

Philippine Inputs to the Concept Papers on the Themes of the Eight Interactive Dialogues

1. On addressing marine pollution (target 14.1), managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems (targets 14.2 and 14.5), and minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming (target 14.3):
 - a. The BFAR launched in 2016 the Search for Outstanding Coastal Communities with "Malinis at Masaganang Karagatan" (MMK), an awareness campaign that recognizes the country's most outstanding coastal communities and participated in by coastal Local Government Units (LGUs). This aims to promote fisheries protection and conservation, centered on the significance of sustainably managing our fisheries and aquatic resources and promoting stakeholder's engagement towards the cause of resource protection and conservation. It also aims to recognize outstanding initiatives and contributions of coastal municipalities/cities to sustainable fisheries development through an incentive system.

The top 3 Outstanding Coastal Communities are chosen annually based on the following criteria:

- Absence of Illegal Fishing;
- Observance of off-fishing season;
- Declared marine protected areas;
- Clean, coastal waters without any garbage or industrial effluence flowing to the sea; and
- Effective mangrove protection and rehabilitation program.

BFAR involvement in numerous campaigns against marine pollution is a call not just for the persons involved but for everyone to continue conserving the abundant water resources of the country. Aside from being part of the numerous campaigns, the bureau constantly develops technologies for adaptation to the changing climate and ocean warming such as climate resilient farming for seaweed and other fishery commodities. Research on the production of most yielding and disease-resistant seaweed strains are continuously conducted in order to ensure the persistent production of seaweeds in the country.

- b. Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing has been one of the greatest challenges faced by the government in maintaining and protecting any country's fisheries resources. IUU Fishing activities include the use of dynamite, cyanide, poaching/intrusions of foreign vessels and other activities that will result in the destruction and degradation of our resources. In response to these illegal activities, the BFAR continuously implements the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) system that will help in managing and protecting our resources. For this year, the BFAR aims to maintain 16 MCS Stations and 32 multi-mission vessels. Specific activities in the MCS system include enforcement of fishery laws through coordination and partnership with other government agencies, training of fish examiners and law enforcement officers, coordination of LGUs under the "Bantay Dagat" Program, and filing of cases

and testifying as government witness in the prosecution of cases with regards to illegal fishing activities.

Further, on managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems (targets 14.2 and 14.5):

A program proposal on Ocean Sciences is currently under review and evaluation. The program intends to develop a collaborative systematic monitoring system of the Pacific Seaboard (PacSea). The overall goal is to determine the drivers of variability in the Pacific Seaboard productivity. At the end of the program, it is expected to have a joint State of the Ocean report and database on the PacSea and a strategic plan for collaborative integrated monitoring between University of the Philippines, Diliman – Marine Science Institute (UPD MSI) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of the PacSea.

In addition to minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming (target 14.3):

A program on Coastal Acidification: How it affects the marine environment and resources in the Philippines, and the effects of acidification on the coastal environment and its resources. This provided basic scientific information to support the inclusion of ocean acidification in the National Climate Change Action Plan for the country to be able to plan and strategize better to protect and manage marine resources for food protein, employment, tourism and improve coastal integrity. This was implemented by the University of the Philippines Diliman - Marine Science Institute (UPD MSI) and De La Salle University.

2. On making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets (targets 14.4, 14.6 and 14.b):
 - a. In the Philippines, small-scale and municipal fisherfolks contributed 25.9% (1,106,071.84MT) to the country's total production in 2018. The BFAR Programs continuously aim to contribute to food security by increasing fish production while considering the small-scale artisanal fisherfolks. Various activities were designed in line with this, including the provision of appropriate technology and research, credit, production and marketing assistance. Fiberglass boats and sustainable fishing gears are distributed to selected beneficiaries as a support to their livelihood. This allows the artisanal fisherfolks (beneficiaries) to have access to the country's marine resources in a clean, environmentally friendly and efficient way. In 2018, 60,297 individuals and 911 fisherfolk groups received environment-friendly fishing gears/paraphernalia.
 - b. The establishment of Community Fish Landing Centers (CFLCs), which is a component of the BFAR's Targeted Action to Reduce Poverty and Generate Economic Transformation TARGET) Program. This was developed in collaboration with the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), the Municipal Local Government Unit and the fisherfolk beneficiaries. The main objectives of the CFLC is to reduce post-harvest losses and improve the socio-economic

conditions of the poor fishing communities by providing the coastal communities with a facility that is equipped with fish stalls and chest freezers, among others.

