Philippines DA, MAFAR unveil â?±904-M agri-fishery investment opportunities to boost agribusiness transformation

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The Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reformâ??Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (MAFAR-BARMM) have unveiled more than â?±904 million worth of investment opportunities for priority agri-fishery commodities during the 1st Hand-in-Hand (HIH) National Investment Forum (NIF) held at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Headquarters on April 30, 2026.

The initiative highlights the governmentâ??s push to attract private sector participation in transforming Philippine agriculture into a more modern, value-driven, and investment-ready industry.

DA Undersecretary for Special Concerns and ODAâ??Foreign Aid/Grants Jerome Oliveros presented flagship commodities such as mango, jackfruit, cacao, bamboo, and coffee, which account for over â?±727 million in identified investment requirements. These commodities were selected for their strong export potential, high domestic and global demand, and alignment with national development priorities.

â??Under the direct leadership of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., the DA is aggressively spearheading initiatives that transition the nation from traditional farming to a high-growth agribusiness hub,â?• Oliveros said. â??We are fostering partnerships that move beyond production into high-value agribusiness, strengthening food security and driving inclusive rural development.â?•

He added that the DAâ??s investment portfolio, with equity requirements ranging from â?±7.8 million to â?±215.2 million, is designed to build resilient and scalable agribusiness ventures nationwide.

â??We invite investors to partner with us in bridging supply gaps and securing high-yield returns while creating lasting impact for farming communities,â?• he said.

MAFAR-BARMM also presented its regional investment priorities, focusing on the seaweed and rubber industries with a combined requirement of â?±177 million. Officials emphasized the Bangsamoro regionâ??s untapped agricultural potential and improving policy environment as key drivers for investment.

â??BARMM represents one of the most significant frontiers for agriculture and fisheries investment in the country,â?• said MAFAR Fisheries Services Director General Pendatun Patarasa. â??Its natural resources and policy support make it a strong partner for both domestic and international investors.â?•

MAFAR Agriculture Services Director General Ismael Guiamel highlighted the broader development impact of the initiative, noting its role in expanding economic opportunities and empowering young people in the region.

Development partners also underscored the importance of clear policy direction and implementation. FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Senior Policy Officer and HIH Coordinator Xiaoruo Jiang emphasized that investment flows depend on well-defined priorities, while ADB Principal Economist and Deputy Country Director for the Philippines Declan Magee stressed the need to translate vision into â??bankable projects supported by strong institutions and effective partnerships.â?•

The HIH NIF forms part of the global Hand-in-Hand Initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), serving as a platform to connect governments and private investors in advancing agrifood systems transformation through data-driven planning, policy coherence, and strategic collaboration.