

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

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5466



Introduced by Honorable JOSE "JUN" L. ONG, JR.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING MUDCRAB SEED BANKS, NURSERIES, HATCHERIES AND GROW-OUT PRODUCTION FARMS IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF ALLEN, BIRI, BOBON, CAPUL, CATARMAN, GAMAY, LAOANG, LAS NAVAS, LAVEZARES, MAPANAS, MONDRAGON, PALAPAG, PAMBUJAN, ROSARIO, SAN ANTONIO, SAN ISIDRO, SAN JOSE, SAN ROQUE, SAN VICENTE AND VICTORIA, PROVINCE OF NORTHERN SAMAR AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to establish mud crab seed banks, nurseries, hatcheries and grow-out production farms in the coastal municipalities of the Province of Northern Samar and appropriating funds therefor.

The establishment of these mud crab seed banks, nurseries, hatcheries and grow-out production farms shall help ensure the production, multiplication and sustainability of mud crabs in Northern Samar thereby meeting the nutritional and economic needs of the residents living in the coastal barangays. It shall also be a sustainable source of economic lot for the people of Northern Samar. It seeks to provide excellent employment opportunities for our people and help alleviate poverty. The seed bank, nursery and hatchery will help control, sustain and replenish the supply of mud crabs and will enable the people to keep pace with the increasing demand for these marine products, locally and worldwide.

Northern Samar is located on the eastern edge of the Philippines, bounded on the north by the San Bernardino Strait separating Luzon from Samar. This province has been identified as a major source of crab seeds, With an estimated 10,720 ha of mangroves, brackish water resources are assumed to

be abundant ¹ The mud crab seed banks, nurseries, hatcheries and grow out production farms will also benefit the nearby provinces and municipalities economically.

It is high time that the government move for the establishment of these centers, plants and research facilities to be able to preserve an ideal aquatic ecosystem which contributes a big portion to food security of the country while also helping the community by placing infrastructures that make use of available resources within the area as a viable source of livelihood and employment for the people.

Amidst the huge potential of the Province of Northern Samar, it is yet to be recognized as one of the leading mud crab producing provinces in the country due to the blatant export of juveniles outside the province. In fact, most of other provinces rely on Northern Samar for seed supply. ² Due to the depleting supply because of export of seed to nearby provinces, mud crab culture production represents a mere 1% of the national production, despite the 270 ha of ponds and the importance of brackish water resources. Several ordinances and measure have been implemented for the conservation of the wild stock of crabs and this representation believes that the establishment of these centers, plants, hatcheries and research facilities will discourage people from selling them out as seeds but rather grow them to marketable sizes. This measure aims to put the Province of Northern Samar on the map of the country's leading mud crab producing provinces thus creating enormous positive impact on the lives of our people.

In view of thereof, early consideration and approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


JOSE "JUN" L. ONG, JR.
Representative

Second District, Northern Samar

¹ Juliette Gaillard, *Development of the Mud Crab Sector in Three Provinces of the Philippines*, September 16, 2010.

² Gaillard, , *Development of the Mud Crab Sector in Three Provinces of the Philippines*, 2010.

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

SECTION 1. There shall be established, under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture, mangrove crab seed banks, nurseries, hatcheries and grow-out production farms in the municipalities of Catubig, Gamay, Laoang, Lapinig, Las Navas, Mapanas, Palapag, Pambujan, San Roque, Silvino Lobos, Province of Northern Samar.

SECTION 2. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the Provincial Government of Northern Samar, the concerned local government units (LGUs), and the University of Eastern Philippines shall, in the identification of areas where these seed banks, nurseries and grow-out production farms will be established shall place priority to the utilization of

abandoned, undeveloped or underutilized fishponds covered by fishpond lease agreements.

SECTION 3. The BFAR and the Provincial Government of Northern Samar, in collaboration with the University of Eastern Philippines, shall issue guidelines and provide technical assistance to fishermen and their association, in the establishment, operation, maintenance, supervision and monitoring of mangrove crab seed banks, nurseries and grow-out production farms.

SECTION 4. The Secretary of Agriculture shall include in the Department's programs the establishment of the mangrove crab seed banks, nurseries and grow-out production farms, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The LGUs concerned shall set aside funds from any available local revenue to fund their establishment, supervision and monitoring.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,