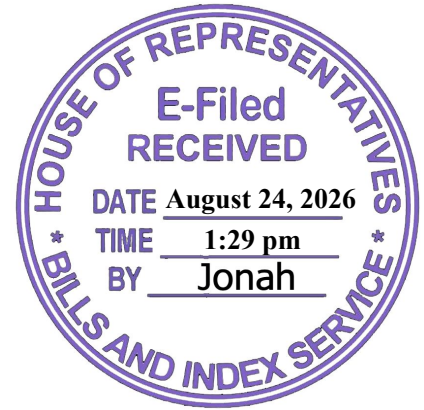


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10871



Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
Party-List Representative Alfred Delos Santos

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is one of the world's top fish-producing countries, and the fisheries sector remains a primary source of food and livelihood for millions of Filipinos, particularly small-scale and municipal fisherfolk in coastal communities nationwide. Yet a significant share of the sector's harvest never reaches the market at full value, this is mostly due to post-harvest losses, which include spoilage, quality degradation, and reduced shelf life, among others. Post-harvest losses remain a persistent problem, driven in large part by the absence of reliable and affordable cold-chain infrastructure at the point of landing, and throughout the seafood supply chain.

Many municipal fishing communities are in areas that lack proper infrastructure or suffer from energy insecurity. As a result, fishers and fish processors in these areas often lack access to ice, chilling, or cold storage facilities capable of preserving the quality of their catch between capture and market. This translates directly into lost income for fisherfolk, reduced product value, lower exportability, and food that never reaches the consumers' tables.

At the same time, the falling cost of solar photovoltaic technology has made solar powered cold-chain equipment increasingly viable in remote, under-served, off-grid, or energy insecure areas, such as island communities and remote coastal towns. Solar-powered cold-chain facilities offer a practical, low-emission, and increasingly cost-competitive solution, one that does not require waiting for grid extension and that insulates fishing communities from fuel price volatility associated with diesel-powered generators commonly used for the same purpose today.

This Act seeks to harness that opportunity by mandating the establishment and integration of solar-powered cold-chain facilities in priority fishing communities. This measure is expected to generate significant knock-on

benefits, such as higher and more stable incomes for municipal fisherfolk, improved food security, greater climate and energy resilience in coastal communities, and the growth of a local industry centered around renewable energy and cold-chain equipment manufacturing, installation, and servicing. Through this Act, we aim to advance the country' s renewable energy goals, its fisheries development goals, and safeguard a way of life that has been thriving for generations.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this measure is urgently sought.



ALFRED C. DELOS SANTOS
Representative, Ang Probinsyano Partylist

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HOUSE BILL NO. 10871

Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
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**AN ACT MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT AND INTEGRATION OF
SOLAR-POWERED COLD-CHAIN FACILITIES IN THE PHILIPPINE
FISHERIES SECTOR, PROVIDING SUPPORT MECHANISMS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Solar-Powered
Fisheries Cold-Chain”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to protect
and advance the rights of fisherfolk, especially small-scale and municipal fishers,
to secure food, decent income, and sustainable livelihood, as well as to promote
food security, reduce post-harvest losses, and support the accelerated
development of the renewable energy, consistent with the Philippine Fisheries
Code, the Renewable Energy Act, and the State’s commitments under its
Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). Towards this end, the State
recognizes that a substantial portion of post-harvest fish loss and spoilage stems
from the lack of reliable, affordable, and continuous cold-chain infrastructure in
coastal and municipal fishing communities.

Off-grid and grid-connected solar energy systems offer a sustainable, low-
emission, and cost-effective means of powering ice-making, chilling, and cold
storage facilities, thereby reducing spoilage, improving fish product quality and
value, strengthening the income of fishers and fishing communities, promoting
climate resilience and energy security in coastal communities, and stimulating
local manufacturing, installation, and maintenance of industries for renewable
energy and cold-chain equipment.

SECTION 3. Definitions. – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

(a) **Fisheries** refers to all activities relating to the act or business of fishing, culturing, preserving, processing, marketing, developing, conserving and managing aquatic resources and the fishery areas, including the privilege to fish or take aquatic resource thereof;

(b) **Small-scale fisheries** refer to fishing within municipal waters, using vessels of three (3) gross tons or less, or fishing not requiring the use of fishing vessels, consistent with the Philippine Fisheries Code;

(c) **Municipal fishers/small-scale fishers** refer to persons who are directly or indirectly engaged in municipal fishing and other related fishing activities.

