Fisheries output seen rising in Q3 as El Niño boosts plankton growth

By Sheldeen Joy Talavera

FISHERIES production could continue to improve in the third quarter, with the weather favoring the growth of plankton that fish depend on for food, a former fisheries official said.

"That is the trend that I am seeing with El Niño, (assuming no other) extreme weather disturbance," according to Asis G. Perez, former director of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and co-convenor of advocacy group Tugon Kabuhayan.

Mr. Perez said fish eat more in warm weather, allowing them to grow bigger. Warm weather also encourages plankton growth, on which the fish feed.

"Since primary production happens with sunlight, the production of the food for fish will be higher this time as El Niño is entering," he told Business World by phone.

The government weather service, known as PAGASA (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration), has forecast the possibility of an El Niño episode beginning in June, running until the first quarter of 2024.

Fisheries production in the first quarter rose 2% to 991.14 thousand metric tons, led by the marine municipal fisheries and aquaculture subsectors.

From the three months to June, Mr. Perez said fishermen reported a good harvest as favorable weather allowed them to fish, while supply-chain disruptions are clearing up for processed animal protein (PAP), a material used in fish feed.

The Philippine Statistics Authority is set to release agricultural output data for the second quarter on Aug. 9.

During the third quarter of 2022, Mr. Perez said fisheries production, particularly aquaculture, declined due to the lower supply of PAP, which was caught up in the import bans on pork products imposed due to African Swine

"Now, we're hoping that with the better climate and at least with less rain and moderate sunlight, assuming no weather disturbances, then maybe fisheries performance will improve," he said.

Mr. Perez noted that increased volume of production does not translate to higher incomes, considering the market's demand and supply situation.

"Kapag sobrang madami naman, *'yong farmer naapektuhan kasi good* production does not necessarily mean more income... kapag nagkasabaysabay ang harvest medyo ang presyo apektado (If the harvest if too bountiful, the farmer could be affected. Good production does not necessarily mean more income. If all the good harvests come in at once, the price could be affected),"

According to the Department of Agriculture's price monitors, as of June 30 the retail price of bangus or milkfish in Metro Manila was between P145 and P240 as of June 30.

Tilapia fetched between P105 and P160 while galunggong or local round scad sold for between P180 and P200.

Mr. Perez also noted that pork imports have affected demand for fish and other commodities.

Pursuant to the Department of Transportation approval of LRT-1 fare adjustment dated June 14, 2023, the following revised fare matrix is for implementation in LRT-1 effective AUGUST 2, 2023.

								10	T1 CTODED	VALUE C	- 84-6-11									
								LK	11 STOKED	VALUE Far										
	DESTINATION Backern EDSA Liberted Gil Puwat Vito Cruz Quirino Pedro Gil LIN Avenue Central Cerriedo D. Jose Bambana Tayuman Blumentriti Abad Santos R.Papa 5th Avenue Monumento Balintawak Rossew																			
		EDSA									D. Jose		Tayuman		Abad Santos			Monumento		Roosevelt
Baclaran	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	33	35
EDSA	14	13	15	15	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	29	32	34
Libertad	15	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	31	33
Gil Puyat	16	15	14	13	15	16	17	17	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	30	32
Vito Cruz	17	17	15	15	13	14	15	16	18	19	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	29	31
Quirino	18	18	16	16	14	13	14	15	17	18	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	28	30
Pedro Gil	19	19	17	17	15	14	13	14	16	17	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	27	29
UN Avenue	20	20	18	17	16	15	14	13	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	26	28
Central	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	13	14	15	16	17	17	18	19	20	22	24	27
Carriedo	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	14	13	14	15	16	16	18	18	20	21	24	26
D. Jose	23	23	22	21	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	23	25
Bambang	24	24	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	22	24
Tayuman	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	14	15	16	17	18	21	23
Blumentritt	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	17	16	16	15	14	13	14	15	16	18	20	23
Abad Santos	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	18	18	17	16	15	14	13	14	15	17	19	22
R.Papa	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	19	18	18	17	16	15	14	13	14	16	18	21
5th Avenue	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	15	17	20
Monumento	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	18	17	16	15	13	16	18
Balintawak	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	24	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	13	16
Roosevelt	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	23	22	21	20	18	16	13

