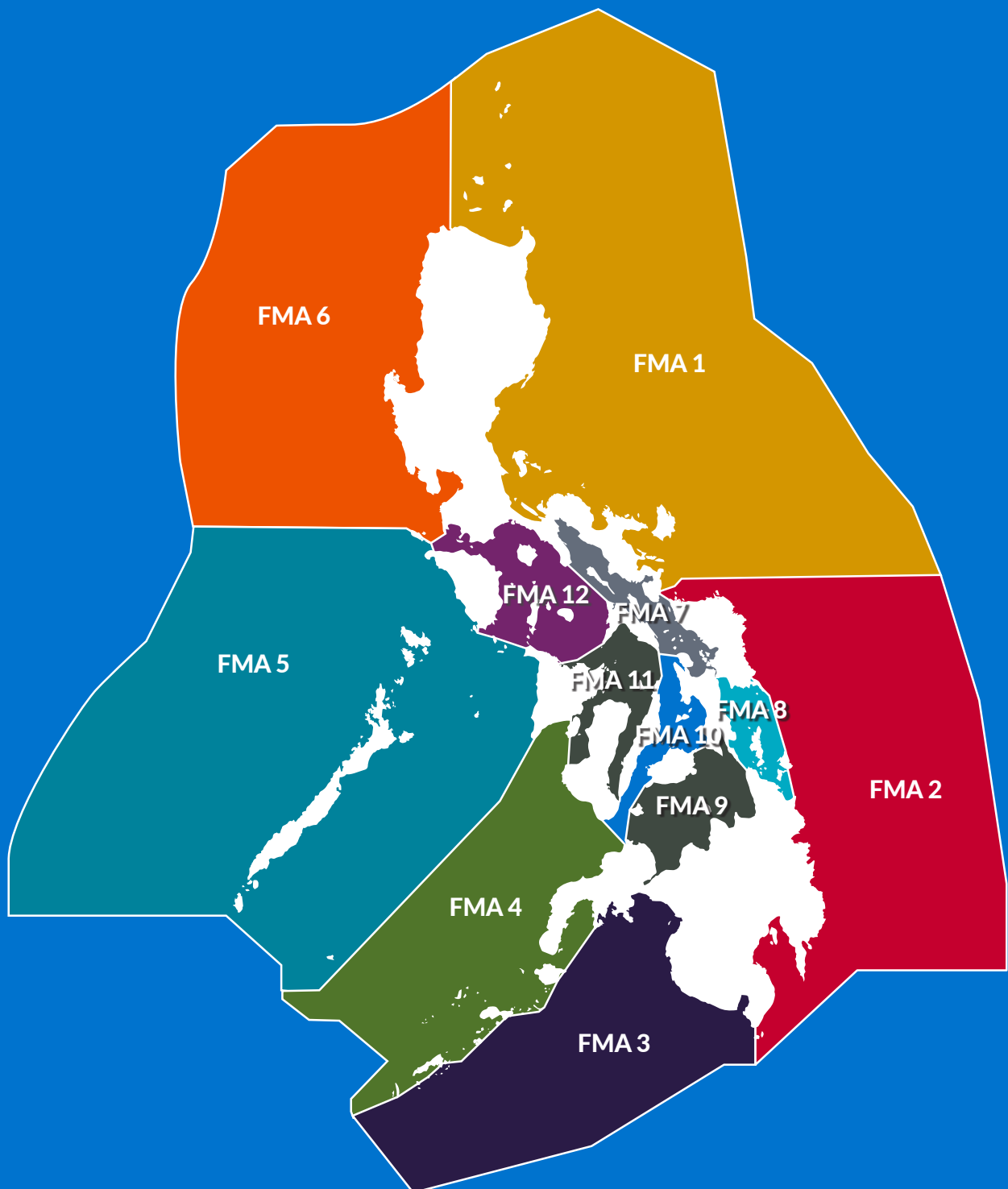
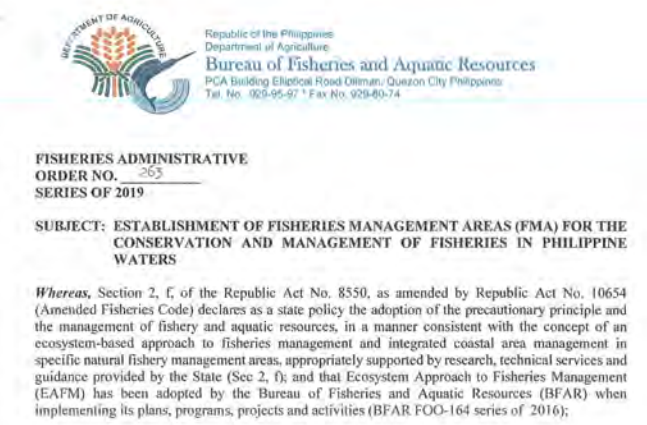


