



Hawksbill Turtle © Tohami



Bowmouth Guitarfish © Tomas Kotouc

Stop Unsustainable Fishing in Philippine Coral Reefs and Mangrove Forests

Palawan Island in the Philippines is globally important for marine and terrestrial biodiversity. A mountain range runs its entire length, and its coasts and seas hold an exceptional abundance of coral reefs, seagrass and mangrove forests. Southern Palawan is the less-developed region of Palawan Island, and much of this coastal and marine ecosystem is unprotected.

A number of critically endangered species rely on Southern Palawan waters, including Hawksbill Turtle, Scalloped Hammerhead, Oceanic Whitetip Shark, Bowmouth Guitarfish, Broadnose Wedgefish and Green Sawfish.

Rainforest Trust and our partner, Rare, seek \$3,161,959 to support the creation of 3,273,085 acres of marine protected areas in Southern Palawan to end unsustainable fishing and poaching to protect threatened species and human livelihoods.

SAVE THIS BIODIVERSE HAVEN IN THE CORAL TRIANGLE

The Philippine Islands are located within the Coral Triangle, which is considered to be the most important place in the world for coral reefs and marine biodiversity. Its coastal and marine ecosystems include 379 species of coral, 13 species of seagrass meadow, and 31 species of mangrove in 109,962 acres of mangrove forests, the highest remaining mangrove cover in the Philippines.

Despite Southern Palawan's biological richness and importance, there are few formally protected marine areas. The region is plagued by overfishing, the illegal wildlife trade, and destructive fishing practices like using dynamite to harvest a greater volume of fish, and compressor fishing using an air supply line to illegally dive for lucrative species.

ENSURE HEALTHY FISHERIES FOR MILLIONS OF FILIPINOS

Fishing is one of the two main sources of livelihood for municipalities in Southern Palawan, the other being farming. The fisheries of Palawan are highly important to the Philippines as a whole, providing 60% of the fish consumed in the National Capital Region—an area known as Metropolitan Manila, the world's most densely populated urban area with over 13.4 million people.

The new marine protected areas cover all municipal waters in Southern Palawan. The entire area of over 3.2 million acres will be regulated by managed access (no commercial trawling, no international fishing, restrictions on permitted gear). The project will protect 52,289 acres of mangroves and 275,554 acres of coral reefs, both



3,273,085
ACRES

\$3,161,959
PROJECT COST

\$0.97
COST PER ACRE

KEY SPECIES:

- Hawksbill Turtle (CR),
- Oceanic Whitetip Shark (CR),
- Bowmouth Guitarfish (CR),
- Broadnose Wedgefish (CR);
- Green Sawfish (CR),
- Scalloped Hammerhead (CR)

Green Sawfish © Pilschikova Ekaterina



critical habitat areas. At least 20% of the critical habitats, including mangroves and coral reef areas, will be established as "no take" zones.

SUPPORT COMMUNITIES IN MANAGING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Marine protected areas fall under the jurisdiction of the Philippine government, but lasting conservation success can only be achieved with community involvement and commitment. Our partner will work closely with all stakeholders to ensure their involvement in the creation and long-term management of the areas.

Priority species that local communities consider emblematic of the ecological biodiversity, integrity and livelihoods of the island include Leopard Coral Grouper, Green Turtle, Dugong, Spinner Dolphin, anchovies, Bigeye Scad, sea cucumbers and lobsters.

There is at least one ancestral domain overlapping the marine project area. Indigenous communities will be fully engaged throughout the process in coordination with the National Commission on Indigenous People.



Oceanic Whitetip Shark © Martin Hristov

