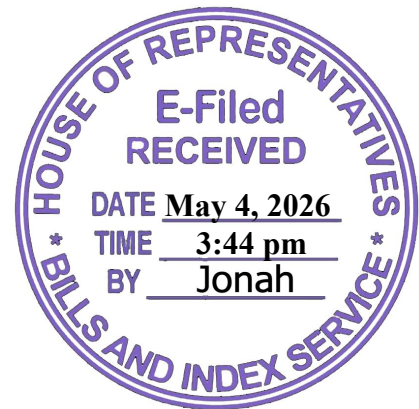


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9046



Introduced by
REP. KAKA BAG-AO (LONE DISTRICT, DINAGAT ISLANDS)
REP. JOSE MANUEL TADEO "CHEL" I. DIOKNO (AKBAYAN PARTY-LIST)
REP. PERCIVAL V. CENDAÑA (AKBAYAN PARTY-LIST)
REP. DADAH KIRAM ISMULA (AKBAYAN PARTY-LIST)
REP. CIELO KRISEL B. LAGMAN (1ST DISTRICT, ALBAY)

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING FISHERFOLK SETTLEMENT AREAS, PROVIDING SECURITY OF TENURE
AND PROTECTION AGAINST DISPLACEMENT FOR MUNICIPAL FISHERFOLK,
INTEGRATING CLIMATE-RESILIENT COASTAL HOUSING AND LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT,
AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

E X P L A N A T O R Y N O T E

The municipal fisheries sector is the cornerstone of Philippine food security and coastal resilience, yet it remains among the most vulnerable and marginalized in the archipelago. Despite the critical role of municipal fisherfolk in feeding the nation, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (**PSA, 2021**)¹ reveals a staggering poverty incidence rate of approximately **30.6%** among fisherfolk—a figure significantly higher than the national average. These communities are currently caught in a systemic "triple threat" cycle of resource depletion, climate-induced disasters, and widespread displacement due to coastal reclamation, tourism expansion, and large-scale infrastructure projects.

The Necessity and Urgency

¹ Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) (2021). *Poverty Incidence Among Basic Sectors in the Philippines*.

The precipitous decline in fisherfolk productivity underscores the necessity for legislative intervention. Recent reports indicate that the average daily catch per fisher has plummeted from a sustainable **10–20 kg/day** in previous decades to a mere **2.5 kg/day** due to overfishing and illegal commercial encroachment within municipal waters.² Compounding this economic crisis is the physical insecurity of these communities; thousands of families reside in high-risk "coastal danger zones" without legal tenure, leaving them uniquely vulnerable to the intensifying typhoons and rising sea levels associated with the Philippine climate.

Displacement, often framed as "development," frequently strips fisherfolk of their proximity to traditional fishing grounds and landing sites. Without the "Kasaganaan sa Baybayin Act," these families remain in a state of perpetual precarity, unable to invest in their homes or livelihoods due to the constant threat of eviction. There is an immediate and urgent need to institutionalize "Fisherfolk Settlement Areas" (FSAs) to provide secure tenure and ensure that coastal development does not come at the expense of our nation's food producers.

Constitutional and International Basis

This proposed legislation is firmly anchored in both the supreme law of the land and established international human rights and development frameworks:

- **Constitutional Mandate:** The bill draws its authority from **Article XIII, Section 7 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution**, which mandates that the State shall protect the rights of subsistence fisherfolk to the preferential use of local marine and fishing resources. This Act operationalizes the principle that "those who have less in life should have more in law" by ensuring that coastal land-use policies prioritize the housing and livelihood needs of the municipal fishing sector.
- **International Alignment:** The measure aligns with the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines)**, which urge states to ensure tenure security, prohibit forced evictions, and facilitate equitable access to resources to promote sustainable small-scale fishing practices (**FAO, 2015**).³
- **Global Sustainability:** This Act advances the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly **SDG 14 (Life Below Water)**, which advocates for access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources, and **SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)**, which promotes inclusive, resilient, and safe human settlements (**United Nations, 2015**).⁴

² **Inquirer.net (2026).** *The Shrinking Catch: Analysis of Municipal Fishery Productivity*. (Retrieved March 6, 2026).

³ **FAO (2015).** *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

⁴ **United Nations (2015).** *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. General Assembly Resolution 70/1.

