



**Republic of the Philippines**  
**Department of Agriculture**

**BUREAU OF FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **DA-BFAR SUSTAINS PROGRAMS, SERVICES DESPITE COMMUNITY LOCKDOWNS DUE TO COVID-19**

More than six weeks into the implementation of the Community Quarantine over various areas of the country to combat COVID-19, the Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) continues to provide its services to our fisherfolk while ensuring food adequacy throughout the country.

Under the guidance of Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar, the Bureau has maintained interventions in tackling challenges to the fishery sector. Ongoing activities remained in place since the start of the quarantine, such as fingerlings and seaweed dispersal, laboratory testing, provision of technical assistance, red tide monitoring, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, components of the BASIL program, among others.

Ensuring the availability and accessibility of fish products during the quarantine and minimizing disruption in the supply chain, the DA-BFAR geared its efforts towards production and production-related projects nationwide, providing a total of Php 21.9 million worth of seedstock, seaweed propagules, production-related technology demonstration projects, and fishing gears and paraphernalia to fisherfolk.

The Bureau highlights that the fishery sector needs to be able to take the challenge of the 'new normal' presented by this pandemic, honing its efforts towards three principles emphasized by Secretary Dar: 'survive, reboot, and grow'. These programs and projects aim to stabilize the food supply chain in the fishery sector and helping the country surpass this global crisis, as well as other emerging challenges.

DA-BFAR Central and Regional Offices implemented Work from Home and Compressed Workweek schemes to secure continuous and efficient delivery of these services to our fisherfolk. Command Action Centers in the Central, Regional and Provincial Offices were also kept operational during the quarantine. As precautionary measures against COVID-19, masks, gloves, alcohol were provided to these frontline and skeletal personnel.

Additionally, the Bureau has conducted 94 relief operations benefitting 3,380 households in Regions 3, 4A, 4B, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 in close coordination with private sector, government agency partners and the Local Government Units, providing immediate assistance to areas affected by the current COVID-19 Pandemic.