



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 11410

Introduced by Representative Howard A. Guintu

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Province of Capiz is endowed with abundant marine and aquatic resources, including crabs, tiger prawns, mussels, and various species of fish, which have long supported the livelihood and food security of its coastal communities. Among its valuable marine resources is the diwal, also called angel wing clam (*Pholas orientalis*), which is a bivalve species naturally found in the coastal barangays of Roxas City and recognized for its nutritional, economic, and livelihood potential.

The diwal gained popularity among the people of Capiz during the 1980s and became a well-known marine delicacy in the province¹. However, by the 1990s, declining diwal populations prompted the imposition of restrictions on harvesting, including a ban that remained in effect for several years to allow the resource to recover. In recent years, the diwal industry has gradually resurged and has once again become one of Capiz's notable marine products, valued by both local consumers and visitors for its distinctive taste and versatility in preparation, whether baked, grilled, or served in soups and other dishes.

The resurgence of the diwal industry presents an opportunity to further develop its potential as a sustainable source of food, livelihood, and income for coastal communities in Capiz and throughout the Philippines. This is an opportune time to harness the full potential of diwal through sustained scientific research and responsible development. There is a need to

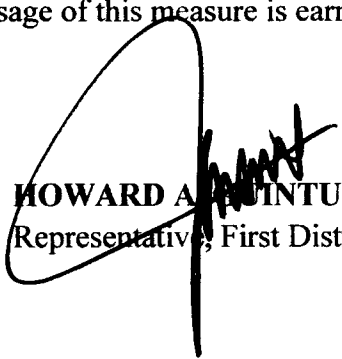
¹ Burgos, N. P. (2012, March 09). *Roxas' prized shellfish makes a comeback*. Philippine Daily Inquirer. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/158757/roxas-prized-shellfish-makes-a-comeback>

deepen scientific understanding of its biology, reproduction, growth, propagation, and population dynamics, and to translate such knowledge into effective technologies for its sustainable culture and conservation. By strengthening research and developing appropriate propagation and production methods, the country can enhance the utilization and value of diwal, explore opportunities for domestic and international markets, including export, and generate greater economic opportunities for coastal communities, while ensuring that its natural populations and the marine ecosystems upon which they depend are protected and preserved.

This proposed measure aims to establish a **Diwal Research and Development Center** in the Province of Capiz. The research center shall provide a dedicated institution for the conduct and coordination of scientific research on diwal and shall facilitate the provision of technical assistance, extension services, and capacity-building to fisherfolk and other stakeholders. The Province of Capiz is a suitable location for the establishment of the center, given the natural occurrence of diwal in the coastal areas of the province and its significance to the local fishing communities. Its establishment in the province will allow research and technical services to be conducted in close proximity to diwal resources and the communities engaged in their harvesting, culture, and utilization, while serving as a research and development hub that may benefit diwal-producing communities throughout the Philippines.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution is unequivocally clear in mandating the protection of the country's marine wealth. The State must not wait for the diwal industry to once again reach a critical or near-depleted state before undertaking meaningful research, propagation, and conservation measures. Rather, proactive scientific study and responsible management must be undertaken while the species remains available, so that its populations may be sustained, its potential may be responsibly developed, and future generations may continue to benefit from this valuable marine resource.

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



HOWARD A. QUINTU
Representative, First District of Capiz



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AN ACT
DEVELOPING THE DIWAL INDUSTRY OF THE PHILIPPINES AND CREATING
THE DIWAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER IN THE PROVINCE OF
CAPIZ, 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 “Diwal Industry Development Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote the sustainable development, conservation, management, and responsible utilization of diwal (*Pholas orientalis*) as an important marine resource and economic commodity of the Philippines. The State recognizes its ecological, nutritional, and economic value, as well as its potential to contribute to food security, livelihood generation, employment, and the development of coastal communities.

Towards this end, the State shall support scientific research, innovation, technology development, and knowledge generation on the biology, ecology, breeding, propagation, culture, production, conservation, and sustainable utilization of diwal.

SEC. 3. *Creation of the Diwal Research and Development Center.* – There is hereby established a Diwal Research and Development Center (DRDC), hereinafter referred to as the “Center,” in the Province of Capiz. The Center shall be attached to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and shall undertake its research and development activities in close collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

SEC. 4. *Functions of the Diwal Research and Development Center.* – The Diwal Research and Development Center shall perform the following function and duties:

- a. Conduct research on the biology, ecology, reproduction, genetics, growth, nutrition, and sustainable utilization of *Pholas orientalis* or diwal;
- b. Develop and promote appropriate technologies and protocols for the breeding, hatchery production, propagation, culture, and stock enhancement of diwal;
- c. Undertake studies and programs for the conservation, rehabilitation, and sustainable management of diwal populations and their habitats;
- d. Develop improved methods for the harvesting, post-harvesting, processing, and value-adding of diwal;
- e. Provide technical assistance, training, extension services, and capacity-building to fisherfolk, local government units, and other stakeholders on sustainable diwal farming, propagation, and culture toward improved productivity and long-term sustainability;
- f. Establish fruitful partnerships with the best advanced research institutes in the world;
- g. Coordinate with the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) to consolidate all policies, programs, and projects on diwal research and development;
- h. Perform such other functions and undertake such other activities as may be necessary for the promotion and development of the diwal industry.

SEC. 5. *Organizational Structure and Staffing.* – The Center shall be headed by a Director, who shall be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. The Director shall be supported by qualified technical and administrative personnel, including researchers, scientists, extension specialists, and support staff, as may be necessary for the effective performance of its mandate.

SEC. 6. *Appropriations.* – The initial funding for the establishment and operation of the Center shall be charged against the current year's budget of the Department of Agriculture. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

The Center may also receive grants, donations, and other forms of financial support from domestic and international sources, subject to existing laws.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with DOST and DTI, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act or the application of such provision is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,