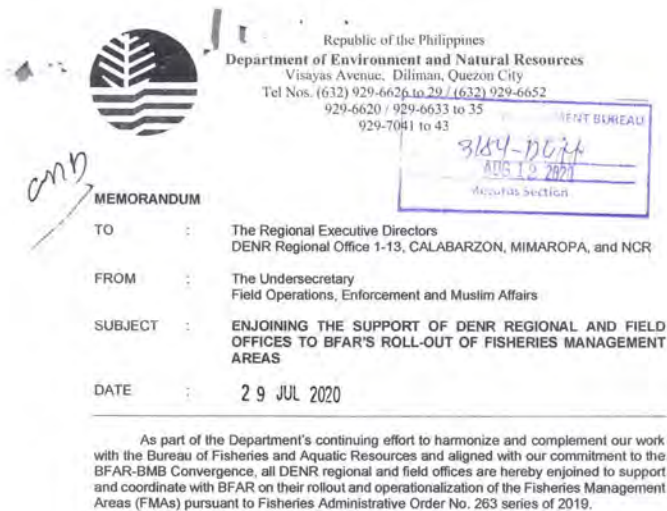
Establishment of Fisheries Management Areas (FMA) in the Philippines



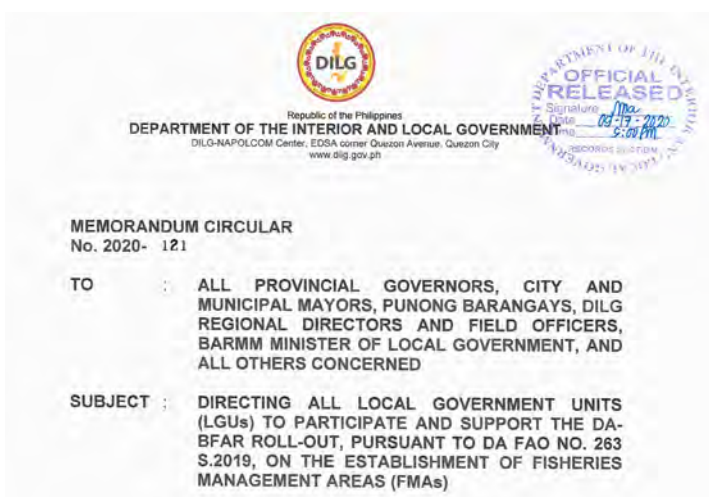
RA 10654 which amended the Fisheries Code of the Philippines¹ declares as a state policy the adoption of the precautionary principle and management of fishery and aquatic resources, in a manner consistent with the concept of an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management and integrated coastal management in specific natural fishery management areas.



On January 28, 2019, the Department of Agriculture -Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) issued the Fisheries Administrative Order No. 263 (FAO 263) which established the twelve (12) fisheries management areas covering all Philippine waters. It encouraged all coastal local government units as fisheries managers to take on shared responsibilities for the conservation and sustainable management of fishery resources.²



Also, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) issued on July 29, 2020, a Memorandum enjoining the support of DENR Regional and Field Offices to the Department of Agriculture -Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' roll-out of Fisheries Management Areas.



Moreover, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) issued on September 17, 2020, Memorandum Circular No. 2020 -121 directing all local government units to participate and support the Department of Agriculture -Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' roll-out, pursuant to Fisheries Administrative Order No. 263, Series of 2019 on the establishment of Fisheries Management Areas.

