

Fisheries production improves in Q1

By Louise Maureen Simeon (The Philippine Star) | Updated May 26, 2017 - 12:00am

Fisheries production in the country slightly improved in the first quarter on the back of higher output across all sub-sectors.

Based on latest data from the Philippine Statistics Authority, production reached 1.03 million metric tons (MT), 1.16 percent higher than the 1.02 million MT in 2016.

Aquaculture production hit 540,000 MT, representing more than half of total output. The figure is six percent higher from 534,000 MT a year ago due to increased number of operations and newly opened marine cages in most areas.

Municipal fisheries also registered a seven percent increase in production to 273,000 MT as more fish catch and unloading activities were observed.

Commercial fisheries also saw an eight percent hike in production to 220,000 MT due to more species caught as climatic conditions improved.

In particular, the common round scad (*galunggong*) continued to post negative growth, falling 11 percent due to the lesser emergence of school in commercial fishing grounds and dry-docking and the inoperation of some commercial fishing boats in several areas.

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Milkfish production also decreased three percent to 71,270 MT due to lesser stocking in marine cages and smaller sizes of the specie were harvested.

Decline was likewise noted in the production of tiger prawn, Indian sardines, squid, anchovies, blue crab, *lapu-lapu*, mudfish, frigate tuna, big-eyed scad and oysters.

On the other hand, *tilapia* production inched up two percent to 98,000 MT due to better quality of stocking materials which resulted in bigger sizes harvested.

Seaweed production posted a minimal one percent gain to 354,000 MT due to good weather conditions, lesser occurrence of disease, and availability of funds that encouraged farmers to increase area in operation.

An increase was also recorded in the production of skipjack, yellowfin tuna, indian mackerel, mud crab, big-eye tuna, catfish and mussels.

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