

# NGO calls for post-harvest support in line with sardine management plan

OCEANA Philippines called on the government to fully implement the National Sardines Management Plan with post-harvest facilities and support for fisherfolk.

In a statement, the non-government organization (NGO) urged the Bureau

of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and local government units to build more such infrastructure and support fisherfolk in bringing their product to market.

Oceana Vice-President Gloria Estenzo Ramos said that fisherfolk

will benefit from keeping spoilage to a minimum and increasing incomes by adding value to the basic sardine product.

“Overfishing and decline of the fish population translate to food security issues that need to be addressed. One of the

immediate measures is the implementation of the national plan for sardines,” she added.

Ms. Ramos said that the plan calls for science-based measures and policies for all 12 Fisheries Management Areas (FMAs).

She added that the management plan recognizes the variation in conditions in the marine ecosystem covered by the FMAs.

“In doing so, the plan could achieve conservation, sustainable use, and fair sharing of benefits in our sardine resources,” she said. — **Adrian H. Halili**

## BSP from SI/1

ING Bank NV, Manila Senior Economist Nicholas Antonio T. Mapa said the recent downgrade in the BSP’s risk-adjusted forecasts is a signal for room to begin policy easing.

“We note that even in the worst-case scenario, inflation is still tipped to slide within target, which would likely suggest that the BSP may not have needed that ‘insurance’ rate hike late last year,” he said in an e-mail.

“As such, it also points to a BSP having much space to reduce policy rates with real policy rates now at more than 3%,” he added.

The BSP lowered its risk-adjusted inflation forecast for this year to 3.9% from 4.2% at its February meeting, falling within its 2-4% target.

Union Bank of the Philippines, Inc. Chief Economist Ruben Carlo O. Asuncion said the decision to cut rates would depend on core inflation.

“While core consumer price index would not be spared the base effects, our monthly trajectory yielded a steady core path in the upper half (3-4%) of the BSP’s inflation target range. This year’s core average would ease to 3.5% from 6.6% in 2023,” he said in an e-mail.

“We reiterate the likelihood of core inflation (and its components) as less susceptible to the risk of high food price shocks from El Niño,” he added.

Mr. Asuncion also noted their “benign” core inflation projection was due to the expectation of below 6% gross domestic product (GDP) growth this year amid less robust domestic demand.

In January, core inflation, which excludes volatile prices of food and fuel, slowed to 3.8% from 4.4% in December. This was the first time that core inflation settled within the target after 17 months.

## Assets, from SI/1

Traders took note by boosting pricing on a rate cut over the next six months, while global funds have pulled out \$478 million from Thai bonds since the start of January, the biggest outflow in emerging Asia for economies that provide updated data.

### ‘SIGNIFICANT ATTACK’

In Hungary, the long-running feud deepened when central bank Governor Gyorgy Matolcsy warned on Thursday that Orbán’s government was planning regulatory changes that represent a “significant attack” against central bank independence. The comments hit the forint just two days after policy makers accelerated the pace of easing amid pressure to deliver more stimulus.

The planned legislation seeks to broaden the purview of the central bank’s supervisory board, which includes government appointees. It would allow the board to look into investments, including controversial foundations the central bank set up and which the European Central Bank has also scrutinized in the past.

The government said it respects central bank indepen-

dence and only aims to boost transparency and prudent financial management in areas unrelated to monetary policy, according to a Facebook post by Finance Minister Mihaly Varga. Investors would be awaiting speeches from Orbán, Economy Minister Marton Nagy and Finance Minister Mihaly Varga on Monday to see if they comment on tensions with the central bank.

### POSSIBLE HOTSPOT

The next potential hotspot may be Indonesia, where the incoming president’s plans to boost spending risks widening the budget deficit and creating a conflict with the monetary authority.

“When people are already saying that there will be a potential risk to fiscal spending — i.e., higher fiscal spending — there could also be another push for cuts,” said Jerome Tay, an investment manager at Abrdn in Singapore. At the same time, Indonesia has inflation under control, so investors may not react too negatively if the central bank does cut rates, he said. — **Bloomberg**

## Deals, from SI/1

The BCDA also signed an MoU with StB Giga-Factor, Inc. for the expansion of next-generation battery manufacturing and export operations in New Clark City. It also inked MoUs with Energy Decarb PTY Limited for the deployment of “decarbonization solutions” to new Clark City Stadium, and with Passenger Urban and Rapid Electric Vehicles Solutions, Inc. for the development of electric transportation frameworks.

