



Republic of the Philippines  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
Office of the Secretary  
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

**FISHERIES ADMINISTRATIVE**

**ORDER NO. 260** :

(Series of 2018)

**SUBJECT: RULES AND REGULATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VESSEL MONITORING MEASURES (VMM) AND ELECTRONIC REPORTING SYSTEM (ERS) FOR COMMERCIAL PHILIPPINE FLAGGED FISHING VESSELS TARGETING STRADDLING AND HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS**

**WHEREAS**, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources under the Department of Agriculture (DA-BFAR) is mandated for the proper conservation, protection and management of the country's marine resources.

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines is a signatory to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean and is a party to various regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) such as the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and other Tuna RFMOs. As such, the Philippines must implement management measures such as vessel monitoring systems in accordance with the Convention and resolutions of the RFMOs.

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Section 14 of Republic Act No. 8550 as amended by Republic Act No. 10654, entitled "An Act to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, Amending Republic Act No. 8550, Otherwise Known as the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 and for Other Purposes" the DA-BFAR is mandated to establish a Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) system in coordination with the LGUs, FARMCs, the private sector and other agencies concerned to ensure that the fisheries and aquatic resources are judiciously and wisely utilized and managed on a sustainable basis and conserved for the benefit and enjoyment exclusively of Filipino citizens. The MCS System shall encompass all Philippine flagged fishing vessels regardless of fishing area and final destination of catch.

**WHEREAS**, SEC. 119 of the Fisheries Code, as amended, provides that no commercial or distant water fishing vessel shall engage in fishing activity without complying with the vessel monitoring measures promulgated by the Department.

**RECOGNIZING** the importance of vessel monitoring measures as an MCS tool to achieve the conservation and management of fisheries and aquatic resources in the Philippines and pursuant to the foregoing laws, the Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) hereby promulgate and implement the

following rules and regulations, in accordance with Republic Act No. 8550 as amended by Republic Act No. 10654, for compliance of all concerned

## CHAPTER I General Provisions

**Section 1. Objectives.** This order has the following objectives:

- a. To enhance monitoring of fishing operations for fisheries management through the implementation of vessel monitoring measures.
- b. To enhance law enforcement to regulate the capture fisheries sector towards achieving long term resource sustainability.
- c. To implement vessel monitoring measures to track fishing behavior for scientific research and data.
- d. To establish a system that will facilitate law enforcement and aid in case building and prosecution of fisheries law violations.
- e. To gather data on fishing effort and catch data by means of an electronic reporting system which will serve as basis for fisheries management measures.
- f. To aid in the seafood traceability and catch documentary requirements of the government.
- g. To ensure safety for fishers thru a tracking device that would monitor the vessels' location during accidents and disasters.
- h. To implement policies embodied in Republic Act 8550, as amended by RA 10654 and its implementing rules and regulations, which refers to the vessel monitoring requirements of fishing vessels

**Section 2. Scope.** – No commercial vessel shall engage in fishing activity without the vessel monitoring measures as established herein. For this purpose, VMM shall apply to licensed Philippine flagged fishing vessels targetting straddling and highly migratory fish stocks within and outside Philippine waters.

The VMS shall apply to all licensed Philippine flagged commercial fishing vessels authorized by the BFAR to operate in the high seas and those fishing vessels with access rights to fish in other countries' exclusive economic zones. However, all catcher fishing vessels operating within Philippine waters which includes the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), the VMS shall be implemented in phases as follows:

Vessel Tonnage FAO	Schedule of Implementation from Effectivity of this
50 to 99 GT	Within one (1) year
30 to 49 GT	Within two (2) years

