

TWENTIETH CONGRESS)
OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. **9763**

Introduced by Representative **KARL FERNANDEZ LEGAZPI**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has long been recognized as one of the world's leading producers and exporters of seaweed, particularly carrageenan-producing varieties such as *Kappaphycus* and *Eucheuma*. The seaweed industry remains a vital pillar of the country's fisheries and aquaculture sector, providing livelihood opportunities to hundreds of thousands of Filipinos in coastal and island communities. Seaweed farming is especially important in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas where economic opportunities are limited and access to traditional agricultural activities is constrained.

According to data from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), seaweed remains the country's leading aquaculture commodity by volume, accounting for more than two-thirds of total aquaculture production.¹ In terms of value, carrageenan and other seaweed-based products continue to be among the country's leading fishery exports, generating approximately USD 250 million in annual export earnings.² The province of Tawi-Tawi alone produces around forty percent (40%) of the country's annual seaweed output, highlighting the industry's crucial role in supporting coastal livelihoods, local economies, and national export revenues.³

Despite its immense potential, the Philippine seaweed industry continues to face serious challenges. Seaweed farmers continue to face declining farmgate prices, deteriorating seedstock quality, climate-related risks, limited access to financing, and insufficient research and technological support, all of which adversely affect productivity, profitability, and industry competitiveness. Recent reports have shown significant declines in seaweed production in several areas due to these factors, threatening the livelihood of coastal communities that depend on seaweed farming as their primary source of income.

At the same time, global demand for seaweed-derived products continues to grow. Carrageenan and other seaweed-based materials are increasingly utilized in food processing, pharmaceuticals,

¹ Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center. (2025). *Fisheries country profile: Philippines*. SEAFDEC. <https://www.seafdec.org/fisheries-country-profile-philippines/>

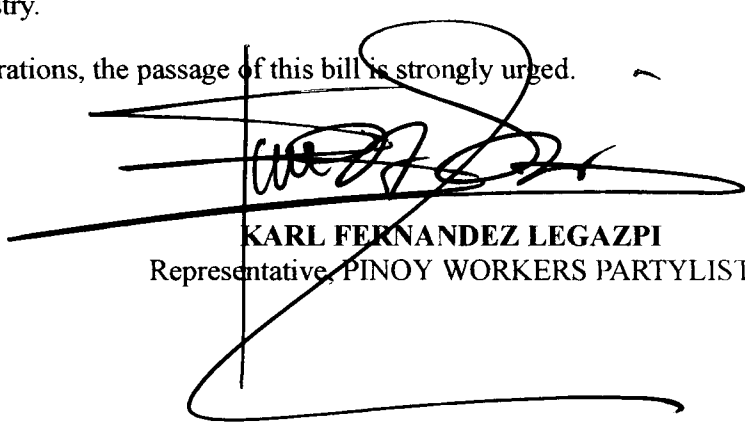
² Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. (2022). Philippine seaweed industry roadmap. Department of Agriculture. <https://www.bfar.da.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Seaweed-Industry-Roadmap.pdf>

³ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The seaweed capital of the Philippines. <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/story/the-seaweed-capital-of-the-philippines/en>

cosmetics, biotechnology, agriculture, and various industrial applications. This growing international demand presents a strategic opportunity for the Philippines to strengthen its position in the global seaweed value chain while generating employment, promoting countryside development, and enhancing food and economic security.

This measure seeks to strengthen the Philippine seaweed industry by providing greater support to seaweed farmers, improving access to technology and financing, promoting value-added processing, and enhancing market opportunities. It also aims to increase productivity, create more livelihood opportunities in coastal communities, and ensure the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of the industry.

In light of the foregoing considerations, the passage of this bill is strongly urged.



KARL FERNANDEZ LEGAZPI
Representative, PINOY WORKERS PARTYLIST

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**AN ACT ADVANCING THE SEAWEED INDUSTRY AS A DRIVER OF SUSTAINABLE
LIVELIHOODS IN COASTAL COMMUNITIES, PROVIDING SUPPORT
MECHANISMS FOR SEAWEED FARMERS AND ENTERPRISES, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Philippine Seaweed Industry Strengthening Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to promote the sustainable development and competitiveness of the Philippine seaweed industry, improve the livelihood of seaweed farmers and coastal communities, encourage value-added processing, and enhance the industry's contribution to food security, employment, and export development.

SEC. 3. *Philippine Seaweed Industry Development Program.* – The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), in coordination with relevant government agencies and local government units (LGUs), shall establish and implement an updated Philippine Seaweed Industry Development Program to support the growth and modernization of the industry.

SEC. 4. *Research and Development.* – BFAR and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) shall strengthen research and development initiatives on seaweed production, climate-resilient farming practices, development of new seaweed-based products, and other technologies to improve industry competitiveness.

SEC. 5. *Technical and Production Support.* – BFAR shall provide qualified seaweed farmers, fisherfolk associations, cooperatives, and community-based organizations with technical assistance, quality planting materials, extension services, and other production support necessary to improve productivity and sustainability.

SEC. 6. *Post-Harvest and Processing Facilities.* – Subject to existing laws and regulations, BFAR, in coordination with LGUs and other concerned agencies, may establish or support the development of shared post-harvest, storage, drying, and processing facilities in major seaweed-producing areas.

SEC. 7. *Market Development and Value-Adding.* – The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in coordination with BFAR and other concerned agencies, shall promote market access, product development, value-added processing, and export opportunities for seaweed and seaweed-based products.

SEC. 8. *Capacity Building and Cooperative Development.* – BFAR, TESDA, and the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) shall provide training programs, skills development, and organizational support to seaweed farmers, associations, and cooperatives to enhance productivity and enterprise development.

SEC. 9. *Access to Financial Assistance.* – Government financial institutions, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations, are encouraged to develop financing programs and credit facilities accessible to qualified seaweed farmers, cooperatives, and enterprises.

SEC. 10. *Coordination with Local Government Units.* – LGUs in seaweed-producing areas are encouraged to integrate seaweed industry development initiatives into their local development and fisheries plans and provide support consistent with this Act.

SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the concerned agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, BFAR, in coordination with the DA, DOST, DTI, TESDA, CDA, and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,