The Palace said Kaisan Pty Ltd also signed a memo with the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development for the latter’s housing projects.

Paco Industries PTY Ltd, FP Paradigm Pty Ltd and Pristine Sustainable Plastics Philippines, Inc. signed a deal with the University of New South Wales on plastic recycling.

An MoU was signed between Integrated Micro Electronics, Inc. and RRR Manufacturing Pty Ltd for the manufacture of portable automated external defibrillator solutions branded as CellAED.

The National Development Company (NDC) in the Philippines and Cyclion Holdings Pty Ltd also signed a deal for the transfer of the latter’s waste-to-energy technology that converts biowaste to green fuel.

The Palace said Philippine-based companies ACEN Corp. and Ayala Corp. signed an MoU with Marubeni Australia for the development of a 200- to 400-megawatt battery energy storage system in New South Wales and with Zen Energy for a solar project in Australia.

Southern Infrastructure Pty Ltd has also signified strong interest in the development of a biomass fuel power plant with a 40-megawatt base load in the Philippines, Malacañang said.

Medgate (Asia) Holdings Pty Ltd also expressed interest in the development of artificial intelligence-driven digital health services in the Philippines “with a particular focus on tuberculosis and other respiratory illnesses.”

“It’s hard to indicate the debit side of all these agreements,” Leonardo A. Lanzona, who teaches economics at the Ateneo de Manila University, said in a Facebook Messenger chat. “Surely, these negotiations had been underway even before the trip was done.”

Mr. Lanzona said the investment pledges might have no effect on the pressing short-term issues of inflation and hunger.

“Their immediate effects on the daily needs of the poor remain questionable,” he said. “On the whole, these still do not justify the billions of travel expenses incurred by the country for these types of trips which can be handled online.”

Public investment analyst Terry L. Ridon said he is hoping these pledges will translate into actual foreign direct investments “in the soonest time.”

“The challenge to government in each and every foreign trip has always been to ensure that MoUs and letters of intent will ripen into more definitive agreements within a realistic investment timeframe,” he said in a Facebook Messenger chat.

Mr. Marcos was in Melbourne for a three-day special summit between Australia and Southeast Asian nations.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australia and New Zealand signed a free trade agreement (FTA) in Thailand in 2009.

Canberra and Manila are among the members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, which is dubbed as the world’s largest FTA.

Also on Monday, Mr. Marcos led the launch for the expansion of Victoria International Container Terminal (VICT), a unit of Razon-led International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI).

“VICT is a Philippine success story, and I hope it will only be the beginning,” he said.

VICT, which started operations in 2017, is ICTSI’s first entry point into Australia. ICTSI is now one of the world’s largest independent terminal operators with 33 terminals in 19 countries.

The Philippines and Australia last year turned their partnership into a strategic one, as they confront authoritarian threats in the Indo-Pacific region.

Mr. Marcos said the strategic partnership would pave the way for more economic deals between the two countries.

In his address to the Australian Parliament last week, he vowed to work with Australia to keep the region stable and free, saying his country has been on the frontline of a battle for regional peace.

Mr. Marcos has veered away from his predecessor’s pivot to China, boosting Manila’s ties with the US and its Indo-Pacific allies such as Japan and Australia.

It seems the two countries have learned that reducing economic dependence on China means finding alternatives with like-minded partners, said Joshua Bernard B. Espeña, vice-president at Manila-based International Development and Security Cooperation.

“It also compels Washington to support these initiatives to strengthen the alliance network on economic grounds.”

The government of Prime Minister Anthony Norman Albanese, a Labor

politician, has been dealing with a protracted trade war with China, which in 2020 began blocking the import of almost a dozen Australian goods, including wine, which accounts for \$45.5 billion of the Australian economy.

The Philippines has been standing up to China’s intrusions in its waters in the South China Sea, and a Chinese envoy last month said the two countries’ relations now stand at a crossroad.

“The Marcos government, however, must ensure that these investments would translate into policy realities or else lose the optics needed to strengthen geoeconomic resolve in confronting China,” Mr. Espeña said.

