



# Ramsar Sites Information Service

## Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

# Philippines

**8 Ramsar Site(s)** covering **247,684 ha**

### **Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary**

Site number: 1,009 | Country: Philippines | Administrative region: Mindanao

Area: 14,836 ha | Coordinates: 08°16'59"N 125°52'59"E | Designation dates: 12-11-1999

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary. 12/11/99; Mindanao; 14,836 ha; 08°17'N 125°53'E. A vast complex of freshwater marshes and watercourses with numerous shallow lakes and ponds in the upper basin of the Agusan River and its tributaries, which rise in the hills of eastern Mindanao. Some parts of the marsh have been converted into fishponds and rice paddies. The site acts as storage for rain water and reduces the downstream flow of flood water into Butuan City and other population centers. The Marsh supports the largest expanses left in the Philippines of seven habitat types and includes a very large area of swamp forest and a peat swamp forest not found anywhere else in the country. High silt loads caused by deforestation and other activities in the catchment are a continuing problem. The Marsh is sparsely populated because of seasonal flooding, and the population are 1) permanent residents of the Marsh who live in floating houses, 2) people who live within the Marsh in the dry seasons and move to the peripheries during the flood season, and 3) people who live permanently on the peripheries and move into the marsh on a daily basis. Trapping of crocodiles for sale on commercial farms is an important activity. Ramsar site no. 1009. Most recent RIS information: 1999.

### **Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA)**

Site number: 2,124 | Country: Philippines | Administrative region: Manila

Area: 175 ha | Coordinates: 14°29'35"N 120°58'50"E | Designation dates: 15-03-2013

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA). 15/03/2013; Manila; 175 ha; 14°29'35"N 120°58'50"E. A coastal wetland in Manila Bay situated within the metropolis of Manila, comprising two interconnected, mangrove-covered islands, shallow lagoons and coastline. A Presidential Proclamation in 2007 designated the site as a Critical Habitat for the survival of threatened, restricted-range and congregatory species. At least 5,000 individuals of migratory and resident birds have been recorded at the site, including about 47 migratory species such as the vulnerable Chinese Egret (*Egretta eulophotes*). The most important of the resident bird species is the vulnerable Philippine Duck (*Anas luzonica*) which breeds at the site. Records from 2007-2011 show that the site supports at least 1% of the estimated population of Black-Winged Stilts (*Himantopus himantopus*) using the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. The site faces threats associated with being located near densely populated areas. Waste from nearby cities accumulates along the coast and heavy metals and other organic contents coming from residential and industrial effluents affect surrounding areas. Other threats include ongoing land reclamation projects and mangrove cutting. Efforts to ensure the long-term conservation of this site are ongoing. Ramsar Site. No. 2124. Most recent RIS information: 2013

## Naujan Lake National Park

Site number: 1,008 | Country: Philippines | Administrative region: Oriental Mindoro  
Area: 14,568 ha | Coordinates: 13°10'N 121°10'59"E | Designation dates: 12-11-1999  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Naujan Lake National Park. 12/11/99; Oriental Mindoro; 14,568 ha; 13°10'N 121°11'E. The 5th largest lake in the Philippines (14km by 7km), volcanic in origin, receives water from local run-off with no major effluents. The lake has 14 species of fish, 5 of them migratory, and is an important feeding or wintering area for large numbers of ducks and other waterbirds such as herons, egrets, rails, and bitterns. The rare Plain swampphen (*Amaurornis olivaceous*) is also found, as well as an endemic species of freshwater crocodile (*Crocodylus mindorensis*). Naujan Lake enjoys a humid tropical climate with evenly distributed annual rainfall. Most of the people in the area depend upon the lake for their livelihood, particularly through fishing; the population is composed of the Mangyans, indigenous people of Mindoro including the Tadyawan tribe in the area of the lake, and the "damuong" or non-Mangyans. Fishing is the principle occupation and source of income, but the lake also provides water for drinking, laundry, bathing, and irrigation; moreover, the lake possesses great beauty and has potential for tourism. Ramsar site no. 1008. Most recent RIS information: 1999.

## Negros Occidental Coastal Wetlands Conservation Area (NOCWCA)

Site number: 2,271 | Country: Philippines | Administrative region: Negros Occidental, Negros Island Region  
Area: 89,607.8 ha | Coordinates: 10°15'48"N 122°46'22"E | Designation dates: 20-10-2016  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site lies along 110 kilometres of coastline of the island of Negros, covering 52 coastal districts (barangays), and three cities (Bago, Himamaylan and Kabankalan) and seven municipalities (Pulupandan, Valladolid, San Enrique, Pontevedra, Hinigaran, Binalbagan and Ilog). It hosts three globally threatened marine turtles, the critically endangered hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), the endangered green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and the vulnerable olive ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*). The vulnerable Irrawaddy dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*) also inhabits the coastal areas. In 2014, 72 waterbird species were recorded in the NOCWCA, including the globally endangered great knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*), far eastern curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*) and spotted greenshank (*Tringa guttifer*). There are three other vulnerable species: the Philippine duck (*Anas luzonica*) which is endemic to the Philippines, Chinese egret (*Egretta eulophotes*) and Java sparrow (*Lonchura oryzivora*). It is also known for its rich and diverse coastal resources, particularly mangroves and shellfish including economically important species such as oysters, green mussels (*Perna viridis*), nylon shell (*Paphia undulata*), angel wing shell (*Pholas orientalis*), shrimps and crabs. The Site faces potential threats including the conversion of mangrove forests and other wetlands to commercial or residential uses or for aquaculture, and also pollution by industrial waste and coliform contamination. Overfishing in some areas also threatens the biodiversity and the sustainability of local livelihoods.

## Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary

Site number: 656 | Country: Philippines | Administrative region: Cebu Province  
Area: 5,800 ha | Coordinates: 10°16'N 124°03'E | Designation dates: 01-07-1994  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary. 01/07/94; Cebu; 5,800 ha; 10°16'N 124°03'E. Wildlife Sanctuary; Shorebird Network Site. A low-lying island surrounded by extensive intertidal sandflats, mangroves, seagrass beds, coral reefs and islets. One of the most important areas in the country for significant numbers of migratory waterbirds, providing habitat for staging, wintering, roosting and feeding birds. Over 10,000 shorebirds have been recorded at one time, with total numbers approaching 50,000. The most important site in the Philippines for the rare waterbird species Asiatic Dowitcher. Inhabitants are dependent on coastal resources: harvesting sea urchins, fish and commercial shells, for their livelihood. Other economic activities include farming corn, cassava and coconut, and raising livestock. Ramsar site no. 656. Most recent RIS information: 1994.

## Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park

Site number: 2,084 | Country: Philippines | Administrative region: Island of Palawan

Area: 22,202 ha | Coordinates: 10°10'N 118°55'E | Designation dates: 30-06-2012

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park. 30/06/12; Palawan; 22,202 ha; 10°10'00"N 118°55'00"E. National Park, National Geological Site, ASEAN Heritage Park, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site. Located on the island of Palawan, the site is unique in the biogeographic region because it connects a range of important ecosystems from the mountain-to-the-sea, including a limestone karst landscape with a complex cave system, mangrove forests, lowland evergreen tropical rainforests, and freshwater swamps. It is home to about 800 plant and 233 animal species, including the critically endangered Philippine cockatoo (*Cacatua haematuropygia*) and Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*), as well as the endangered Green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and Nordmanns greenshank (*Tringa guttifer*). There are also some 15 endemic species of birds such as the Palawan peacock pheasant (*Polyplectron emphanum*) and the Tabon scrub fowl (*Megapodius freycinet cumingii*). One of the unique features of the park is an 8.2 km long section of the Cabayugan River that flows underground within large formations of stalactites and stalagmites. The river provides water to local communities for domestic and agricultural uses, before flowing towards the underground river. The site is a major ecotourism destination, and community-based sustainable ecotourism has been initiated to involve the local communities in Park management as well as to generate income. Ramsar Site no. 2084. Most recent RIS information: 2012.

## Sasmuan Pampanga Coastal Wetlands

Site number: 2,445 | Country: Philippines | Administrative region: Sasmuan, Province of Pampanga, Region 3, Philippines

Area: 3,667.3 ha | Coordinates: 14°49'17"N 120°36'24"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2021

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Sasmuan Pampanga Coastal Wetlands are located in Manila Bay, on the island of Luzon in the north of the Philippine Archipelago. These sheltered wetlands include mudflats, mangroves and riverine habitats that serve as important stopover points for migratory waterbirds on the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, with over 50,000 individuals counted in 2020. Threatened bird species recorded in the Site include the endangered Nordman's or spotted greenshank (*Tringa guttifer*), black-faced spoonbill (*Platalea minor*) and far eastern curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*). Aquaculture ponds cover large parts of the Site, helping to support local livelihoods. The Site also hosts zones of the vulnerable mangrove species *Avicennia rumphiana*, which, along with the more common *Sonneratia alba*, provides shelter for juvenile species of fish, molluscs and other marine and estuarine species. Unsustainable hunting, fishing and logging (especially of mangrove species) are some of the activities threatening the Wetlands.

## Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park

Site number: 1,010 | Country: Philippines | Administrative region: Sulu Sea

Area: 96,828 ha | Coordinates: 08°57'N 119°52'E | Designation dates: 12-11-1999

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park;12/11/99;96,828 ha; 8°57'N 119°52'E. This Ramsar Site is a National Marine Park and World Heritage Site located in the center of the Sulu Sea. This wetland is an example of an ecosystem with near pristine coral reefs having high diversity with at least 359 species of corals (equivalent to about 80% of all coral species in the Philippines), 600 species of fish, 7 species of seagrass, 13 species of sharks and two species of marine turtles. Being the apex of the Coral Triangle, this biogeographic region has one of the highest coral diversity in the world harbouring threatened species like the vulnerable Staghorn Coral (*Acropora abrolhosensis*) and Dana Staghorn Coral (*Acropora aculeus*) and serves as an important source and sink for not only coral larvae but also fish and other marine species. To date, this site harbors the highest number of white-tip sharks and supports threatened fish such as the endangered Humphead Wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*) and the vulnerable Giant Grouper (*Epinephelus lanceolatus*). Islets provide the only known breeding area for the endemic subspecies of Black Noddy (*Anous minutus worcestri*) in the Philippines and act as breeding and feeding grounds for threatened species such as the critically endangered Christmas Island Frigatebird (*Fregata andrewsi*) and the critically endangered Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*). Threats to the site include, plans for oil exploration in the Sulu Sea, illegal harvesting of Topshell and introduction of invasive plant species. This biologically rich site is managed by the Tubbataha Protected Area Management Board. Ramsar site no. 1010. Most recent RIS information:2010.