								LRT	1 SINGLE J	OURNEY Fa	re Matrix									111111111
	DESTINATION																			
	Baolaran	EDSA	Libertad	GI Puyat	Vito Cruz	Quirino	Pedro Gil	UN Avenue	Central	Carriedo	D. Jose	Bambang	Tayuman	Blumentritt	Abad Santos	R.Papa	5th Avenue	Monumento	Balintawak	Roosevek
Baclaran		15	15	20	20	20	20	20	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	30	30	35	35
EDSA	15		15	15	20	20	20	20	25	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	30	35	35
Libertad	15	15		15	15	20	20	20	20	25	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	35	35
Gil Puyat	20	15	15		15	20	20	20	20	20	25	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	35
Vito Cruz	20	20	15	15	100000000000000000000000000000000000000	15	15	20	20	20	20	20	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	35
Quirino	20	20	20	20	15		15	15	20	20	20	20	20	25	25	25	25	25	30	30
Pedro Gil	20	20	20	20	15	15		15	20	20	20	20	20	20	25	25	25	25	30	30
UN Avenue	20	20	20	20	20	15	15		15	20	20	20	20	20	20	25	25	25	30	30
Central	25	25	20	20	20	20	20	15		15	15	20	20	20	20	20	20	25	25	30
Carriedo	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	20	15		15	15	20	20	20	20	20	25	25	30
D. Jose	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	15	15		15	15	20	20	20	20	20	25	25
Bambang	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	20	15	15		15	15	20	20	20	20	25	25
Tayuman	25	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	20	15	15		15	15	20	20	20	25	25
Blumentritt	30	25	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	20	15	15		15	15	20	20	20	25
Abad Santos	30	30	25	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	20	15	15		15	15	20	20	25
R.Papa	30	30	30	25	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	20	15	15		15	20	20	25
5th Avenue	30	30	30	30	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	20	20	15	15		15	20	20
Monumento	30	30	30	30	30	25	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	20	20	15		20	20
Balintawak	35	35	35	30	30	30	30	30	25	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	20	20		20
Roosevelt	35	35	35	35	35	30	30	30	30	30	25	25	25	25	25	25	20	20	20	



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

This refers to the attached memorandum for the Secretary of this Department dated 24 March 2023 received from the undersigned on the Railway Regulatory Unit's Recommendation on the Fare Adjustment Petition of the Light Rail Manila Corporation (LRMC) and Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA).

undersigned hereby informs the LRMC that the application for fare adjustment for the 1 system has been duly approved by the Secretary, based on following scheme:

	Fare Formula					
LRT Line 1	Boarding Fare = PHP 13.29 Distance Fare = PHP 1.21 per kilometer					

Further, the LRMC is reminded to comply with Section 3.4, Rule 4 ("Procedure for Approval of Adjusted and Periodic Fare Rates for Applicants with Concession Agreements") of the Rules of Procedure for Fare Rate-Fixing under the Department of Transportation Railway Regulatory Unit, as contained in Department Order No. 2022-027 dated 07 December 2022 on the Creation of the DOTr Railway Regulatory Unit, to wit:

- 3.4 Approved Fare rates shall be published, at the expense of the Applicant, once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation. Collection Date¹ shall be implemented thirty (30) days after the last day of publication. Said publication must include the following:
 - XXXX

Very truly yours,

cretary for Railways and rson, DOTr Railways Regulatory Unit

¹ Rule 2 (Definition of Terms) defines Collection Date as "thirty (30) days after the last day of publication as contemplated under these Rules, when Applicant may start collecting the approved adjusted rates"



Republic of the Philippines DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

The Chairperson Rail Regulatory Unit (RRU)

SUBJECT

DATE

1.0 Introduction

This respectfully pertains to the Petitions for Fare Adjustment filed by LRMC and LRTA 2.0 Body

LEGAL ASPECT

AUTHORITY OF DOTR THROUGH RRU TO RULE ON RAIL FARE ADJUSTMENT MATTERS

DOTr is vested with regulatory powers under existing laws for purposes of fixing rates and granting franchises to rail transportation utilities.¹

- Under the 1987 Administrative Code, DOTr is the primary regulating and administrative entity mandated to administer and enforce laws, rules, and regulations in the field of transportation. Pursuant to Executive Order (EO) No. 125-A.) DOTr is authorized to determine, fix and prescribe rates for the operation of public land transportation utility facilities and services.
- rmonized reading of EOs 292 and 125-A indicates that DOTr's authority to fix
- In fact, DOTr is also authorized by the same EOs to issue Certificates of Public Convenience for operation of public rail transportation utilities and services.