Key Legislative Mechanisms

To address these challenges, the *Kasaganaan sa Baybayin Act* introduces several critical innovations:

1. **Certificate of Compliance (COC):** A mandatory legal requirement for any project—public or private—impacting coastal communities, ensuring that displacement is not arbitrary and that livelihood transition is fully funded.
2. **Inter-Agency Committee on Fisherfolk Settlement Areas (IACFSA):** An institutional mechanism that ensures national policy coherence across the DA-BFAR, DHSUD, DENR, and other key agencies, with direct participation from the fisherfolk themselves.
3. **Climate-Resilience Standards:** The bill mandates that all settlements must be designed for climate-adaptation, including elevated structures, coastal green buffer zones (mangroves), and disaster-resilient evacuation infrastructure.

Conclusion

The "Kasaganaan sa Baybayin Act" is not merely a housing initiative; it is a human rights imperative. By integrating secure land tenure with climate-resilient infrastructure and mandated livelihood protections, the State provides a mechanism for long-term community empowerment. This Act ensures that municipal fisherfolk—the guardians of our marine heritage—are granted the legal protection to remain on their land, secure in their right to continue their traditional livelihoods, and resilient against the existential threats posed by climate change.

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



REP. KAKA BAG-AO

Lone District of Dinagat Islands



REP. JOSE MANUEL TADEO "CHEL" I. DIOKNO

AKBAYAN Party-list



REP. PERCIVAL V. CENDAÑA

AKBAYAN Party-list



REP. DADAH KIRAM ISMULA

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REP. CIELO KRISEL B. LAGMAN

1ST District, Albay

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

- 1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** This Act shall be known as the "***Kasaganaan sa Baybayan Act.***"
- 2 **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** It is hereby declared the policy of the State to fulfill
3 its social justice mandate by ensuring the security, dignity, and economic stability of
4 municipal fisherfolk through the following measures:
- 5 **(a) Institutionalization of Preferential Rights:** The State shall explicitly recognize and
6 protect the statutory preferential rights of municipal fisherfolk to the use and
7 management of municipal waters and coastal resources, ensuring that any competing
8 commercial, industrial, or tourism-related use remains legally subordinate to the
9 subsistence and livelihood requirements of local fisherfolk, in accordance with **Section**
10 **7, Article XIII of the 1987 Constitution.**
- 11 **(b) Guarantee of Secure and Resilient Tenure:** The State shall establish a permanent,
12 climate-resilient, and sustainable housing framework that guarantees legal security of

tenure for municipal fisherfolk, prioritizing their protection against natural hazards through the mandatory integration of disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation standards in all housing projects, consistent with the right of every citizen to adequate housing and the State's duty to provide for the vulnerable.

(c) **Mandatory Safeguards Against Arbitrary Displacement:** The State shall prohibit the displacement of fisherfolk communities from their ancestral and customary landing sites and settlements due to reclamation, tourism, commercial expansion, or conservation zoning, unless such relocation is proven to be for a compelling public interest and is accompanied by a legally binding, transparent, and participatory relocation and livelihood restoration plan that is demonstrably superior to their original living conditions, in line with the prohibition of forced evictions under R.A. No. 7279.

(d) **Integrated Planning and Resource Management:** The State shall mandate the seamless integration of Fisherfolk Settlement Areas into all local land-use plans, Comprehensive Land Use Plans, coastal resource management programs, and national housing development agendas, ensuring that residential settlements are strictly proximal to primary fishing grounds and essential support infrastructure to prevent the degradation of traditional livelihoods.

(e) **Participatory Governance:** The State shall institutionalize the compulsory participation of accredited fisherfolk organizations and Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Councils at every stage of the planning, design, monitoring, and implementation of settlement policies, acknowledging their role as primary decision-makers and stewards of their own communities and aquatic domains.

