

ATTAINING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: PHILIPPINE FISHERIES AND OTHER AQUATIC RESOURCES 20/20

**39th Annual Scientific Meeting, 12-13 July 2017
The Manila Hotel**

RESOLUTIONS

WHEREAS, the Philippine territory consists of 80% water and 20% land, which is owing to its archipelagic geography;

WHEREAS, the ocean is a source of food, pharmaceutical and industrial raw materials, including phycocolloids (from seaweeds), bioactive natural compounds, minerals and other high value products;

WHEREAS, in the development of the “Blue Economy” (ocean-based) in the country, the living marine resources are major contributors;

WHEREAS, these vast aquatic and marine natural resources remain largely untapped;

WHEREAS, harnessing aquatic and marine resources will help us meet our sustainable development goals (SDGs);

WHEREAS, Philippine aquatic resources have become overexploited, a victim of the so-called “*tragedy of the commons*”, and needs restoration and protection;

WHEREAS, there are several agencies involved in the administration and management of the country’s ocean and aquatic resources resulting in fragmented and ineffective implementation of policies and programs;

WHEREAS, other ASEAN countries of comparable or even lesser marine and aquatic resources have placed governance of fisheries and oceans at the Ministry (Department) level;

WHEREAS, there is a paramount need for a no-nonsense enforcement of the laws and rules governing the exploitation of our aquatic resources;

WHEREAS, the consequence of over exploitation of resources and poor implementation of policies and programs, fisher folk communities are still among the poorest in the country.

NOW, THEREFORE, the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), Philippines on its 39th Annual Scientific Meeting recommend the following actions to be addressed accordingly by the appropriate offices and agencies:

For the Office of the President and Senate of the Philippines/ House of Representatives:

- Initiate the creation of a new department that will deal with fisheries, the oceans and other aquatic resources (e.g. Department of Fisheries and Oceans). The new department will spearhead the development of the Blue Economy in the Philippines. The primary function of the new department is to develop and manage resources in the oceans and other aquatic ecosystems.
- Consider the following concerns in the creation of the new department: equitable distribution of benefits; separating the development and regulatory functions; including both living and non-living resources (e.g. minerals, energy; market development) creating R and D arm;
- Wherever appropriate, increase the budget for fisheries and ocean resources including that of more inclusive research of aquatic issues;
- Specifically, the following issues need to be urgently addressed by the executive branch and later by the new department:
 1. Human Resources
 - a. Develop competencies that empower fisher folk and other stakeholders (e.g. seafarers, ship/ boat builders) in the use of appropriate practices that are at once productive and sustainable;
 - b. Develop tertiary level human resources who will staff the new department and related government agencies.
 2. Information and Educational Campaign
 - a. Intensify information, education, and communication campaign on the blue economy and aquatic and ocean resources;
 3. Technologies
 - a. Develop, introduce and promote sustainable fisheries and aquatic resources technologies, including technologies for mineral resources;
 4. Regulation
 - a. Strengthen the enforcement of fishery and environmental laws and regulations;
 - b. Promote the protection, conservation, and sustainable and equitable utilization of ocean and aquatic resources;
 5. Environmental Conservation and Management
 - a. Rehabilitate aquatic habitats (e.g. mangroves, sea grasses, coral reefs, wetlands) and once restored, protect these from future collapses associated with “*tragedy of commons*”;
 - b. Strengthen environmental monitoring in the fisheries and aquatic sector using the state-of-the-art technologies;
 6. Maritime, Communication, and R/D Infrastructure
 - a. Prepare a master development plan covering fish ports, telecommunication facilities, and other infrastructure in coordination with relevant agencies;
 - b. Upgrade existing fish ports and navigation equipment and other infrastructure facilities;

7. Business Development
 - a. Create business models that will ensure sustainable livelihoods and equitable distribution of costs and benefits;
 - b. Promote and support the development of enterprises including SMEs in the blue economy and related sectors.

For the Department of Agriculture

- Support and Facilitate the creation of the new department on oceans, fisheries and aquatic resources;

For the Department of Science and Technology (DOST)

- Create a research agency focusing on oceans and its resources; including the sea bed;
- Continue to develop and disseminate new and affordable technologies for conservation, restoration, and sustainable utilization of ocean and aquatic resources;
- Coordinate the effective implementation of the national R&D agenda for the fisheries and aquatic sector, including the harnessing of renewable energy from the ocean and desalination of seawater for domestic use;
- Intensify S&T human resources development for the fisheries and aquatic sector;

For the Department of Education (DepEd)

- Develop curricular materials that promote awareness and better appreciation of the importance of fisheries and aquatic resources;
- Align K to 12 curriculum to include awareness and competence in ocean and aquatic resources;

For the Department of Health (DOH)

- Coordinate the environmental biologic monitoring of fisheries and aquatic resources and impact in human health;
- Provision of expanded health care services to fisher folk communities;

For the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)

- Ensure that government programs on fisheries and the oceans are science-based and rooted on sustainable marine ecosystem management;

For the Local Government Units (LGUs)

- Strengthen the fisheries extension services to serve as the link between researchers and fisher folk communities in their choice of appropriate technology;

For the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

- Ensure that environmental concerns are tempered by the needs of socio-economic development;
- Expand marine protected areas (MPAs) to at least 20-30% of total area;

For Commission on Higher Education (CHED)

- Consider creating a “virtual” university for Marine and Archipelagic Studies which will integrate and coordinate the initiatives of HEIs on oceans, fisheries and blue economy concerns.

For the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)

- Ensure the protection of national territorial integrity;

For the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)

- Encourage and support the establishment of industries in the blue economy guaranteeing inclusive growth;
- Expand the market for products of the blue economy.

The Resolutions Committee was chaired by Academician Rodel T. Lasco. The members of the committee were: Academician Eufemio T. Rasco, Jr., Academician Aura C. Matias, Academician Emil Q. Javier, Academician Edward H.M. Wang, Academician William G. Padolina, Academician Michael L. Tan, DOST Regional Directors: Dir. Anthony C. Sales, Engr. Edilberto L. Paradela and Dir. Victor B. Mariano and OYSi President, Dr. Glenn B. Gregorio.

Citation:

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