SUFFICIENCY OF PETITION

- Based on the Report of the Hearing Officer4 and submissions made by LRMC and timely publication, and Notice of Hearing5 as required under the law and the RRU Rules
- Both Petitions are found to be sufficient in form and substance as they provided for the proposed fare rate, factual antecedents in arriving at said proposed fare rate, and the basis for such adjustment. While LRMC's petition is unverified, it is worth noting that the same was filed based on the Concession Agreement, prior to the establishment

As to signatories' authority in filing the Petitions, both Petitions submitted the Corporation Code of the Philippines⁷ and Executive Order 603, as amended.8

PUBLICATION AND PUBLIC HEARING

- RRU conducted its first Public Hearing on 17 February 2023 at LRTA Administration Bldg., LRT Line 1 Pasay Depot, Gate 1, Aurora Blvd., Pasay City. Petitioners and other organizations attended the said hearing and each were given adequate time to
- As manifested during the Public Hearing, Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), Kabataan Partylist (Kabataan), Alliance of Nationalist and Genuine Labor Organization (ANGLO), Anakhayan and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan submitted their Position Papers on 20 February 2023, interposing their comments and objections on the proposed fare increase.9 All position papers submitted are duly considered herein.
- The foregoing twin requirements of publication and public hearing are in compliance with the 1987 Administrative Code¹⁰ and jurisprudence. In Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) v. Blancaflor, it the Supreme Court expounded on necessity of a public hearing in rate fixing/increases scenario, ruling that MIAA, being an agency attached to the Department of Transportation and Communications (now DOTr), is governed by Administrative Code of 1987, which specifically mandates the conduct of a public hearing.

Similarly, as held in Francisco, et. al. v. Toll Regulatory Board (TRB),¹² subsequent toll rate adjustments (in this case, Rail fare adjustments) are mandated by law to undergo both requirements of **public hearing and publication**.

COORDINATION WITH COMMISSION ON AUDIT (COA) AND LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING REGULATORY BOARD (LTFRB)

- LRTA, under its Charter, is required to consult with LTFRB in fixing LRT's fare rates.

 This consultative process is to determine the reasonableness and economic viability of the fare adjustment and does not arrogate unto LTFRB the authority to fix fares for
- Accordingly, LRTA consulted LTFRB to provide comments for the proposed fare adjustments for LRT1 and LRT2. LTFRB in response interposed no objection to the proposed fare increase.14
- On the other hand, Section 22 of the 1987 Administrative Code¹⁵ and Francisco v TRB On the other hand, section 22 of the 1987 Administrative Code¹³ and Francisco v TRB requires a special audit on the matter of fare adjustment. In compliance thereto, LRTA wrote COA, ¹⁶ which replied that audit is not a procedural requirement nor a condition precedent to any adjustment and implementation of fare rates, and further stated that it is the sole duty of the regulatory body concerned who has the power to issue, modify and promulgate fare adjustment.¹⁷
- COA posited that they cannot participate on the ground that they can only be involved post-audit after the fare adjustment is approved.

DOTR'S CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION

- For LRMC, pursuant to Sections 20.3.b and 20.3.c of Concession Agreement dated 2 October 2014, whenever notional fare is adjusted, Concessionaire shall apply to the grantors, LRTA and DOTr, for an adjustment of the approved fare so that it is at least
- As raised in the Petition, the approved fare rates took effect on January 2015 and is approximately 36% lower that the notional fare.

CHNICAL, FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL ASPECT

- Foremost, it is respectfully recognized that LRTA Board's expertise, as co-grantor of DOTr, already passed upon policy determination on technical, financial and operational matters involving the petitions made as evidenced by LRTA Board Resolution No. 068-2022.
- For LRMC, improvement has been established in terms of service as evidenced by the increase in trains deployed, faster travel time, improved headway, progress of major projects, and the progress in Cavite Extension Project's construction.
- For LRTA-operated Line 2, it is likewise acknowledged that LRT Line 2 has served For LKTA-operated Line 2, it is likewise acknowledged that LKT Line 2 has served more than 1 billion passengers since it started operating in 2003. With the current number of passengers, LRTA intends to allocate 97% (3% for common carrier's tax), or about P110.6 million, of the expected P114 million additional rail revenue per year, to augment funds for Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE). Sufficient resources for repair and maintenance will help improve turn-around time of equipment repairs, as well as the timely conduct of preventive maintenance activities for optimal performance of critical rail systems and facilities