(f) **Sustainable Development and Climate Action:** The State shall adopt a holistic approach to coastal development that harmonizes economic growth with ecological integrity, ensuring that all fisherfolk settlements incorporate ecosystem-based management and climate-resilience strategies to mitigate the impacts of sea-level rise and extreme weather events, as part of the country's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms

For this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

(a) **Municipal Fisherfolk** refers to persons—including **women and marginalized gender groups**—who are directly or indirectly engaged in the **entire fisheries value and supply chain**. This encompasses the taking, culturing, post-harvest handling, **fish vending, marketing, and further processing** of fishery or aquatic products. To be recognized under this definition, such individuals must reside in the municipality or city and be duly registered in the **Municipal Fisherfolk Registry (FishR)** as maintained by the local government unit, pursuant to the inclusive standards set by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

1 **(b) Fisherfolk Settlement Areas (FSAs)** refer to contiguous areas of public land,
2 government-owned property, or reclaimed land specifically designated, zoned, and
3 developed for the permanent residential use of municipal fisherfolk, which must feature
4 direct, unobstructed physical and legal access to the shoreline, traditional fishing
5 grounds, and necessary fisheries-related infrastructure.

6 **(c) Fish Landing Site** refers to a functional coastal infrastructure or designated segment
7 of the shoreline where fishing vessels are permitted to dock, and where catch is
8 unloaded, weighed, sorted, and distributed. This site shall be recognized as a public
9 utility and protected from any obstruction, privatization, or unauthorized conversion that
10 would impede the traditional docking rights of municipal fishers.

11 **(d) Security of Tenure** refers to the legal right of a beneficiary to occupy and reside in a
12 designated Fisherfolk Settlement Area, which is established and protected through
13 formal legal instruments—including but not limited to, usufruct agreements,
14 stewardship contracts, community mortgage programs, or cooperative housing titles—
15 that protect against arbitrary eviction, dispossession, or displacement.

16 **(e) Resettlement** refers to the government-mandated, planned, and managed transfer of
17 fisherfolk households from their current location to an alternative site, which shall only
18 be permitted when the current site is certified as a hazard-prone or danger zone by the
19 Mines and Geosciences Bureau or equivalent authority, or when the continued
20 occupancy is rendered legally or physically impossible, provided that such relocation
21 complies with the participatory, livelihood-preserving standards mandated by this Act.

22 **(f) Just Transition Measures** refers to a comprehensive suite of social protection,
23 technical training, and financial assistance programs designed to provide immediate
24 relief and long-term economic stability to fisherfolk households whose livelihoods are
25 negatively impacted by spatial reallocation, infrastructure development, or
26 environmental conservation measures. These measures must include, at a minimum,
27 income replacement, compensation for capital assets, and the facilitation of alternative
28 or enhanced fishing-related employment.

29 **(g) Municipal Waters** include not only streams, lakes, inland bodies of water and tidal
30 waters within the municipality which are not included within the protected areas as
31 defined under Republic Act No. 7586 (The NIPAS Law), public forest, timber lands, forest
32 reserves or fishery reserves, or part of ancestral domain as defined under Republic Act
33 8371 (IPRA), but also marine waters included between two (2) lines drawn
34 perpendicular to the general coastline from points where the boundary lines of the
35 municipality touch the sea at low tide and a third line parallel with the general coastline
36 including offshore islands and fifteen (15) kilometers from such coastline, subject to
37 the following rules:

- 38 1. For cities or municipalities with generally straight coastlines, the distance shall
39 be reckoned from the low-water line along the mainland shoreline;

2. For cities or municipalities composed wholly or partly of islands, islets, or with irregular coastlines, the distance shall be reckoned from the coastline of the outermost island or islet, applying the archipelagic principle; and
3. Where two (2) municipalities are so situated on opposite shores that there is less than thirty (30) kilometers of marine waters between them, the third line shall be equally distant from opposite shore of the respective municipalities.

This delineation is for fisheries governance and local administrative purposes and shall not affect national maritime baselines.

SECTION 4. Beneficiaries. The primary beneficiaries of this Act shall be registered municipal fisherfolk households, as evidenced by their active entry in the Municipal Fisherfolk Registry maintained by the Local Government Unit (LGU). The Municipal Fisherfolk Registry shall be a public document, updated annually, and subjected to a mandatory community validation process involving the Municipal/City Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (M/C-FARMC) to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the list.

