



Senate

Office of the Secretary

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**
First Regular Session

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SENATE

RECEIVED BY:

S. B. No. 947

Introduced by SEN. WIN GATCHALIAN

**AN ACT
RENAMING THE BENHAM RISE AS "PHILIPPINE RISE" OR "TALAMPAS NG
PILIPINAS," NAMING THE UNDERSEA FEATURES THEREIN, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In line with the constitutional mandate to pursue an independent foreign policy based on national sovereignty, territorial integrity, national interest and the right to self-determination,¹ the Philippines formalized its claim for an extended continental shelf in the Philippine Rise Region with the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (UN-CLCS) on 8 April 2009. The Philippines presented scientific and technical evidence such as geodetic, bathymetric, geophysical, and geological data from national government agencies and international sources to support its claim, which was confirmed by the UN-CLCS on 12 April 2012, after a series of intensive deliberations.

The UN-CLCS, in its "*Recommendations of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in Regard to the Submission Made by the Philippines in Respect of the Benham Rise Region on 8 April 2009*" and adopted by the Commission², declared

¹ Article II Section 7 of the 1987 Constitution

² Adopted by the Subcommission on 2 April 2012, and submitted to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf for consideration and approval by the Commission

that: "The Philippine islands, including Luzon, constitute the land mass in the region. The Benham Rise and its subsidiaries, the Molave and Narra spurs, form a composite morphological feature that constitutes the submarine prolongation of that land mass by way of the FOS envelope. The outer edge of the continental margin, established from the FOS of the Benham Rise Region by applying the provisions of article 76, paragraph 4, of the Convention, extends beyond the 200 M limits of the Philippines. On this basis, the Commission recognises the legal entitlement of the Philippines to delineate the outer limits of its continental shelf beyond its 200 M limits in this region."

This is consistent with Article I of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which provides that the seabed and subsoil and other submarine areas are part of the Philippine territory, and Article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which provides that the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas are part of the continental shelf of coastal states. Thus, the Philippine Rise Region is within the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the Philippines.

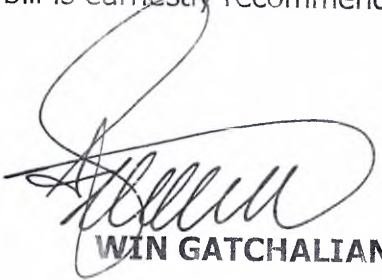
On May 16, 2017, President Rodrigo Duterte signed Executive Order No. 25 renaming Benham Rise to Philippine Rise. The Philippine Rise³ is a natural submarine prolongation of the Luzon Island extending up to 318 nautical miles (589 kilometers), from the Eastern Philippine Seaboard facing the Pacific Ocean. The Philippine Rise Region is comprised of the 200-nautical-mile continental shelf from the baselines of Luzon and the extension of the seabed and subsoil approximately up to 118 nautical miles beyond the legal continental shelf limits.⁴ It consists of a plateau and the Molave and Narra Spurs and Saddles in the east and northeast. It is docked to Luzon through the Palanan Saddle in the northwest and the Bicol Saddle in the southwest, and moves with it as a single unit. The outer limits of the Extended Continental Shelf (ECS), as established on the basis of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) recommendations, are defined by 226 points, covering a seabed area of 135,506 square kilometers.

³ Foreign Service Institute – Center for International Relations and Strategic Studies. <https://think-asia.org/bits:ream/handle/11540/7970/The-Philippine-Rise.pdf?sequence=1>

⁴ This can extend up to 350 nautical miles if the coastal State proves its right to claim an extended continental shelf (see UNCLOS III, Article 76, paragraphs 4(a), 5 and 6, in relation to Article 77).

To further solidify our sovereignty over the Philippine Rise, this bill seeks to rename, through legislative fiat, the Benham Rise as "Philippine Rise" or "Talampas ng Pilipinas", thus, complementing both the Executive Order No. 25, and the UN-CLCS Recommendation. Exercising the sovereign rights of the Philippine Government over the Philippine Rise is vital to protect our national interests over our national territories in the eastern seaboard, amid competing maritime claims in the West Philippine Sea, exacerbated by China's aggressive posturing in the area.

In view of the foregoing, the enactment of this bill is earnestly recommended.




