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 **Report on the Consultations with Government Agencies engaged**

**in Small- Scale Fisheries Sub-Sector**

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From the Regional Consultations held related to VGSSF, significant issues were highlighted which put forward major recommendations. Those issues were tackled by NGOs and partner fishers Group during consultations with relevant Government Agencies.

**Consultation with the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) and Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR)**

Adialogue between NGO Network, DA-BFAR and the National Anti – Poverty Commission

on issues related to VGSSF was conducted and discussed specifically the **promotion of conservation enterprises for small scale fishers**. A resolution of the National Anti-Poverty Commission-Artisanal FisherfolkSectoral Council (NAPC-AFSC) was eventually drafted and signed by Council Members, calling the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) to provide support to the development and implementation of social/conservation enterprises. The NAPC-AFSC will send copies to the Office of DA and BFAR. The NGO network will follow this up with the Fisheries Agency. Among the notable recommendations include the following: (1) support to CB-CRM as a framework; (2) formation of a TWG on social enterprises for fisheries; (3) allocation of funds and provision of technical support for livelihood projects that are in incubation period.

**Consultation with the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Council on Agriculture and Fisheries -Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (DA-PCAF)**

**On Provision of subsidized insurance premium for municipal fishers**

One important issue for the fisherfolks as they are considered as one (1) of the poorest sectors in the country, and thus, have very limited financial capability to apply is the provision of insurance which is much needed considering the various work-related hazards. The consultation agreed to come up with a resolution subsidizing the group insurance coverage of the fisherfolk. The total number of registered fisherfolk is around 1.9 Million as of February 26, 2019.

**A** copy of the resolution be furnished to the BFAR, PCIC and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) as the agency mandated to promote the sound, efficient and effective management and utilization of government resources.

**On Fisherfolk Settlement Areas**

Another issue that was tackled in this government body was the issue of fisherfolk settlement areas.

Most, if not all, of the fisherfolk families residing in the foreshore and the salvage/ easement zones just settled into the land they are now occupying, given the open access nature of public domain, with minimal or no document securing their residence. However, they are not the only ones facing the threat of displacement and relocation. Even those who are settling in coastal lands beyond the salvage/ easement zones are also facing these threats. Many of them had been residing in their communities for years, others for decades, some for generations, without any threat to the security of tenure. Some are even paying taxes for their land. But there had been many cases of private claimants able to secure title over coastal lands where fishers had been occupying for years and decades.

The NAPC has been consistently advocating for the establishment of fisherfolk settlement through the issuance of guidelines as mandated by Section 108 of the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, as amended by RA10654.

In a resolution adopted by the NAPC Artisanal FisherfolkSectoral Council (AFSC) urged the DA-BFAR, Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and NAPC for the immediate issuance of the said implementing guidelines.

Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF) Executive Director Ariel Cayanan stressed that the agency, through the National Sectoral Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (PCAF-CFA), strongly supports the implementation of the provision of the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 on the establishment of settlement areas for fisherfolk.

In his message, Dir. Cayanan shared PCAF-CFA’s Resolution recommending the conduct of a fisherfolk settlement policy forum. He also said that this issue can be a part of the agenda of the National Agriculture and Fisheries Council.