Priority in the allocation of housing and tenure support shall be strictly granted to the following households:

- (a) Households currently occupying coastal areas formally classified as "danger zones" or "high-risk areas" by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) or the appropriate national disaster risk management authority;
- (b) Households experiencing actual or threatened displacement due to state-sanctioned infrastructure projects, private coastal developments, tourism expansion, or the implementation of protected area/conservation zoning;
- (c) Households currently possessing no legal security of tenure, including those living as informal settlers on public or private land within the municipal coastal zone;
- (d) Members of organized fisherfolk associations, cooperatives, or federations duly accredited by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), or the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR).

In the implementation of this Section, all Local Government Units are mandated to ensure that registration and tenure documentation are gender-responsive and accessible. This includes the recognition of both husband and wife, or the primary fisher-household head regardless of gender, as co-tenants or co-beneficiaries in all tenure instruments. Any form of gender-based discrimination, including the exclusion of women fishers who engage in post-harvest or processing activities, shall be strictly prohibited. Any violation of the beneficiary identification protocols herein shall be

subject to administrative and legal sanctions under this Act and the existing Anti-Discrimination laws.

SECTION 5. Establishment of Fisherfolk Settlement Areas (FSAs). The DA-BFAR, in close coordination with the DHSUD, the DENR, and the concerned Local Government Unit (LGU), shall identify, validate, and designate suitable public lands as Fisherfolk Settlement Areas (FSAs) within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act. If no suitable public land is available within the municipality, the LGU, with the assistance of the DHSUD and DA-BFAR, shall pursue land acquisition, land banking, or lease-to-own arrangements specifically for the purpose of establishing FSAs.

All designated FSAs shall comply with the following mandatory standards:

(a) Proximity and Access: The settlement must be located within a radius that guarantees rapid, safe, and unobstructed physical access to traditional fishing grounds and designated fish landing sites. The LGU and the DA-BFAR shall certify that no infrastructure or private enclosure shall impede the fisherfolk's daily transit between the settlement and the sea.

(b) Provision of Essential Services and Infrastructure: The State shall ensure the provision of basic services, including potable water, sanitation, electrification, and connectivity. Furthermore, each FSA shall be equipped with integrated livelihood support facilities, such as cold storage, fish drying areas, and boat repair centers, to promote the economic viability of the community.

(c) Security of Tenure and Protection from Displacement: All residents within the designated FSAs shall be granted secure, legally recognized tenure instruments. The settlements shall be protected from any form of arbitrary displacement, demolition, or land-use conversion. Any modification to the settlement status shall require a prior, transparent, and participatory public hearing with the residents and the Municipal/City FARMC.

(d) Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience: All FSAs shall be designed and developed in strict adherence to climate-resilient engineering standards. This includes the mandatory avoidance of high-risk coastal hazard zones, the implementation of elevation strategies for housing structures, the establishment of coastal green buffers, and the integration of ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction measures, such as mangrove reforestation and coral reef protection, to mitigate the impacts of sea-level rise and extreme weather events.

SECTION 6. Right to a Secured Settlement. Qualified beneficiaries shall be granted secure tenure through recognized legal instruments, including usufruct agreements, stewardship contracts, community mortgage programs, cooperative housing agreements, or other tenure arrangements recognized under housing and agrarian

1 reform laws. In addition to the right to secure tenure, municipal fisherfolk shall be
2 entitled to the following rights:

3 **(a) Protection Against Arbitrary Displacement:** Municipal fisherfolk shall not be
4 arbitrarily displaced from their settlements or traditional fishing grounds. Any project—
5 whether public or private—that impacts these communities must satisfy the following:

- 6 1. Conduct of a mandatory, free, prior, and informed consultation with the affected
7 community and the local FARMC;
- 8 2. Proof of exhaustion of all alternatives to displacement;
- 9 3. Provision of a legally binding relocation plan that ensures livelihood continuity
10 and accessibility to fishing resources.

11 **(b) Right to Remain in Established Settlements:** No municipal fisherfolk shall be
12 uprooted from their established settlements or denied access to their customary fishing
13 areas without a lawful, participatory, and transparent procedure. Any displacement
14 undertaken in violation of this provision shall be deemed *void ab initio*. Responsible
15 officials and private proponents shall be subject to administrative, civil, and criminal
16 liability, without prejudice to the rights of the affected individuals to immediate
17 restitution, reinstatement, or just damages.