WIN GATCHALIAN

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
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**AN ACT
RENAMING THE BENHAM RISE AS "PHILIPPINE RISE" OR
"TALAMPAS NG PILIPINAS," NAMING THE UNDERSEA FEATURES
THEREIN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the
Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1 SECTION. 1. *Renaming of the Benham Rise* – In the exercise of the
2 Philippine's inherent right to designate the names of its submarine areas, the
3 undersea region found on the east of Luzon, which is formerly known as
4 "Benham Rise", is hereby named as "Philippine Rise" or "*Talampas ng*
5 *Pilipinas*."

6 SEC. 2. *Features and Coordinates of the Philippine Rise*. - The twenty-
7 two (22) undersea features found in the Philippine Rise or *Talampas ng*
8 *Pilipinas* shall be as follows:

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	Name	Coordinates
1	Akle Seamount	POLYGON ((126.33848 18.47302, 126.33018 18.46093, 126.33279 18.44551, 126.34868 18.43958, 126.352 18.42345, 126.3252 18.40447, 126.31144 18.39238, 126.3131 18.38004, 126.32615 18.37672, 126.33729 18.38787, 126.36007 18.40376, 126.37928 18.37459,

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		126.40015 18.36249, 126.42885 18.35537, 126.43976 18.36913, 126.45732 18.36913, 126.47772 18.36889, 126.49147 18.37411, 126.49574 18.39475, 126.46348 18.41538,126.44759 18.43317, 126.45328 18.45215, 126.43312 18.46733, 126.4215 18.46235, 126.40181 18.47919, 126.40134 18.49959, 126.41154 18.5124, 126.40561 18.52307, 126.37952 18.51809, 126.36315 18.52568, 126.35133 18.51777, 126.34963 18.50599, 126.30978 18.51287, 126.29721 18.50149, 126.30504 18.48299, 126.31974 18.48773, 126.33848 18.47302))
2	Amugis Hill	POLYGON ((124.59511 15.87461, 124.59427 15.86748, 124.59662 15.86059, 124.60073 15.85655, 124.61239 15.86319, 124.61493 15.8667, 124.61451 15.87679, 124.61282 15.88228, 124.60828 15.88295, 124.60158 15.87956, 124.59511 15.87461))
3	Antipolo Hill	POLYGON ((124.46231 15.97932, 124.45644 15.97597, 124.44597 15.96745, 124.43983 15.96158, 124.43661 15.94957, 124.4408 15.92947, 124.45616 15.92514, 124.47069 15.92954, 124.47243 15.93491, 124.47355 15.94308, 124.46706 15.95781, 124.47083 15.96514, 124.46426 15.97143, 124.46231 15.97932))
4	Anubing Seamount	POLYGON ((124.24981 16.39809, 124.246 16.39794, 124.23956 16.39267, 124.23092 16.37041, 124.21906 16.35327, 124.21364 16.34741, 124.21686 16.34448, 124.23282 16.34653, 124.24366 16.32998, 124.26182 16.31563, 124.29185 16.31285, 124.32143 16.31739, 124.33051 16.33657, 124.33725 16.35635, 124.33095 16.36821, 124.28936 16.37744, 124.25684 16.38461, 124.24981 16.39809))
5	Bayog Saddle	POLYGON ((124.1578 16.70452, 124.11307 16.68175, 124.08358 16.60326, 124.09029 16.53393, 124.09822