- Based on tentative data presented during the public hearing, LRTA's deficit for CY2023 is projected to be -P8.500 billion. It has been actually operating at a loss and relying on government subsidies for its operations and maintenance, as reflected in
- Concession Agreement with government is P1.46 billion. As of January 2023, LRMC's actual fare is 50% behind the notional fares. This gap will exponentially increase. In 2026, without an increase, actual fare will be 81% behind the notional
- As such, although LRMC and LRTA claims that they continue to operate and maintain the Railway Systems with the highest performance and safety standards despite the apparent financial challenge, it is our view that the sought fare adjustments is of extreme urgency, and LRMC, LRTA and/or public interest will suffer great damage or inconvenience if the same is not imposed as it may cause delay or stoppage of urgently needed improvements, expansions and/or repairs.
- Thus, in order to ensure the viability and sustainability of the services rendered, LRMC's petition as applied to Stored Value Card (SVC) shall range from a minimum fare of P14.00 and a maximum of P35.00; while fares for Single Journey Ticket (STI) o Stored Value Card (SVC) shall range from a minimum m of P35.00; while fares for Single Journey Ticket (SJT) shall range from P 15.00 to P35.00.
- For LRTA, the resulting fares as applied to SVC shall range from a minimum fare of P14.00 and a maximum of P33.00; while fares for SJT shall range from P15.00 to
- The foregoing fare rates were derived using inflation rebasing formula¹⁸ (2018 as base year), an option available in the LRT Line 1 Concession Agreement in determining the fares, and considers prevailing consumer price indexes (CPI) in the country within the last four (4) years.
- In fact, as commented by LTFRB, inflation rebasing method is a more comprehensive method as it considers computed average growth rate of inflation which is a significant economic parameter that is practical and reliable. Further, the timing consideration (4 years) is generally adequate, which suggests that the period (to adjust fares) is not too short nor too long.

Sample Comparison: Petitioned Fare (SJT) vs. Other Road Transportation Fares

					•					
Full and Ave. Trip	Single Journey Tit.	Ordinary	Modern E-Jeep AC	Ordinary Bus	City Bus AC	TNVS	TNVS			
(in Mometer)	URT2 Petition P13.29+ P1.21	#12.00 +P1.80	P34.00 +P2.20	P13.00 +P2.25	P35.00 +P2.65	PIS.00 +P15.00	P55.00 +P38.00			
16.56	P35.00	P35.00	P42.00	P39.00	P46.00	P294.00	P353.00			
8.5	P25.00	20.00	P24.00	P21.00	P25.00	P173.00	P208.00			

- 3.1 In view of the foregoing, RRU finds merit in LRMC and LRTA's Petitions for fare
- The fare rates herein approved are subject to the continuing authority to review rates and validate the reasonableness of such rates and entitlement of grantee/operator by RRU to determine the reasonableness of its imposition, and the post auditing authority of COA.
- Further, approved fare rates shall be published, at the expense of petitioners, once a tweek for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation. Collection Date shall be implemented thirty (30) days after the last day of publication. Said publication must include the following:
 - Approved adjusted fare rates; and Collection Date when approved fare rates shall take effect.

Respectfully submitted

APPROVED FOR FURTHER STUDY

JAIME J. BAUTISTA MAR 2 7 2023

¹ Executive Order No. 292 or the Administrative Code, and Executive Order No. 125-A Executive Order No. 292, Section 1 and 2; Executive Order No. 125-A, Section 5 Executive Order No. 125-A, Section 5.

rrandum for RRU Chairperson dated 28 February 2023.

Anneses A. EBAC Polition, B-17 January 2023 publication, C-1 February 2023 Publication, D-6 February 2023, E-Notice of grant and Enditor of Poblication.

January C. H. Ellis of Poblication:

Anneses C. H.T.R. Polition, B-17 January 2023 publication, I-1 February 2023 Publication, J-6 February 2023, K-Notice of the and L. Addition of Poblication. runnomen.
tificate authorizing the President/CEO; Annex N- LRTA Board Resolution Number 068-2022 dates

(G.R. No. 16690), October 19, 2020.

Section 4 (13), Article 2, E.O. No. 603, 12 July 1980

Annex T. LTTRB letter dated 23 Nevember 2022.