18 **(c) Safeguarding of Customary Access in Spatial Reallocation:** Any spatial reallocation
19 within municipal waters for tourism, reclamation, or conservation zoning must maintain
20 customary access areas for registered municipal fisherfolk. Such access shall only be
21 restricted if strictly required for safety or ecological conservation, and only upon the
22 prior implementation of "Just Transition Measures." These measures must include, at a
23 minimum, sustainable livelihood restoration, alternative landing site infrastructure, and
24 fair economic compensation.

25 **(d) Prohibition of Forced Evictions:** Forced eviction from settlements, fish landing sites,
26 or traditional fishing areas is strictly prohibited, except in the specific cases authorized
27 by Republic Act No. 7279 and other applicable statutes. Where eviction or relocation is
28 deemed lawful and unavoidable, the State shall guarantee:

- 29 1. The provision of adequate, suitable, and safe resettlement sites located within a
30 reasonable distance from primary fishing grounds;
- 31 2. The delivery of just, fair, and transparent compensation and rehabilitation
32 assistance;
- 33 3. Meaningful participation of the affected fisherfolk in all stages of the planning
34 and implementation of the relocation;
- 35 4. The preservation of continued access to fishing resources to the maximum
36 extent possible.

SECTION 7. Institutional Mechanisms. There is hereby created an **Inter-Agency Committee on Fisherfolk Settlement Areas (IACFSA)**, which shall serve as the primary policy-making and oversight body for the implementation of this Act.

The leadership and membership of the IACFSA shall be structured to ensure executive oversight and grassroots representation, as follows:

(a) Executive Leadership

1 **Chairperson:** Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR)

2 **Co-Chairperson:** Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD)

(b) Institutional Members. The Committee shall be composed of authorized representatives from the following national agencies, whose mandates are critical to the successful implementation of settlement and livelihood policies:

1 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

2 Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)

3 National Anti-Poverty Commission – Fisherfolk Sector (NAPC-FS)

4 National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)

5 Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

(c) Civil Society and Sectoral Representation. To ensure the policy reflects the actual needs of the fisherfolk, the Committee shall include three (3) representatives from national fisherfolk organizations. These representatives shall be formally appointed by the Chairperson upon nomination by the National Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (NFARMC).

SECTION 7.1. Powers and Functions of the IACFSA. The IACFSA shall exercise the following powers and functions:

(a) Policy Formulation: Formulate and approve national policies, strategic plans, and regulatory frameworks for the establishment and development of FSAs, ensuring consistency with national fisheries, housing, environmental, and land-use laws;

(b) Standard Setting: Develop and promulgate mandatory minimum planning, design, and construction standards for all FSAs, including climate-resilient engineering and livelihood-support facility requirements;

(c) Program Coordination: Coordinate the implementation of settlement programs across all national government agencies and local government units (LGUs) to ensure

1 policy coherence, prevent jurisdictional overlap, and facilitate the efficient delivery of
2 basic services;

3 **(d) Oversight and Validation:** Provide central oversight in the identification, validation,
4 and mapping of suitable areas for FSAs, including public lands and government-owned
5 properties, in coordination with the relevant LGUs;

6 **(e) Protection of Rights:** Ensure that all settlement programs uphold the statutory rights
7 of municipal fisherfolk, specifically the security of tenure, protection against arbitrary
8 displacement and forced eviction, and the preservation of access to traditional fishing
9 grounds and landing sites;

10 **(f) Resource Mobilization:** Coordinate with relevant agencies to secure and mobilize
11 funding for FSA development, including, but not limited to, national government
12 appropriations, fisheries development funds, climate adaptation and disaster risk
13 reduction (DRR) funds, and official development assistance;

14 **(g) Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establish and maintain a comprehensive monitoring and
15 evaluation system to ensure compliance with this Act, specifically tracking the progress
16 of settlement development, the integrity of beneficiary selection, and the long-term
17 impact on fisherfolk livelihoods;

18 **(h) Technical Assistance:** Provide technical guidance and capacity-building programs
19 to LGUs regarding settlement planning, coastal housing design, CLUP integration, and
20 the implementation of just transition measures;

21 **(i) Dispute Resolution:** Act as a quasi-judicial body to hear and resolve disputes
22 concerning settlement site selection, beneficiary eligibility, claims of displacement, and
23 access to fishing grounds.