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		16.50302, 124.1395 16.46195, 124.18057 16.40379, 124.19135 16.41965, 124.18464 16.50831, 124.20945 16.5 6707, 124.24239 16.62034, 124.23344 16.63702, 124.20497 16.67524, 124.17854 16.70005, 124.1578 16.70452))
6	Bicol Saddle	POLYGON ((123.50595 15.67579, 123.47556 15.52431, 123.55037 15.55002, 123.6219 15.51075, 123.65697 15.54021, 123.75235 15.54208, 123.78648 15.46166, 123.89401 15.58182, 123.81593 15.61267, 123.73177 15.61221, 123.71728 15.58789, 123.67333 15.5715306, 123.63265 15.58743, 123.59946 15.58322, 123.5513 15.61782, 123.50595 15.67579))
7	Bicol Slope	POLYGON ((122.74621 15.3576, 122.71738 14.86041, 122.95517 14.75233, 123.78331 14.7127, 124.0288 14.41727, 124.5476 13.90927, 124.57642 13.66068, 124.27379 13.4301, 124.36746 13.17791, 124.89707 13.05181, 125.24654 13.25357, 125.23213 13.65348, 125.02317 14.03537, 124.77097 14.52175, 124.48275 14.93967, 124.27379 15.12702, 123.84145 15.44046, 123.56404 15.56656, 123.09568 15.53413, 122.74621 15.3576))
8	East Luzon Trough	POLYGON ((122.50232 15.67898, 122.82273 15.48532, 123.28853 15.54916, 123.16887 15.78853, 123.00043 15.82548, 122.91165 15.94017, 123.25093 16.93462, 123.52632 17.32731, 123.69195 17.3984, 123.85118 17.7518, 123.5683 17.82659, 123.45799 17.50203, 123.11414 17.04287, 122.93655 17.01346, 122.50232 15.67898))
9	Ipil Hill	POLYGON ((125.49385 16.87911, 125.48602528398 16.8117410016766, 125.512537747291 16.7517619863167, 125.564258782275 16.743069375395, 125.599898487054

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10	Isabela Ridge	POLYGON ((123.40526 17.67204, 123.4113 17.60116, 123.41006 17.52553, 123.36441 17.4898, 123.37364 17.44946, 123.41544 17.47347, 123.45683 17.53449, 123.47109 17.61005, 123.50286 17.6815, 123.5519 17.79038, 123.53016 17.80854, 123.49935 17.80902, 123.47762 17.78737, 123.40526 17.67204))
11	Kalantas Seamount	POINT (124.39312 16.76329)
12	Malabatino Hill	POLYGON ((124.90724 16.69051, 124.89447 16.68993, 124.89005 16.67883, 124.89145 16.67192, 124.88913 16.6696, 124.88837 16.66321, 124.89383 16.66083, 124.90591 16.66135, 124.90963 16.66565, 124.9141 16.67779, 124.90724 16.69051))
13	Mangkono Seamount	POLYGON ((127.29233 16.9857, 127.28132 16.95893, 127.29319 16.92741, 127.33486 16.91273, 127.36746 16.92525, 127.3802 16.96778, 127.3992 16.99153, 127.4264 16.99801, 127.4223 17.01247, 127.39315 17.02953, 127.35904 17.02457, 127.34609 17.01183, 127.31284 17.00233, 127.29233 16.9857))
14	Molave Rise	POLYGON ((126.36253 16.08516, 126.35749 15.87181, 126.60443 15.99276, 126.5154 15.74246, 126.66323 15.53919, 126.85474 15.41488, 127.06472 15.52239, 127.27135 15.58623, 127.49477 15.62655, 127.77364 15.66182, 128.23224 15.64838, 128.17681 15.79118, 127.93826 15.87013, 128.05586 15.89701, 127.9937 16.05156, 127.69468 16.11203, 127.55525 16.23467,

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		127.1 168 16.55048, 126.83122 16.47825, 126.74555 16.33882, 126.51876 16.07172, 126.36253 16.08516))
15	Molave Gap	POLYGON ((126.33945 16.05579, 126.3529 16.01117, 126.3529 15.9861, 126.32722 15.9586, 126.30338 15.9103, 126.30094 15.87607, 126.38285 15.88157, 126.37674 15.90358, 126.38224 15.92008, 126.36207 15.9482, 126.37307 15.9751, 126.39447 15.99955, 126.40241 16.01728, 126.40669 16.03623, 126.40853 16.06374, 126.33945 16.05579))
16	Narig Seamount	POLYGON ((124.68663 16.57244, 124.69638 16.47406, 124.72402 16.44642, 124.77646 16.44276, 124.82687 16.49805, 124.84598 16.56512, 124.78012 16.64358, 124.73703 16.64276, 124.72728 16.60008, 124.68663 16.57244))
17	Narra Spur	POLYGON ((125.47458 17.54664, 126.05975 17.03722, 126.20716 17.71323, 126.55493 18.30067, 126.90694 18.40245, 127.03417 18.56361, 127.12323 18.82232, 126.96207 18.82656, 126.54645 18.68236, 126.05024 18.61026, 126.12658 18.41093, 126.05461 18.21519, 125.90091 18.02896, 125.47458 17.54664))
18	Palanan Seamount	POLYGON ((123.08189 17.38776, 123.03401 17.34207, 123.00414 17.2507, 122.98613 17.19008, 122.97251 17.14483, 123.02215 17.11804, 123.07794 17.11584, 123.14427 17.12902, 123.16052 17.18305, 123.14339 17.26959, 123.11044 17.35657, 123.08189 17.38776))
19	Palosapis Hill	POLYGON ((124.9481 16.46351, 124.94441 16.44899, 124.93985 16.44825, 124.93998 16.4448, 124.94687 16.4357, 124.95191 16.4304, 124.94945 16.42253, 124.95511 16.4117, 124.95819 16.41096, 124.96963 16.41071, 124.98034 16.41354, 124.99339 16.42671, 124.99659 16.43557, 124.99191 16.44382, 124.98994

