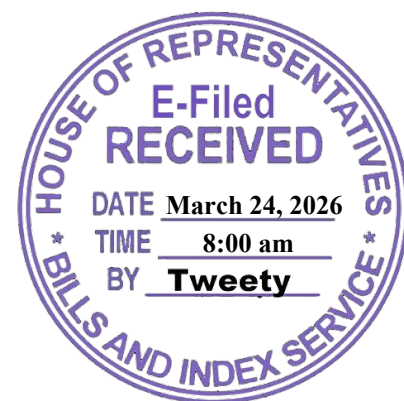


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8721



Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to establish fisherfolk resettlement areas to ensure that municipal fisherfolks have secure, adequate, and proximate settlements near their fishing grounds. While Republic Act No. 8550, otherwise known as the "*Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998*" originally envisioned the creation of these settlements, the permissive language of the existing law has led to the relocation of fishing communities to inland areas far from their source of livelihood.

The fisherfolk sector continues to rank among the poorest in the country. Based on the 2023 Full Year Official Poverty Statistics of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the fisherfolk sector recorded a poverty incidence of 27.4%¹, significantly higher than the national average of 15.5% of the same year². This vulnerability intensifies as the Philippines remains highly exposed to climate risks, with coastal communities bearing the brunt of extreme weather events. Displacement due to commercial development or climate-induced disasters, without access to suitable resettlement near fishing grounds, further erodes livelihood security and weakens participation in local economies.

In the 2024 Philippine Fisheries Profile, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) reported that there were approximately 2.6 million registered fisherfolk nationwide. These communities depend on immediate coastal access to reduce operational costs and preserve the quality of their

¹ Gonzales, Anna Leah. (2025, March 31). *Poverty incidence in 10 basic sectors down in 2023*. <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1247183>

² Department of Economy, Planning, and Development. (2024, August 15). *Statement on the 2023 Full Year Official Poverty Statistics*. <https://dro7.depdev.gov.ph/statement-on-the-2023-full-year-official-poverty-statistics/>

catch. By requiring local government units (LGUs) to integrate these settlements into their Comprehensive Land Use Plans, this bill transforms an aspirational policy into a concrete urban planning requirement. It also ensures that registered fisherfolk without real property receive priority in settlement allocation, thereby effectively linking socialized housing with sustainable fisheries management.

This measure promotes the secure tenure in locations that sustain the traditional livelihood of fisherfolk. It strengthens their economic resilience, supports national food security, and affirms the State's duty to protect and uplift marginalized sectors.

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



HON. ERIC G. YAP

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8721

Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

AN ACT

MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FISHERFOLK RESETTLEMENT AREAS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 108 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8550, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE PHILIPPINE FISHERIES CODE OF 1998", AS AMENDED

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

Section 1. Section 108 of Republic Act (RA) No. 8550, otherwise known as the "*Philippine Fisheries Code Of 1998*", as amended by RA No. 10654, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 108. Fisherfolk Settlement Areas. - The Department [shall establish and create fisherfolk settlement areas in coordination with concerned agencies of the government, where certain areas of the public domain, specifically near the fishing grounds, shall be reserved for the settlement of the municipal fisherfolk. Nothing in this section shall be construed to vest ownership of any resettlement area to a municipal fisherfolk for whom said areas may have been reserved for or had been actually granted to.] OF AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS OF CITIES OR MUNICIPALITIES EXERCISING JURISDICTION OVER COASTAL AREAS AND MUNICIPAL WATERS, SHALL IDENTIFY, ESTABLISH, AND CREATE SETTLEMENT AREAS WHICH HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO FISHING GROUNDS: PROVIDED, THAT IN PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED OR ESTABLISHED SETTLEMENT AREAS WITH ADEQUATE ACCESS TO FISHING GROUNDS, FISHERFOLK SHALL BE GRANTED PREFERENCE IN THE AWARD OF SETTLEMENT RIGHTS THEREAT: PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SETTLEMENT

AREAS SHALL BE IN FAVOR OF FISHERFOLK WHO ARE REGISTERED AS SUCH WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE CITY OR MUNICIPALITY AND WHO ARE WITHOUT REAL PROPERTY: PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS EXERCISING JURISDICTION OVER COASTAL AREAS AND MUNICIPAL WATERS ARE HEREBY MANDATED TO INTEGRATE SETTLEMENT AREAS FOR FISHERFOLK IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLANS."

SEC. 2. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 3. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders and rules, and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 4. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

: Provided, That

: Provided, further, That

: Provided, finally, That