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BANNING FISHING BY MEANS OF “MURO-AMI” AND THE LIKE DESTRUCTIVE TO CORAL REEFS AND OTHER MARINE HABITAT

BFAR ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 203, S. 2000, August 14, 2000

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Pursuant to Section 92 of R.A. No. 8550, this order banning fishing in Philippine waters by means of “muro-ami” and the like, destructive to coral reefs and other marine habitat is hereby promulgated for the information, guidance, and compliance of all concerned.

SECTION 1. Definition . — The terms as used in this order shall be construed as follows:

a. “Muro-ami” — is a Japanese fishing method used in reef fishing consisting of a movable bagnet, detachable wings and scarelines having plastic strips and iron/steel/stone weights, effecting fish capture by spreading the net in an arc around reefs or shoals and, with the use of the scarelines, a cordon of fishermen drive the fish towards the waiting net while pounding the corals by means of heavy weights like iron/steel/stone or rock making it destructive to the corals.

b. “Kayakas” — locally known as bahan, bahig, lukay, lukayan, pukot, singkil, tigsil, lintig or likum-likom, is the local version of the “muro-ami” but smaller in size, using bamboo or trunk of trees as scaring devices aside from coconut or other leaves or material to drive the fish out of the coral reefs while at the same time pounding the corals which makes it destructive to the corals.

c. “Scarelines (serosca)” — is a device made up of ropes of various diameter with length depending upon the depth of the water, with styrofoam, bamboo or synthetic material used as floats at one end of the rope, and stones, lead or iron chains and other material of varying weight. Along the rope are plastic strips, corn/coconut husks, coconut or other leaves or material tied at different intervals used to scare and drive the fish towards the waiting net. Contact and entanglement of the scarelines with the corals is what is making it destructive.

d. Recruiter or organizer — is the individual or group of individuals who recruit others to work on board the fishing boat or correspondingly the ones in charge of their protection, security and employment.

SECTION 2. Prohibition . — It shall be unlawful to fish in Philippine waters by means of “muro-ami” and “kayakas” or their variations which are destructive to coral reefs, seagrass beds and other marine habitat.

SECTION 3. Penalty. — The operator, boat captain, masterfisherman and recruiter or organizer violating this order shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment from two (2) to ten (10) years or a fine from one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) to five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00), or both such fine and imprisonment in the discretion of the court without prejudice to the confiscation of the catch and gear used.

SECTION 4. Repeal . — All orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 5. Effectivity . — This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and/or two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Adopted: 14 Aug. 2000

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