

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

PROCLAMATION NO. 261

**DECLARING MAY 31" AS "THE NATIONAL FISHERFOLKS DAY" IN  
THE PHILIPPINES AND PROVIDING FOR THE CONDUCT OF  
ACTIVITIES FOR ITS ANNUAL OBSERVANCE**

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines is an archipelagic country, endowed with vast coastal and ocean resources which provide economic and ecological benefits for our country and people;

**WHEREAS**, a large portion of our rural population of around eight million Filipinos are directly and indirectly dependent to the livelihood activities from our coastal resources, which contribute 4.4% of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or 18% of gross agricultural production amounting to 2.1 million metric tons of fishery products a year;

**WHEREAS**, Republic Act No. 8550, otherwise known as the Fishery Code, has taken cognizance of the importance of the fisherfolks sector where their participation is institutionalized in the planning and management of our coastal and marine resources;

**WHEREAS**, we annually celebrate the Ocean month in May and it is just and proper to give due recognition to the rightful stewards and beneficiaries of our oceans and its natural resources as well as of our lakes, gulfs, bays and other fishing areas;

**WHEREAS**, the Local Chief Executives of our coastal municipalities, during their Conference last May 26-28, 1999, unanimously approved a resolution urging the President of the Republic of the Philippines to declare a National Fisherfolks Day in recognition of the role and contribution of the municipal fisherfolks in the sustainable development and management of our fishing communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fisherfolks themselves through the Fisherfolks Basic Sector Council of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) has petitioned the President to declare a National Fisherfolks Day to highlight the fisherfolks sector as one of the major pillars of our society and partners in the national program for food security and eradication of poverty in the rural areas, particularly in the fishing communities.

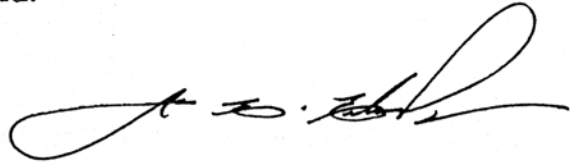
**NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA,** President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, and in accordance therewith, do hereby declare the following:

**SECTION 1. Observance of the National Fisherfolks Day.** Every May 31<sup>st</sup> shall be celebrated as the National Fisherfolks Day.

**SEC. 2. Lead Agencies.** The Department of Agriculture through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) Fisherfolks Basic Sector Council are hereby designated as the lead agencies in the annual celebration of the National Fisherfolks Day. Likewise, all government agencies, state universities and colleges, government owned and controlled corporations, non-government agencies, and the private sector whose operations and activities are directly or indirectly relevant to the fishing industry are hereby enjoined to participate and provide the necessary assistance in the annual observance of the National Fisherfolks Day to highlight the aspirations and contributions of the fishing industry, particularly the marginal fisherfolks in the overall national economic development.

**SEC. 3. Institutionalization of the National Fisherfolks Day and Participation of Local Government Units.** All local government units are hereby directed to provide full support in the local celebration of the National Fisherfolks Day in their respective cities, municipalities and/or provinces.

**DONE** in the City of Manila, this 3<sup>rd</sup> Day of April in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand.



By the President:

**RONALDO B. ZAMORA**  
Executive Secretary

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