake its initial operations in
11 the existing offices, laboratories and experimental stations and other similar government
12 institutions within the DA. Furthermore, DA, collaborating SUCs and international research
13 organizations shall deploy selected personnel and scientists to assist PhilRAI in pursuing its
14 research, development and extension programs.

15 **SEC. 19. *Services of Government Personnel.*** – The PhilRAI shall, for the purpose of
16 its research for development activities, obtain and secure the services of scholars, scientists,
17 and technical personnel of SUCs, DA and related agencies of the national government and
18 international research organizations. Such personnel may be given honoraria or incentives as
19 may be fixed and authorized by the Board.

20 **SEC. 20. *Buildings and Equipment.*** – PhilRAI is hereby authorized to own, acquire,
21 borrow, lease, hold, plan and construct buildings, laboratories, experimental stations, and
22 other facilities as may be necessary or proper to attain its goal and objectives.

23 PhilRAI is also authorized to purchase equipment, materials and articles, either
24 locally or abroad, as may be necessary or proper to carry out its powers and functions and

1 attain its purposes and objectives. Provided, however, that it shall be exempted from the
2 payment of any and all forms of taxes, duties, fees and charges of any and all such
3 importation of equipment, materials, articles and services. Provided, further, that the same are
4 not available locally on favorable terms.

5 **SEC. 21. Appropriations.** – The Secretary of Agriculture, and Budget and
6 Management are hereby authorized and directed to set aside, out of the Agricultural
7 Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) and other fund sources of DA, the amount of
8 Five Hundred Million Pesos (Php 500,000,000) as the initial budget of PhilRAI for its start-
9 up and operating expenses. Thereafter, the annual budget of PhilRAI's operations shall be
10 provided for in the annual General Appropriations Act. The appropriations herein provided
11 shall be subject to the fiscal control and management procedures provided for in Executive
12 Order (EO) No. 714, Series of 1981.

13 All funds, savings and income of PhilRAI shall be considered part of the funds
14 automatically released to the latter, subject to the fiscal control and management procedures
15 provided for in EO 714. Such funds, savings and income shall be used to achieve the goal and
16 objectives for which PhilRAI was established.

17 **SEC. 22. Civil Service Laws.** – PhilRAI and its officers and employees shall be
18 subject to the Civil Service Law, rules and regulations. Technical personnel shall be selected
19 on the basis of the highest possible standards of merit and fitness for public service to be
20 determined in accordance with such policies and guideline as may be approved by the Board.

21 **SEC. 23. Auditor.** – The Chair of the Commission on Audit shall be ex-officio
22 auditor of PhilRAI. For this purpose, he/she may appoint a representative who shall be the
23 resident auditor of PhilRAI, together with the necessary personnel to assist the said
24 representative in the performance of his/her duties.

1 **SEC. 24. *Legal Counsel.*** – The Government Corporate Counsel shall be the legal
2 counsel of PhilRAI. It may establish its own legal department, subject to the supervision and
3 control of the Government Corporate Counsel, to handle the day-to-day legal matters
4 affecting its affairs.

5 **SEC. 25. *Annual Report.*** – The Board shall submit to the President of the Philippines
6 through the Secretary of Agriculture, an annual report On the activities and operations of
7 PhilRAI together with the audit report on relevant accounts.

8 **SEC. 26. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within ninety (90) days from the
9 effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall, in coordination with PhilRAI,
10 formulate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

11 **SEC. 27. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid
12 or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force
13 and effect.

14 **SEC. 28. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations,
15 rules and regulations, and issuances, or part thereof, which are inconsistent with the
16 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

17 **SEC. 29. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication on
18 the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

19 *Approved.*