1		16.45243, 124.98366 16.45871, 124.97431 16.46363,
2		124.96459 16.46462, 124.9481 16.46351))
3	20	Pili Ridge
4		POLYGON ((124.97196 16.12906, 124.96104 16.1295,
5		124.95143 16.11858, 124.93659 16.064, 124.98942
6		16.03692, 125.04095 15.99893, 125.08069 15.97317,
7		125.11606 15.97361, 125.11999 16.0081, 125.08462
8		16.04915, 125.06846 16.07535, 125.04051 16.095,
9		125.02567 16.11596, 125.00907 16.1129, 124.98637
10		16.12164, 124.97196 16.12906))
11	21	Toog
12		Seamount
13		POLYGON ((125.84045 17.84893, 125.75722 17.77524,
14		125.67664 17.70632, 125.67452 17.66709, 125.69149
15		17.65013, 125.76306 17.63475, 125.82773 17.58651,
16		125.89347 17.56001, 125.92899 17.55364, 126.0101
17		17.60878, 126.03024 17.66179, 126.02388 17.75244,
18		126.02123 17.80811, 125.97829 17.83408, 125.92262
19		17.85794, 125.88499 17.86271, 125.84045 17.84893))
20	22	Yakal
21		Seamount
22		POINT (126.28086 18.23918)

SEC. 3. *Designation in Official Philippine Maps.* - Pursuant to this Act, all official maps and charts of the Philippines to be produced and published by the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA) shall refer to the abovementioned undersea region as Philippine Rise or *Talampas ng Pilipinas*.

SEC. 4. *Deposit of Instrument Obligation.* - The Philippine Government, through the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in consultation with NAMRIA and other relevant government agencies, shall deposit a copy of this Act and other relevant documents, in compliance with the deposit obligations pursuant to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and notify accordingly all relevant international and intergovernmental organizations, such as the United Nations

1 Statistical Commission, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of
2 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),
3 the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), and
4 the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), among others.

5
6 SEC. 5. *Mandatory Use of the "Philippine Rise" in All Government*
7 *Documents and Communications.* - All departments, subdivisions, agencies,
8 and instrumentalities of the Government are hereby directed to use and employ
9 the name Philippine Rise or *Talampas ng Pilipinas* in all communications,
10 messages, and public documents, and to popularize the use of such name with
11 the general public, both domestically and internationally. All departments,
12 subdivisions, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Government are enjoined
13 to use the official Philippine maps produced and published by NAMRIA in
14 accordance with this Act: Provided that, the Department of Education and the
15 Commission on Higher Education shall cause the distribution of said official
16 Philippine maps to all schools, colleges, and universities, both public and
17 private, as reference material for teaching geography and other related
18 disciplines.

19
20 SEC. 6. *Mandatory Use of the "Philippine Rise" in the Communications*
21 *of All Juridical Entities Operating Within the Philippines.* - All private institutions,
22 organizations, and establishments organized under the laws of the Philippines,
23 or operating within the Philippines, are hereby directed to employ the name
24 Philippine Rise or *Talampas ng Pilipinas* and the names adopted in this Act for
25 its undersea features in all communications, announcements, and messages,
26 both domestically and internationally.

27
28 SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive
29 orders, rules and regulations or part thereof, contrary to or inconsistent with
30 the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

31
32 SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any section or provision of this Act is

1 held unconstitutional or invalid, all other sections or provisions shall remain in
2 full force and effect

3

4 SEC. 9. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
5 publication in the *Official Gazette* and/or in at least two (2) newspapers of
6 general publication.

Approved,