



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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Quezon City, 1100 Philippines

**FISHERIES ADMINISTRATIVE
ORDER NO. 265
Series of 2020**

SUBJECT: REGULATION ON THE CATCHING, POSSESSION, TRANSPORTING, SELLING, TRADING AND EXPORTING OF PUERULUS, JUVENILE AND GRAVID SPINY LOBSTERS (*Palinuridae*).

WHEREAS, Section 2(c) of the Republic Act No. 8550 as amended by RA No. 10654, provides for rational and sustainable development, management and conservation of the fishery and aquatic resources in Philippine waters including the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and in the adjacent high seas, consistent with the primordial objective of maintaining a sound ecological balance, protecting and enhancing the quality of the environment;

WHEREAS, lobster is among the most sought high-value commodities both in the local and international markets. The increasing demand has resulted in a high level of fishing pressure which involves indiscriminate catching, selling and trading of the species. This further resulted to reduction of potential yield from the fishery and decreased in economic benefits that could be obtained from the stock;

WHEREAS, a significant drop in lobster production was recorded in 2016, from 71.88 metric tons in 2008 to 6.10 metric tons (PSA, 2016), where areas of ARMM, Western Visayas, CARAGA, Bicol and Davao Regions are the main producers;

WHEREAS, there are five (5) common species of spiny lobsters (*Palinuridae*) in the Philippines: the ornate spiny lobster (*Panulirus ornatus*), scalloped spiny lobster (*P. homarus*), longlegged spiny lobster (*P. longipes*), painted spiny lobster (*P. versicolor*), and pronghorn spiny lobster (*P. penicillatus*);

WHEREAS, there is a great prospect to develop sustainable lobster aquaculture due to high species diversity and the availability of puerulus. As aquaculture grow-out relies solely on wild-sourced fry/seed at present, the lobster industry recognizes the need for the BFAR, the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute, the academe, and other relevant institutions to initiate the development of the first hatchery and nursery technology;

WHEREAS, Section 104 of the amended Fisheries Code provides for the prohibition of the exportation of breeders, spawners, eggs or fry except for the hatchery or captive-bred breeder, spawner, egg or fry, which may be allowed subject to the regulations to be promulgated by the Department;

NOW THEREFORE, the following provisions of this Order are hereby adopted and

implemented:

SECTION 1. Definition of Terms

- 1) **Breeders/Spawners** – mature spiny lobsters which are physiologically highly developed and ready to spawn or produce eggs and sperm for reproduction.
- 2) **Carapace Length**–measurement from the rear of the eye socket to the rear of the carapace on a line parallel to the centerline of the body shell (see Figure 1).
- 3) **Gravid** – female spiny lobsters which are considered pregnant or carrying eggs in cluster at its belly.
- 4) **Juvenile lobster** –the size of the species that is less than the length at first sexual maturity.
- 5) **Length at first sexual maturity (L_m)** - defined as minimal size attained at first sexual maturity or the size at which 50% of the lobsters at that size are mature (see Table 1).
- 6) **Puerulus** – the fry stage, pre-juvenile, swimming and non-feeding transitional stage, short-lived and lasting for 2-3 weeks prior to juvenile. It looks like a very small lobster but is still translucent.
- 7) **Spiny lobster** – locally known as *banagan*, species belonging to family *Palinuridae* of Subphylum *Crustacea*, called spiny lobsters due to the many spines on their carapace and basal segments of the long second antennae.

SECTION 2. Prohibition. It shall be unlawful for any person, association, cooperative, partnership or corporation to undertake the following:

- a. Catching, transporting, possessing, trading and selling of gravid spiny lobsters, and juvenile spiny lobsters from the wild measuring less than the maturity Carapace Length (CL) at first sexual maturity as prescribed in Table 1 of this Order;
- b. Exportation of wild-sourced puerulus of spiny lobsters; and
- c. Exportation of spiny lobsters' breeders, spawners, eggs or fry as per provisions of Section 104 of the amended Fisheries Code.

SECTION 3. Exemptions. The following acts are exempted from the above provisions:

- a. Collection of puerulus and juvenile spiny lobster for local aquaculture intended for grow-out purposes. Provided, the growers and collectors are registered/licensed/permitted and certified by the Local Government Unit, and that the transport and trading of the same shall be accompanied by the Local Transport Permit. Provided further, the Local Government Unit