Section 22 Chapter 4, Solitelle B. Tilled J. Book V of Administrative Code of 1987.

Section 22 Chapter 4, Solitelle B. Tilled J. Book V of Administrative Code of 1987.

Astherity to Examine Accounts of Public Ullilines, (17) The Commission shall examine and until the books, records and accounts of public utilities in connection until the fixing of plate appropriate, or in evidence to the proceedings of the proper regulatory agencies.

Asserts U. Letter dated 3 August 2021, Armes V- 2 Suptember 2021 for LRTA (LRT Line 2) and Armes W- 11 Cocheer 2022 for LRMC ** Annex U- Letter dated 3 August 2021; Annex v- 2 september 2021 for Lish (Lish 1 anne 4) man chures Y- 1 shoots of (LRT Line 1).

** Annex X- Letter dated 10 August 2021; Annex Y- 18 August 2021 for LRMC and Annex Z- 25 October 2022 for LRTA

** Section D** Inflation Rebusing of the Notional Fancy "Schedule 9 of the LRT Line 1 Concession Agreement.



Cotabato farmers trained in organic fertilizer preparation

FARMERS in Cotabato province received training in the preparation of alternative fertilizers from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAg) at the Municipal Nursery of Midsayap.

Seventy organic farmers from Midsayap learned to make fertilizer using fermented fruit juice, fermented plant juice, fish amino acids, and calcium phosphate made from jackfruit, bananas, fish, eggshells, muscovado, vinegar, carbonized rice hulls, and liquid smoke' as well as organic composting.

The program is a farm-income improvement initiative of Governor Emmylou J. Taliño-Mendoza.

The OPAg lead official for organics, Dina A. Lumogdang, said the methods used will save farmers money and keep their farms chemical-free.

Meanwhile, the Department of Agriculture (DA) Region 12 and the provincial government of Cotabato also discussed the distribution of rice fertilizer

"Sa ngayon ay pinaghahandaan na ng probinsya ang isasagawang pamamahagi kung saan magkakaroon ng ikalawang pagpupulong kasama ang mga representante ng iba't-ibang munisipyo upang maibahagi ang nasabing fertilizers sa mga karapat dapat na mga benepisyaryo (The province is preparing for the distribution, for which we will convene a second meeting with representatives from each municipality, in order to distribute fertilizer to eligible beneficiaries)," the governor said.

In 2022, the DA ranked Cotabato province no. 1 in Region 12, no. 3 in Mindanao and no. 10 in the country in rice production, with output of 510,973 metric tons. - Maya M. Padillo

Well-milled rice prices up in six regional centers

SIX regional trading centers reported higher average retail prices of well-milled rice at mid-June, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

In a report, the PSA said prices rose on June 15-17, which it refers to as the second phase of June, compared with the prices from June 1-5, or the first phase.

Higher prices were recorded in Cabanatuan City where they increased by P1.50 to P40.50 per kilogram. Prices rose by P0.50 in both Legazpi City and Digos City to P45.75 and P46.50, respectively. Retail prices also increased in Kidapawan

City by P0.42 to P43.50, in Pagadian City by P0.25 to P43.25, and in the National Capital Region (NCR) by P0.11 to P43.25. Well-milled rice prices fell P0.17 to P40.33

in Tuguegarao City. In Iloilo City they fell P1.61 to P50.89. The PSA estimated the average retail price of red onion increased in six regional trading

centers during the period. Red onion prices rose by P25 to P207.50 per kilo in Tacloban City, by P22 to P228 in Iloilo

City, and by P15 to P265 in Pagadian City. Increases were also monitored in Batangas City where prices rose by P10 to P145, in Baguio City by P10 to P211.50, and in the NCR by P0.13 to P170.17.

Retail prices declined in Calapan City by P15 to P215, in Tuguegarao City by P2.50 to P162.50, and in Cagayan de Oro City by P0.27

The average retail price of dressed chicken declined in five trading centers during the

Prices fell in Cabanatuan City by P10 to P162.50, in Digos City by P9 to P188.00, and in Pagadian City by P5 to P197.50.

Chicken prices also dropped in the NCR by P2.59 to P180.64, and in Kidapawan City by P2

Meanwhile, the average retail price of dressed chicken in Iloilo City rose by P5 to P175. — Sheldeen Joy Talavera