

# A Marine Gem Worth Protecting

The Philippine Rise is a vital marine habitat that houses a vast array of untapped resources that need to be utilized sustainably for present and future generations.



Its rich ecosystem has a high presence of commercially important fish species.



Hosts diverse reef ecosystems of corals, algae, and sponges.



Considered as one of the only known spawning grounds of the highly-valuable migratory Pacific bluefin tuna.



Holds significant mineral resources, such as cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts and hydrothermal polymetallic sulfides.



Yields the highest catch rate of tuna species compared to other areas of the Philippines.



Has vast energy potential due to abundant gas hydrates, which can exceed global oil, natural gas, and coal reserves.

Source: Foreign Service Institute - Center for International Relations and Strategic Studies

# Protection through Collaborative Action

Under the ENIPAS Act, oversight is vested in the **Protected Area Management Board (PAMB)**, composed of representatives from various sectors. The PAMB is responsible for the following:

### Management and Planning

Oversee the management and approves programs and policies.

### Administration of Funds

Allocate financial resources for the implementation of the management plan.

### Regulation and Permitting

Review permits, fees, and sustainable resource use.

### Conflict Resolution

Issue rules and regulations for resolution of conflicts among stakeholders.

### Policy Evaluation

Evaluate the effectiveness of management and may recommend appropriate policy changes.

### Performance Monitoring

Monitor and assess the performance of protected area personnels and partners.

Protecting the PRMRR through collective action and legal designation under the ENIPAS Act will ensure that the beauty and value of this extraordinary underwater treasure will endure for generations to come.

**Be part of the collective action to protect the PRMRR:**



[bit.ly/PRMRR-PAMB](http://bit.ly/PRMRR-PAMB)



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Photo courtesy of DENR-BMB



# Protecting the Philippine Rise Marine Resource Reserve



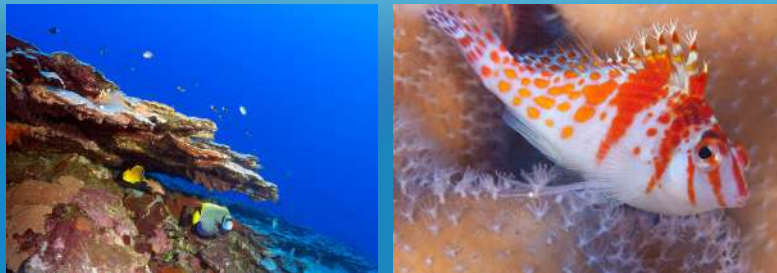
Photo courtesy of Oceana

# The Philippine Rise Marine Resource Reserve

Far off the northeastern coast of Luzon lies the **Philippine Rise**, previously known as Benham Rise, a 13-million-hectare underwater plateau teeming with rich marine biodiversity and natural resources.

Locally known in Catanduanes as **Kalipung-awan** ("loneliness in an isolated place"), the Philippine Rise extends well beyond the Philippines' 370-kilometer exclusive economic zone. In 2012, the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf officially declared the Philippine Rise as part of the country's extended continental shelf, reaffirming our sovereign rights over the Philippine Rise territory and its abundant resources.

Its seamounts and deep-blue canyons shelter rich coral reefs, tuna spawning grounds, and marine ecosystems that sustain livelihoods across northern and eastern Philippine regions. Due to its ecological and economic importance, 352,390 hectares of the Philippine Rise were designated as the **Philippine Rise Marine Resource Reserve (PRMRR)**, the country's first offshore marine protected area (MPA).



Photos from Oceana

## Coastal provinces surrounding the Philippine Rise:

### Region 2:

- ▶ Cagayan
- ▶ Isabela

### Region 3:

- ▶ Aurora

### Region 4A:

- ▶ Quezon Province

### Region 5:

- ▶ Albay
- ▶ Camarines Norte
- ▶ Camarines Sur
- ▶ Catanduanes



## MULTIPLE USE ZONE

**302,706 hectares**

Areas for settlement, traditional and/or sustainable land use and other income generating or livelihood activities.



## STRICT PROTECTION ZONE

**49,684 hectares**

Areas with high biodiversity values, closed to human activities except for scientific studies and/or non-extractive use by indigenous peoples.

## An Underwater Treasure Under Threat

The PRMRR must be closely monitored and protected to ensure the sustainability of its resources, especially as it continues to face threats from:



Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing



Foreign vessel intrusion



Marine extractive activities



Habitat degradation

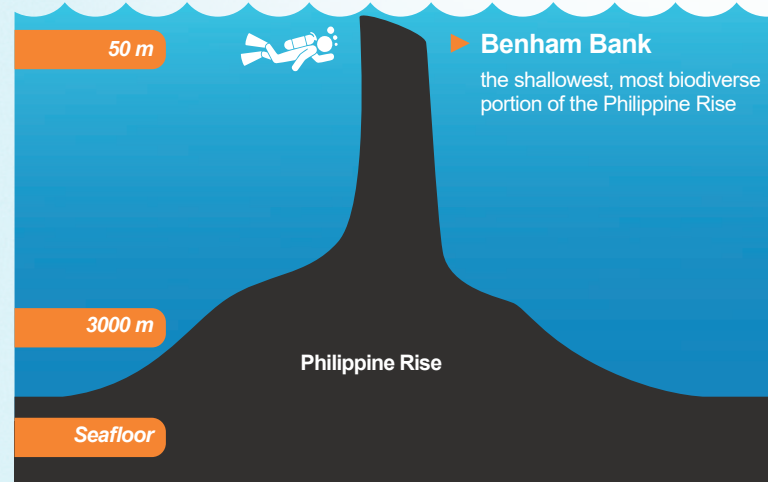


Growing population and economic pressures



Climate change impacts

Larger than Luzon Island, it spans depths of **3,000 to 3,500** meters, extending from Cagayan in the north to Catanduanes in the south. It features the **Benham Bank**, which hosts one of the richest mesophotic coral ecosystems in the country.



A protected area designation under the **Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act** will provide a permanent protected area status and a dedicated national budget for the conservation of the PRMRR. Securing this ENIPAS designation would also mark the PRMRR as the first deep-sea coral reef in the Philippines to attain this status.