24 **SECTION 7.2. IACFSA Technical Secretariat.** There is hereby created an IACFSA
25 Technical Secretariat, to be co-managed by the DA-BFAR and the DHSUD. The
26 Secretariat shall be responsible for: providing administrative and technical support to
27 the Committee; coordinating inter-agency meetings and multi-stakeholder
28 consultations; maintaining an integrated national database of all registered Fisherfolk
29 Settlement Areas; preparing annual progress reports; and performing such other
30 functions as may be assigned by the Committee to ensure the efficient operation of the
31 IACFSA.

32 **SECTION 7.3. Regional and Local Implementation Mechanisms**

33 **(a) Regional Fisherfolk Settlement Committees (RFSCs):** RFSCs shall be established
34 within each BFAR Regional Office to serve as the regional coordinating arm, facilitating
35 the synergy between regional offices of concerned national agencies and LGUs;

(b) Local Fisherfolk Settlement Planning Teams (LFSPTs): Each LGU shall establish an LFSPT composed of representatives from the LGU Planning Office, the Municipal Agricultural Office (MAO), the Municipal/City FARMC, and accredited local fisherfolk organizations. The LFSPT shall have the primary responsibility for the identification, design, and development of FSAs within their respective jurisdictions.

The IACFSA shall finalize the coordination and implementation protocols, in consultation with regional offices and LGUs, within one hundred eighty (180) days from the formal constitution of the Committee.

SECTION 8. Integration with Local Land Use Plans (CLUPs). Local Government Units (LGUs) shall mandatorily integrate designated Fisherfolk Settlement Areas (FSAs) into their respective Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs) and Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plans (PDPFPs). This integration shall include a mandatory Coastal Resource Management (CRM) overlay. The LGU, through its Local Planning and Development Office (LPDO), shall ensure that the CRM component is formulated with the full and direct participation of the local Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (FARMC) to ensure that land-use zoning does not encroach upon or restrict access to traditional fishing grounds.

SECTION 9. Role of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Councils (FARMCs). The Municipal and City FARMCs shall serve as the primary institutional partner of the LGU in all stages of FSA implementation. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

(a) Conducting independent validation of the Municipal Fisherfolk Registry to confirm beneficiary eligibility;

(b) Providing formal recommendations for the selection and identification of potential settlement sites;

(c) Monitoring the construction and development of settlements to ensure adherence to standards; and

(d) Leading community-based efforts in the protection, conservation, and management of traditional fishing grounds and marine protected areas (MPAs) adjacent to the FSA.

SECTION 10. Climate-Resilient Fisherfolk Settlements. All FSAs shall be designed and constructed to comply with the National Building Code and the latest climate-adaptation standards. Mandatory measures include:

(a) Site Selection: Absolute prohibition against siting settlements in areas identified by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) as having high susceptibility to storm surges, tsunamis, or liquefaction;

(b) Structural Integrity: Housing units shall be typhoon-resilient, designed for elevated construction to account for projected sea-level rise;

(c) Ecosystem-Based Protection: LGUs shall implement a mandatory coastal green buffer zone, including the restoration of mangroves and beach forests to serve as natural storm-surge barriers;

(d) Emergency Infrastructure: Every FSA shall be equipped with dedicated, accessible, and disaster-resilient evacuation centers or multi-purpose halls designed to withstand super-typhoon wind speeds.

SECTION 11. Settlement Planning Standards. The IACFSA shall issue the "Minimum Planning and Design Standards for Fisherfolk Settlements" within one hundred eighty (180) days of this Act's effectivity. These standards shall cover:

(a) Suitability and Accessibility: Proximity standards that mandate settlement location within a five (5) kilometer radius of the primary landing site or, where terrain dictates otherwise, the provision of a dedicated shuttle/access route;

(b) Land Allocation: Minimum square-meterage requirements per household that account for gear storage, vessel maintenance, and home-based post-harvest processing;

(c) Cultural and Structural Appropriateness: Housing designs that prioritize cross-ventilation, flood-resilience, and adequate space for the storage of fishing equipment, constructed using materials compliant with local hazard profiles.