### MAHARLIKA FUND

Meanwhile, Finance chief Ralph G. Recto invited Australian investors to look at potential opportunities with the Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF).

“Australian investors seeking to broaden their portfolios into rapidly expanding markets such as the Philippines should explore potential ventures within the Fund,” he said in a speech at the Philippine Business Forum.

“It provides an opportunity for private-sector engagement in financing our big-ticket infrastructure projects,” he added.

The Maharlika Investment Corp. (MIC) is set to announce its first commitment in the next two to three months, which would likely be an energy-related project.

Its priority sectors include energy, physical and digital infrastructure, food security, aviation and aerospace, mineral processing, transportation and tourism.

Mr. Recto also invited Australian investors to explore investments in recently liberalized sectors such as telecommunications, transportation, banking, mining and energy.

“In addition, we are currently refining the country’s fiscal incentives system to further tailor-fit incentives and attract international enterprises to invest in strategically important projects,” he added.

The Finance chief also noted the Philippines’ young population and potential to become “demographic partners” with Australia.

“Our young, tech-savvy, English-speaking workforce complements Australia’s forward-thinking businesses and highly skilled labor force. This sweet spot provides an opportunity for the Philippines and Australia to become demographic partners,” he added.

He also cited growth prospects of the country, which is the fastest-growing economy in the region. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocsom**



Republika ng Pilipinas  
**LUNGSOD NG MAKATI**  
SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF MAKATI

### PRESENT:

Vice Mayor	HON. MONIQUE YAZMIN MARIA Q. LAGDAMEO – Presiding Officer
Councilor	HON. DENNIS B. ALMARIO
Councilor	HON. MARIA DOLORES M. ARAYON
Councilor	HON. MARTIN JOHN PIO Q. ARENAS
Councilor	HON. JOEL M. ARIONES
Councilor	HON. SHIRLEY C. ASPILLAGA
Councilor	HON. BENEDICT B. BANIQUED
Councilor	HON. VIRGILIO V. HILARIO, JR.
Councilor	HON. LUIS S. JAVIER, JR.
Councilor	HON. EDRALYN M. MARQUEZ
Councilor	HON. CARMINA C. ORTEGA
Councilor	HON. ARMANDO P. PADILLA
Councilor	HON. RENE ANDREI Q. SAGUISAG, JR.
Councilor	HON. KRISTINA T. SAROSA
Councilor	HON. JOSE C. VILLENA, IV
Councilor	HON. ANNA ALCINA M. YABUT
LnB President	HON. ROLANDO D. ALVAREZ, JR.
SK President	HON. JEROME TRISTAN G. PANGILINAN

### ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Secretary to the Sanggunian: **ATTY. DINDO R. CERVANTES**

Upon motion of Hon. M.D.M. Arayon, duly seconded, the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Makati, by a unanimous vote, approved City Resolution No. 2024-021 on second and final reading.

### CITY RESOLUTION NO. 2024-021

Authors: Hon. A.P. Padilla, Hon. R.A.Q. Saguisag, Jr., Hon. D.B. Almario, Hon. B.B. Baniqued, Hon. V.V. Hilario, Jr., Hon. M.D.M. Arayon, Hon. E.M. Marquez, Hon. C.C. Ortega and Hon. J.T.G. Pangilinan

Co-Authors: Hon. M.J.P.Q. Arenas, Hon. J.M. Ariones, Hon. L.S. Javier, Jr., Hon. K.T. Sarosa, Hon. J.C. Villena, IV, Hon. A.A.M. Yabut and Hon. R.D. Alvarez, Jr.

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE HONORABLE MAYOR MAR-LEN ABIGAIL S. BINAY OR HER DULY AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE TO FORMALIZE A REQUEST, FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT OF MAKATI, FOR ONE (1) UNIT OF BASIC LIFE SUPPORT (BLS) AMBULANCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH-METRO CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT (DOH-MCHD), AND IN THE EVENT THAT SUCH REQUEST BE GRANTED, TO FURTHER AUTHORIZE THE HONORABLE MAYOR TO ACCEPT SUCH DONATION AND TO SIGN THE DEED OF DONATION AND ALL OTHER PERTINENT DOCUMENTS RELATIVE THERETO, SUBJECT TO EXISTING LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS.**