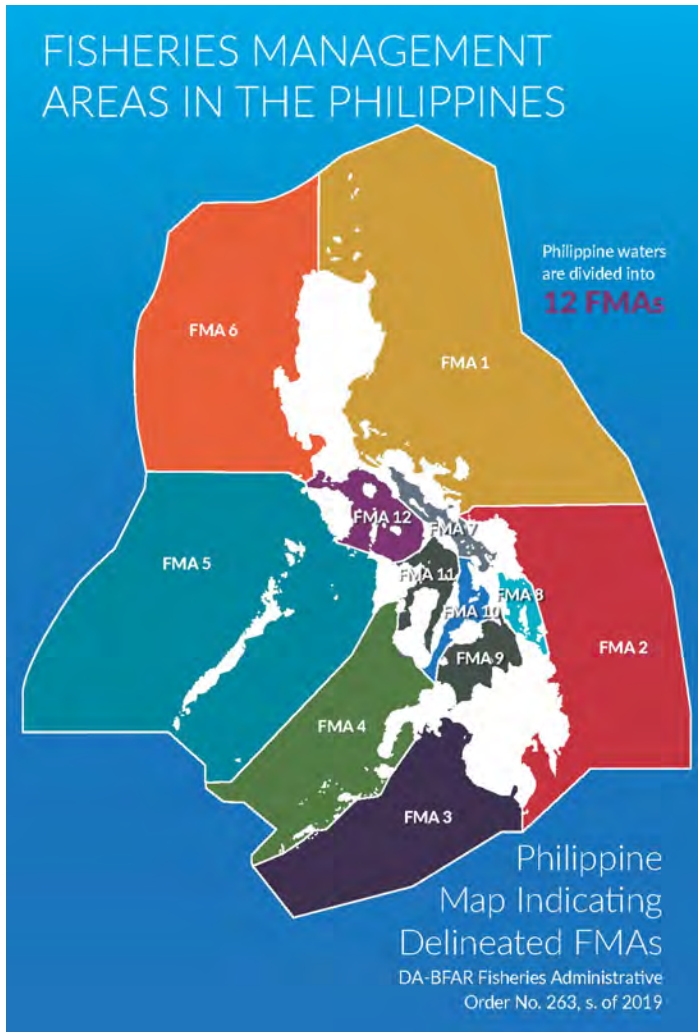
Fisheries Management Area (FMA) - A bay, gulf, lake, or any other fishery area which may be delineated for fishery resource management purposes.³

¹ Section 2, f of the Republic Act No. 8550, as amended by Republic Act 10654; BFAR FOO-164 series of 2016

² Consistent with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Memorandum Circular No. 2018-59 on the Guidelines on the Regulation and Monitoring of Fishery Activities in Municipal Waters.

³ Section 3, c of Fisheries Administrative Order 263





Objectives:

- 1 Provide science-based, participatory, and transparent governance framework and mechanism to sustainably manage fisheries.
- 2 Uphold ecosystems approach to fisheries management anchored on food security.
- 3 Provide opportunities for supplementary livelihood for poverty alleviation consistent with the objectives of the Amended Fisheries Code.
- 4 Ensure cooperation between local governments and national agencies and stakeholders.

Each FMA is expected to:

- 1 Set up its own governance structure, through a multi-sectoral management body assisted by a scientific advisory group (SAG).
- 2 Develop its own Fisheries Management Area Plan to guide the policy response of BFAR regional offices, Local Government Units, fisherfolk, industry, and key stakeholders.
- 3 Set reference points or critical range of values of performance indicators of fish; and
- 4 Formulate harvest control rules (HCRs) to guide sustainable management of fisheries.

OCEANA supports the full and effective implementation of FMAs for the sustainable management of fisheries in the Philippines.

The Fisheries Administrative Order 263 provides the location and boundaries of the twelve (12) delineated Fisheries Management Areas (FMAs), which were established based on considerations of stocks boundary, range and distribution of fisheries.

It is a significant milestone in addressing illegal fishing and mainstreaming science-based management of fisheries, as it directs all coastal local government units to take on shared responsibilities for the conservation and sustainable management of shared fishery resources.

Oceana supports the effective implementation of the FAO 263 by helping establish/strengthen governance mechanism for science based, participatory and transparent decision-making in each fishery management area.



Specifically, these involve:

- Discussions with government, scientists, and stakeholders.
- Orientation and cascade information on the implementing rules on fisheries management areas which includes science advisory groups, reference points, and harvest control rules.
- Gathering support from the Department of Interior and Local Government for the implementation of the Fisheries Management Area system by the local government units.
- Rendering technical support for the protection of Sardines and effective implementation in the Fisheries Management Areas 7 and 8.
- Rendering technical support in the creation of Scientific Advisory Group in Fisheries Management Areas 7 and 8.
- Providing Fisheries Management Area orientations to the fisherfolks and people's organizations.
- Convening initial discussion with the Commission on Higher Education to encourage state universities and colleges to be engaged members of the Scientific Advisory Group of each Fisheries Management Area.
- Providing capacity building training of State Universities and Colleges for effective implementation of Fisheries Management Areas system.