SECTION 12. Fisheries Support Facilities. Each FSA shall be integrated with dedicated fisheries support infrastructure to ensure economic viability. The LGU and DA-BFAR shall ensure the provision of:

(a) Standardized fish landing, docking, and mooring facilities;

(b) Sanitary fish drying, processing, and solar-tunnel dryer areas;

(c) Cold storage and ice production plants to reduce post-harvest losses;

(d) Secured boat storage and maintenance workshops;

(e) Controlled fish trading centers that provide fair-market access to fisherfolk, preventing monopolistic middleman practices.

SECTION 13. Community Infrastructure. The State, in partnership with the LGU, shall ensure the "Progressive Realization of Community Infrastructure." Each FSA shall be provided with:

- (a) 24/7 access to potable water and centralized sanitation/sewage treatment systems;
- (b) All-weather access roads linking the FSA to primary municipal arteries;
- (c) Functional community health centers and primary education facilities within a reasonable travel distance;
- (d) Sustainable energy solutions, including off-grid solar micro-grids where traditional connection is delayed.

SECTION 14. Congressional Oversight. The IACFSA shall submit an annual report to Congress through the Committees on Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and Housing of both Houses of Congress. The report shall include the status of fisherfolk settlement development; number of beneficiary households; funding utilization; challenges and policy recommendations among others.

SECTION 15. Prohibited Acts and Penalties. The following acts are hereby prohibited and shall be subject to the corresponding penalties:

(a) Violation of the Right to a Secured Settlement: Any person or entity that violates the security of tenure of a qualified municipal fisherfolk beneficiary, as defined in Section 6, shall be punished by an administrative fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (PHP 50,000.00) but not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (PHP 100,000.00), and imprisonment of two (2) to six (6) years. In addition, the offender shall pay a penalty equivalent to double the administrative fine imposed.

(b) Large-Scale Displacement of Fisherfolk: Any person or entity that causes the unlawful displacement of ten (10) or more fisherfolk households, or the obstruction of access to traditional fishing grounds for an entire barangay or community, shall be liable as follows:

1. Administrative Penalty: A fine of Five Million Pesos (PHP 5,000,000.00) to Ten Million Pesos (PHP 10,000,000.00).
2. Criminal Penalty: Imprisonment of six (6) to twelve (12) years, and a criminal fine equivalent to twice the administrative fine imposed.
3. Juridical Liability: If the offender is a corporation, partnership, or other juridical person, the penalty of cancellation of the registration and permit to operate shall be imposed. The officers, directors, or representatives who authorized the act, as well as the individuals who participated in its execution, shall be held personally, criminally, and solidarily liable.
4. Civil Liability: The offender shall be liable for damages to life and property of the displaced communities, and shall shoulder the full cost of environmental restoration or rehabilitation of the damaged fishery resources based on the Philippine Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System (PENCAS) standards.

1 **(c) Unlawful Closure of Access:** The obstruction or blockage of established fish landing
2 sites, traditional boat routes, or common access points by any person, public or private,
3 without a valid permit or legal order, is prohibited. Violators shall be punished by an
4 administrative fine of Fifty Thousand Pesos (PHP 50,000.00) to One Hundred Thousand
5 Pesos (PHP 100,000.00), and imprisonment of two (2) to six (6) years. The offender
6 shall also be liable for the total cost of removing the obstruction. This penalty is without
7 prejudice to separate criminal liability if the act is attended by physical injury,
8 intimidation, or harassment.

9 **(d) Falsification or Manipulation of Registry Data:** Any person who willfully falsifies,
10 tampers with, or manipulates the Municipal Fisherfolk Registry to secure benefits or
11 deprive a qualified beneficiary of their rights under this Act shall be punished by an
12 administrative fine of Fifty Thousand Pesos (PHP 50,000.00) to One Hundred Thousand
13 Pesos (PHP 100,000.00), and imprisonment of two (2) to six (6) years. A fine equivalent
14 to twice the administrative fine shall also be imposed.

15 **SECTION 16. Moratorium on the Resettlement of Municipal Fisherfolk**

16 **(a) General Prohibition:** Upon the effectivity of this Act, a national moratorium is hereby
17 imposed on the forced relocation or resettlement of municipal fisherfolk from their
18 existing settlements, traditional landing sites, or customary fishing grounds. No such
19 resettlement shall be undertaken during the period of implementation of this Act, except
20 in cases where a formal certification from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) or
21 the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) identifies the
22 current site as being in a state of imminent environmental danger or high-risk for man-
23 made disasters, rendering the area completely uninhabitable.