**WHEREAS**, Section 15, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;

**WHEREAS**, it is the policy of the City Government of Makati to provide the best possible health care to its constituents by strengthening the delivery of its health care programs and services;

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Health-Metro Center for Health Development (DOH-MCHD) is mandated to ensure that all Filipinos are guaranteed with equitable and accessible quality health care through the Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP);

**WHEREAS**, the HFEP aims to achieve the country’s overall health system goals, focusing on enhancing health outcomes, ensuring financial risk protection, and promoting responsiveness. In F.Y. 2023, the HFEP is guided by the Department of Health’s (DOH’s) FOURmula One Plus for Health (F1 Plus) framework which serves as the implementation roadmap for R.A. No. 11223, otherwise known as the “Universal Health Care Law.”;

**WHEREAS**, aligned with the direction of the Philippine Health Facility Development Plan (PHFDP) 2020-2040 in providing access to quality healthcare and addressing the need for ambulances, the DOH-MCHD has allocated funding for the procurement of ambulances under the HFEP;

**WHEREAS**, the HFEP serves as the national government’s vehicle wherein healthcare facilities receive assistance for infrastructure improvement, motor vehicle, and equipment upgrade;

**WHEREAS**, the Makati Health Department, for the purpose of augmenting the number of existing ambulances in the City, desires to request one (1) unit of Basic Life Support (BLS) Ambulance from the DOH;

**WHEREAS**, on 22 October 2020, the DOH issued Administrative Order (AO) NO. 2020-0051 which provides for the guidelines in the allocation of ambulances of the DOH;

**WHEREAS**, it was provided in the said administrative order that the process of applying for a request from LGU health facilities shall be addressed to respective DOH-MCHD Directors and accompanied by a resolution from the Sangguniang Panglungsod signed by the local chief executive;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, in the event that such request be granted, the execution of a Deed of Donation, among other documents, between the City Government of Makati and DOH-MCHD, is necessary to effectuate the abovementioned purpose;

**WHEREAS**, Section 8 (a) (6) of R.A. No. 7854, otherwise known as the Charter of the City of Makati, provides that the City Mayor, as the chief executive of the city government, shall, among others, represent the City in all its business transactions and sign on its behalf all bonds, contracts, and obligations, and such other documents upon authority of the sangguniang panlungsod or pursuant to law or ordinance;

**WHEREAS**, in consideration of the reasonableness and absence of any legal impediment to the aforesaid authority that will be given to the City Mayor, the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Makati, pursuant to the abovementioned provision of law, hereby approves this Resolution.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF MAKATI, METRO MANILA, BY THE POWERS VESTED IN IT BY LAW, IN SESSION ASSEMBLED**, to authorize the Honorable Mayor Mar-len Abigail S. Binay or her duly authorized representative to formalize a request, for and on behalf of the City Government of Makati, for one (1) unit of Basic Life Support (BLS) Ambulance from the Department of Health-Metro Center for Health Development (DOH-MCHD), and in the event that such request be granted, to further authorize the Honorable Mayor to accept such donation and to sign the deed of donation and all other pertinent documents relative thereto, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations.

**RESOLVED FURTHER**, that copies of this Resolution be furnished the Department of Health – Metro Manila Center for Health Development (DOH-MMCHD), Office of the Mayor, Office of the City Administrator, Law Department, Makati Health Department (MHD), Budget Department, Accounting Department, General Services Department (GSD), Information and Community Relations Department (ICRD), Department of the Interior and Local Government – Makati City Field Office (DILG-Makati City), and all other departments, offices, and agencies concerned for their information, guidance, and reference.

This Resolution shall be posted and published in accordance with the provisions of R.A. No. 7854, otherwise known as the Charter of the City of Makati.

**APPROVED BY THE SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF MAKATI, METRO MANILA**, in its Regular Session held on 28 February 2024.

Attested by:

**ATTY. DINDO R. CERVANTES**  
Secretary to the Sangguniang Panlungsod

Certified true and correct by:

**HON. MONIQUE YAZMIN MARIA Q. LAGDAMEO**  
Vice Mayor & Presiding Officer

<sup>1</sup> <https://law.upd.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/DOH-Administrative-Order-No-2020-0051.pdf>