Oceana is conducting a scientific study on the sardine fisheries in FMA 7 with partners from State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) particularly the University of the Philippines Visayas, Bicol State University Tabaco Campus, Partido State University and Samar State University which are also members of the SAG.

- Providing information, communication, and education materials for wide public awareness on Fisheries Management Areas.⁴
- Development of the Fisheries Management Area Scorecard and Evaluator's Guide together with Civil Society Organizations and People's Organizations.⁵
- Roll-out of the Fisheries Management Area Scorecard roll-out for the 12 Fisheries Management Areas.

⁴ Fisheries Management Area video: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/0t0nkgworl7keuz/FMA%20explainer%20video%20%28final%29.mp4?dl=0>
Youtube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddk06g1q0aY>

⁵ FMA Scorecard: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/a286260te4d8cx8/FMA%20Scorecard.pdf?dl=0>
FMA Evaluator's Guide: https://www.dropbox.com/s/92jv38zmmrpmkdr/FMA%20Scorecard_Evaluator%27s%20Guide.pdf?dl=0

Feedback on the Scorecard:

"We would like to extend our appreciation to your organization for the assistance that you provide on the implementation of FMA 2. The scorecard is of a big help as it serves as our guide in the successful implementation of FAO 263. It also helps us to identify the future risks and threats and how we can address them."

– Mr. Rocky Sumagaysay, FMA 2 Focal Person



"The Scorecard guides us on the needed legal instruments through the Means of Verification in details and in accordance with FAO 263. The Scorecard will help not only the CSOs to measure the performance of each FMA but, also to measure our own performance as an implementing body of the FMA. It will be a great help in the implementation of each FMA."

– Mr. Ronnie Esmeña, FMA 8 Focal Person

The Fisheries Management Area Scorecard is intended as an assessment and monitoring tool designed to help and recommend measures for effective and sustainable management of fisheries for the 12 Fisheries Management Areas in the Philippines. Using key indicators based on good governance principles of transparency, accountability and public participation, and predictability under the Rule of Law and in order to determine compliance status and effective governance of the FMAs, the non-government organizations and peoples' organizations are invited to check the presence or absence of these indicators in the FMAs in compliance with the Fisheries Administrative Order 263.

The Scorecard is the outcome of an extensive, participatory, consultative, and collaborative process among the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and People's Organizations (POs) working closely with FMAs throughout the Philippines. The Evaluator's Guide is a step-by-step guide for performing the FMA compliance assessment. It contains two sections: (1) General Principles on Fisheries Management Areas; and (2) Technical Guidance on the conduct of the compliance assessment.

WISH LIST FOR OUR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- Department of Agriculture – Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR):
 - o Full budgetary support and allocation for the implementation of the Fisheries Management Areas in the country.
 - o Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, support on the equipment and gadgets for Fisheries Management Areas with areas that don't have proper internet connection and signal.
 - o Ensure transparent and participatory process in the selection of sectoral representatives and that they are accountable to their constituents.
 - o Strengthen partnerships with the Civil Society Organizations working on Fisheries Management Areas.
- Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR):
 - o Ensure harmonization of Protected Area Management Plans with the FMA - Management Plans and coordination with the coastal local government units (LGUs).
- Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG):
 - o Strengthening of LGUs' awareness and effective implementation of the FAO 263.
 - o Coordination with the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao especially in Fisheries Management Areas 3 and 4.
- Commission on Higher Education (CHED):
 - o Capacitate State Universities and Colleges on their significant roles and involvement in the Scientific Advisory Groups of Fisheries Management Areas and possible inclusion of FMAs in the curriculum.
- Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources - lead regions
 - o Ensure decentralized, science-based, participatory, and transparent implementation of Fisheries Management Areas.



About Oceana

As a sea nation, the Philippines harbors a wealth of marine resources that provides food and livelihood to millions of Filipinos. It ranks 14th in the world as a producer of wild-caught seafood. Oceana Philippines seeks to restore the health, richness and abundance of Philippine oceans. By working closely with civil society, academics, fishers, and government, Oceana Philippines promotes the use of science-based policies to help ensure sustainable fisheries and vibrant marine ecosystems for the benefit of the Filipino people. Visit ph.oceana.org or visit our social media sites to learn more.