24 **(b) Suspension of Pending Projects:** All ongoing or pending development projects—
25 whether public or private—that would result in the displacement of municipal fisherfolk
26 are hereby suspended by operation of law. This suspension shall remain in effect until
27 the project proponent secures a **Certificate of Compliance (COC)** from the IACFSA,
28 certifying that the project has fully integrated the protections, tenure security, and just
29 transition measures mandated by this Act.

30 **(c) Requirements for Resumption:** Proponents of suspended projects may seek the
31 lifting of the moratorium only by submitting a formal "Undertaking of Compliance" to the
32 IACFSA. This undertaking must include:

- 33 1. A validated, participatory relocation plan that identifies a new site with equal or
34 better access to traditional fishing grounds;
- 35 2. A financial guarantee, in the form of a performance bond, to cover the costs of
36 livelihood transition, relocation assistance, and infrastructure development at the
37 new site;

3. Proof of written consent and a signed agreement with the affected fisherfolk households and the local FARMC, obtained through an independent, third-party verified consultation process.

SECTION 17. Appropriations. The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be charged against existing appropriations of implementing agencies. Thereafter, funding shall be included in the **annual General Appropriations Act**.

SECTION 18. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). Within **one hundred eighty (180) days** from the effectivity of this Act, the IACFSA, as the primary policy-making body, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to ensure the effective implementation of this Act.

(a) Drafting Committee: The IACFSA shall form an **IRR Drafting Committee** chaired by the DA-BFAR and the DHSUD, with the legal counsel of the Department of Justice (DOJ) serving as an ex-officio member to ensure consistency with existing statutes. The Secretariat of the IACFSA shall serve as the primary administrative support for the drafting process.

(b) Multi-Stakeholder Consultation: In the formulation of the IRR, the Committee shall conduct at least three (3) regional consultative workshops and one (1) national summit. The Committee is mandatorily required to engage the following stakeholders:

1. The National Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (NFARMC);
2. Accredited provincial and municipal federations of fisherfolk organizations;
3. Civil society organizations (CSOs) specializing in human rights, land tenure, and coastal resource management;
4. Representatives from the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP); and
5. Experts from the academe and the scientific community regarding climate-resilient coastal engineering.

(c) Mandatory Contents of the IRR: The IRR shall, at a minimum, prescribe:

1. Standardized procedures for the identification, validation, and awarding of Fisherfolk Settlement Areas;
2. Detailed technical specifications for "climate-resilient" coastal housing and support infrastructure;
3. Uniform guidelines for the "Just Transition Measures" and livelihood restoration packages;
4. Simplified, accessible, and gender-responsive protocols for the registration of beneficiaries in the Municipal Fisherfolk Registry; and
5. Procedures for the exercise of the IACFSA's quasi-judicial powers in resolving disputes and adjudicating claims for violations of this Act.

1 **(d) Publication:** The IRR shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication
2 in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

3 **SECTION 19. Rule of Statutory Construction.** Any doubt in the interpretation,
4 application, or implementation of any provision of this Act shall be resolved in favor of
5 the municipal fisherfolk, consistent with the constitutional mandate of social justice and
6 the protection of the preferential rights of subsistence fisherfolk to the use of marine
7 and fishing resources. The provisions of this Act shall be liberally construed to ensure
8 the realization of the State's duty to provide security of tenure and livelihood protection
9 to the sector.

10 **SECTION 20. Separability Clause.** If any provision, section, or part of this Act is declared
11 unconstitutional, invalid, or inconsistent with the Constitution or other existing laws by a
12 court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the
13 remainder of this Act. The remaining provisions not affected by such declaration shall
14 continue to be in full force and effect.

15 **SECTION 21. Repealing Clause.** All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
16 proclamations, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the
17 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly. Provided
18 that the provisions of Republic Act No. 8550 (The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998), as
19 amended, and Republic Act No. 7279 (Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992)
20 shall remain in force, except to the extent that they are inconsistent with the specific
21 protections and mandates provided under this Act.

22 **SECTION 22. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete
23 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation
24 in the Philippines.

Approved,