(d) **Municipal waters** include not only streams, lakes, inland bodies of water and tidal waters within the municipality which are not included within the protected areas as defined under Republic Act No. 7586 (The NIPAS Law), public forest, timber lands, forest reserves or fishery reserves, but also marine waters included between two (2) lines drawn perpendicular to the general coastline from points where the boundary lines of the municipality touch the sea at low tide and a third line parallel with the general coastline including offshore islands and fifteen (15) kilometers from such coastline. 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;

(e) **Post-harvest facility** refers to any structure, equipment, or system used for the handling, icing, chilling, freezing, storage, processing, or transport of fishery products after capture or harvest, consistent with Republic Act No. 8550, as amended;

(f) **Solar-powered cold-chain facility** refer to any ice-making machine, chiller, blast freezer, cold storage room, refrigerated vehicle or vessel component, or similar post-harvest facility whose primary or supplemental power source is solar photovoltaic energy, whether stand-alone, hybrid, or grid-connected with the net-metering or battery storage; and

(g) **Fisherfolk organizations** refer to a group, association, cooperative, or federation of fisheries, whether formally registered with the Cooperative Development Authority, the Securities and Exchange Commission, or a similar body recognized by the concerned local government unit or DA-BFAR.

SECTION 4. *Lead and Implementing Agencies.* – The Department of Agriculture through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR), shall be the lead implementing agency of this Act and shall primarily be responsible for identifying priority fishing communities and landing sites, integrating solar-powered cold-chain facilities into existing and future post-harvest infrastructure programs, and monitoring the operation and maintenance of facilities under this Act.

The Department of Energy (DOE) shall provide technical assistance and standard for solar photovoltaic and hybrid systems used under this Act, ensure alignment with the National Renewable Energy Program and relevant off-grid electrification programs, and assist in identifying areas where solar-powered cold-chain facilities may be integrated with, or serve as an alternative to, grid extension.

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) shall provide technology transfer, research and development support, technical training, and testing or certification assistance relating to solar-powered ice-making, chilling, and cold storage technologies suited to municipal fisheries.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall promote the local manufacture, assembly, and servicing of solar-powered cold-chain equipment, and shall extend assistance to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and fisherfolk cooperative engaged in the fabrication, distribution, installation, or maintenance of such equipment.

SECTION 5. *Solar-Powered Fisheries Cold-Chain Program.* – This Act hereby establishes a Solar-Powered Cold-Chain Program (the “Program”) to be implemented by DA-BFAR in coordination with the DOE, DOST, DTI, and concerned LGUs. The program shall, at minimum:

- (a) Prioritize the installation of solar-powered cold-chain facilities in municipal fish landing sites, fish ports, and coastal communities that are off-grid, have unreliable or high-cost electricity access, or are identified as high post-harvest loss areas;
- (b) Provide for the training of fisherfolk, fisherfolk organizations, and LGU personnel in the proper operation, basic maintenance, and management of solar-powered cold-chain;
- (c) Establish a mechanism, in coordination with concerned LGUs and fisherfolk organizations, for the operation, upkeep, and cost-recovery of facilities established under the Program; and

- (d) Integrate monitoring and reporting requirements to track reductions in post-harvest losses, energy cost savings, and income effects on beneficiary communities, the results of which shall be included in DA-BFAR's annual report to Congress.

SECTION 6. *Funding, Incentives, and Support Mechanisms.* – The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DA-BFAR, DOE, DOST, and DTI. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA). The DTI, in coordination with the Philippine Board of Investments, and other concerned agencies, shall study and recommend appropriate fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, including but not limited to duty exemptions or tax incentives on the importation or local manufacture of solar-powered cold-chain equipment and components, for enterprises and cooperative engaged in producing, assembling, or installing such equipment for use under this Act.

DA-BFAR, DOE, DOST, and DTI may likewise accept grants, donations, and technical assistance from local and foreign sources, including multilateral and bilateral development partners, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations on the matter.

SECTION 7. *Sourcing for Solar Photovoltaic Installers.* – In the contracting and purchase of solar energy systems from accredited Solar PV installers, local business shall be given priority in supplying the government. All bidding and procurement done for the purpose of this Act shall be in accordance with the law and existing rules and regulations. The same shall be made in public with all pertinent documents available.

SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act, the DA-BFAR, the DOE, the DOST, and the DTI shall jointly promulgate the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act, in consultation with concerned LGUs, fisherfolk organizations, civil society organizations, people's organizations, and other relevant stakeholders. The IRR shall, at minimum, define technical and safety standards for solar-powered cold-chain facilities, criteria for the selection of priority sites and beneficiary communities, and the roles and coordination mechanisms among the implementing agencies and LGUs.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions or parts unaffected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees or issuances, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and

regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,