



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Constitution Hills, Batasan Complex, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 157



Introduced by Representatives **ALFEL M. BASCUG** and
EDDIEBONG G. PLAZA

Explanatory Note

This bill seeks to amend Presidential Decree No. 705, otherwise known as the "The Revised Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines by shortening the period to revert fishponds that have been unutilized and abandoned to forest lands from five (5) years to three (3) years. The five (5) year period is found to be too long before the aforesaid fishponds can be rehabilitated and reforested.

This proposal was made by taking into account the alarming environmental conditions, particularly climate change which brought severe typhoons that regularly devastated our communities. One of the more effective ways to mitigate the effects of typhoons is adequate coastal protection through mangrove reforestation in abandoned fishponds and other vulnerable lowland areas.

To effectively implement the provisions of this proposed law, this bill requires the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) to jointly set guidelines in determining abandoned, undeveloped or underutilized fishponds which shall be promptly reverted to forestlands.

This bill was approved by the Committee on Natural Resources in the 18th Congress. This is refiled for the same considerations for which it was previously approved.

Considering the foregoing, the approval of this measure is requested.

ALFEL M. BASCUG
1ST District, Agusan del Sur

EDDIEBONG G. PLAZA
2nd District, Agusan del Sur



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**AN ACT REVERTING FISHPONDS WHICH HAVE BEEN UNUTILIZED OR
ABANDONED FOR A PERIOD OF THREE (5) YEARS TO FOREST LANDS,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 43 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE
NO.705 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "THE REVISED FORESTRY REFORM
CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES"**

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

SECTION 1. Section 43 of Presidential Decree No.705, otherwise known as "The Revised Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines", is hereby amended as follows:

*"SEC. 43. **Swamplands and Mangrove Forests.**-*

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*"Mangrove and other swamps released to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources for fishpond purposes which are not utilized or which have been abandoned for [five (5) years}] **THREE YEARS** from the date of such release shall revert to the category of forest land and **SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY REHABILITATED AND REFORESTED**".*

*"**THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES SHALL JOINTLY SET GUIDELINES OR DETERMINING ABANDONED, UNDEVELOPED OR UNDERUTILIZED FISHPONDS, COVERED BY FISHPOND AGREEMENTS (FLAs) WHICH SHALL BE REVERTED INTO FORESTLANDS AND REHABILITATED.**"*

SECTION 2. If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provision hereof.

SECTION 3. All laws, decrees, executive orders, issuance, rules, and regulations, or parts

thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,