- c. *Lambaklad* promotes sustainable fishing technologies and is considered as eco-friendly fishing gear intended to promote government and fisherfolk association and cooperative collaborations. This will catalyze development through programs that may increase coastal fisheries production in a sustainable manner. The implementation of this program will introduce a community-based livelihood program to its beneficiaries in the area. Consequently, this will provide a regular source of extra income and additional employment opportunities to the fisherfolks. This will also enable additional economic activities for the beneficiaries in the area. The promotion of this efficient and environment-friendly fishing method contributes to fish production in the area and eventually provides an alternative fishing method in lieu of illegal and highly destructive fishing methods.
 - d. The BFAR continuously promotes the construction of Mariculture Parks, in partnership with private stakeholders, to address major concerns such as food security, employment, livelihood, and poverty reduction in coastal areas. There was also the establishment of off-shore Mariculture using High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) materials as frames for fish cages which are said to be typhoon resilient. This is BFAR's strategy to promote this type of mariculture area with greater production capacity. The promotion of off-shore mariculture investment aims to increase fish production in consideration of the utilization of environment-friendly and more resilient fish cage technology.
 - e. The “Katuwang sa Diwa at Gawa para sa Masaganang Ani at Mataas na Kita” or KADIWA Program is instigated in support of the marketing of the harvested produce of our fisherfolks. It is a market system which sells major agricultural & fisheries goods at reasonably low prices to help poor Filipino households. Through this outlet, fishery products processed and produced by our local fisherfolk will be gathered in one place thereby making their products readily available and accessible. The KADIWA will also limit the number of market intermediaries from producers to consumers, thus, making the producers sell their products at a lower price.
3. On increasing scientific knowledge, and developing research capacity and the transfer of marine technology (target 14.a):

The BFAR is committed to its mission to empower stakeholders to improve productivity that will include technology generation, verification and adaptation of aquaculture, marine fisheries and post-harvest technology. The BFAR, in close partnership with various research organizations such as the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) and other academic institutions, conducts research and development activities, which include development of technologies in the entire fisheries sector.

Technologies in the fisheries sector include the development of a National Vessel Monitoring system for the Philippines. Integrated Marine Environment Monitoring System (IMEMS) is a project of the BFAR that uses technology to actively monitor the activities in the marine environment and ensure its long term sustainable and legal use. An effective monitoring and control of the national fisheries and marine environment will benefit and protect the commercial fishers in their fishing areas against foreign vessels that might enter Philippine waters to do illegal fishing activities. This will also monitor vessel activities, status, fish catches & landing. This project is a more sophisticated national scale vessel monitoring system (VMS) that also has a powerful integrated analytics engine that enables automated detection of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, thus, easier monitoring and surveillance for the government can be done.

The recently approved Fisheries Administrative Order No. 263, series of 2019, provides the policy framework on the Establishment of Fisheries Management Areas (FMA) for the conservation and management of fisheries in Philippine Water. The FMAs were established based on considerations of stocks boundary/range/distribution, structure of fisheries as well as administrative divisions, through consultation with stakeholders. It follows science-based measures anchored on the Ecosystem Approach on Fisheries Management (EAFM). A priority area of concern intended under this Fisheries Administrative Order (FAO) is the Establishment of Management Bodies (MB) in the twelve (12) FMAs.

4. On enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (target 14.c), and leveraging interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda:

The Philippines, as an archipelagic country, recognizes that it is dependent on the opportunities the ocean and its resources hold for our food security and economy. The country is very much committed to provide environment-friendly policies and programs that will benefit the whole fishing industry. Aside from this, it is also important to build a strong partnership between the government and the private stakeholders to enable more livelihood programs that will help in alleviating poverty, as well as lessen the incidence of hunger in the country. Therefore, a call for inter-government agency cooperation between countries is vitally important.