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Memorandum Circular

No. 22
Series of 2021

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW BLUE SWIMMING CRAB (BSC) NATIONAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (BSC-NMP) 2021 to 2025

WHEREAS, the Blue Swimming Crab Management Plan (BSCMP) 2011-2015, supported by Joint Department of Agriculture (DA) – Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Administrative Order No. 01, series of 2014 (JAO No.1, s. 2014), entitled “Regulation for the Conservation of Blue Swimming Crab (*Portunus pelagicus*)” has completed its implementation period in 2015;

WHEREAS, a year before the completion of its implementation, a comprehensive review of the BSC-NMP was undertaken to respond to the emerging concerns and issues of the industry, strengthen partnerships among the stakeholders, and improve economic benefits of the industry actors;

WHEREAS, the next-cycle Blue Swimming Crab National Management Plan (BSC-NMP) for 2020 onwards established the regulations for the conservation and management of blue swimming crabs including the minimum carapace width to be traded, the protection of crab nursery areas, and the establishment of closed season and fishing grounds;

WHEREAS, the BSC-NMP is aligned with the strategies and actions as stipulated in the Comprehensive National Fisheries Industry Development Plan (CNFIDP) Medium Term Plan 2016-2020 of the Philippines, as well as with the Eight Paradigms of the Department of Agriculture that characterize the “new thinking” for Philippine Agriculture and Fisheries. More importantly, the development of this Plan has been carefully guided by the provisions of the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

WHEREAS, the Global Marine Commodities (GMC) Project, a collaborative project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources with support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), was aimed at mainstreaming sustainability in the value chain of important marine commodities from developing countries, including blue swimming crabs and octopuses that are important traded and export commodities of the Philippines;

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WHEREAS, the GMC Project in the Philippines strengthened the national capacities for the management of blue swimming crabs and octopuses including the updating of the BSC-NMP and development of the Octopus National Management Framework Plan (ONMFP);

WHEREAS, the updating of the BSC-NMP is the result of an in-depth and inclusive multi-stakeholder sector Root Cause Analysis (RCA), where RCA identified the weaknesses, threats, and gaps faced by the sector and the contributing causes and causality relationships towards sustainable fisheries management for the BSC commodity;


WHEREAS, the BSC-NMP has undergone series of stakeholders consultations in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao and had been endorsed by the Blue Swimming Crab Technical Working Group for the approval of the DA-Secretary;

WHEREAS, the National Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (NFARMC) has reviewed the new BSC-NMP in a special meeting on March 6, 2020 and has incorporated their inputs and recommendations in the Plan;

WHEREAS, the updated BSC-NMP is an industry Plan which provides for the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders of the industry, including support to co-finance sustainability programs, and other initiative in the transformation process from business-as-usual fishery management to sustainable fishery management.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM D. DAR, the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, by the power vested in me by the laws, and in order to implement the Blue Swimming Crab National Management Plan nationwide, hereby order the following:

- 1) Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and its Regional Field Offices to incorporate into their plans the actions identified in the BSC-NMP;
- 2) BSC industries in the value chain, including fishers, buyers, traders, processors and exporters, to support the implementation of the BSC-NMP, including co-financing fishery improvement and sustainability projects;
- 3) BFAR and Stakeholders to institutionalize participative commodity platforms for the sustainable management of the BSC; and
- 4) The BSC Technical Working Group and stakeholders to conduct a mid-term review on the implementation of the Plan and implement adaptive actions as may be necessary.

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Similarly, I also call on the Local Government Units (LGUs), and other relevant International development Organizations/Programs, National Government Agencies (NGAs), and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) to take on their equally important roles in the successful implementation of the BSC-NMP.

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect this 15th day of October, 2021.



WILLIAM D. DAR, Ph.D.

Secretary



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