

Panacot Is Scarborough Shoal

China Declared a Nature Reserve at Scarborough Shoal on September 10, 2025

DFA files ‘unequivocal’ protest vs China’s nature reserve in West PH Sea

“China’s State Council approved the establishment of the so-called **“Huangyan Island National Nature Reserve”** at Bajo de Masinloc.

The DFA xxxx asserted that Bajo de Masinloc is **“a longstanding and integral part of the Philippines over which it has sovereignty and jurisdiction.”** (*Inquirer.net*, September 13, 2025)

Panacot Is Scarborough Shoal



Panacot, Bajo de Masinloc and *Scarborough Shoal* refer to the same geologic feature off the coast of Luzon in the West Philippine Sea.

The Claim that *Panacot* Is Not Scarborough Shoal

A shoal named *Panacot* appears in the 1734 Pedro Murillo Velarde map.

A small group of Filipinos who assert that Scarborough Shoal belongs to China deny that the *Panacot* in the 1734 Murillo Velarde map is Scarborough Shoal. Rigoberto Tiglao, a *Manila Times* columnist, wrote in his November 3, 2025 column:

“Carpio’s hoax is based on the fabrication that the Panacot Shoal in the Murillo Velarde map is the same marine formation as Scarborough Shoal, by another name (image 1).

It is not. Panacot is a shoal that, at 39 nautical miles, is so near to the Zambales mainland that fishermen during the Spanish period routinely passed through it and had given it a name. Scarborough Shoal is 116 nautical miles, approaching the high seas (image 2). ”

Maps from the mid 1700s to the early 1900s graphically debunk this alleged hoax, which is part of China’s *Three Warfares Strategy* to seize the

1734 *Carta Hydrographica y Chorographica de las Yslas Filipinas*



The 1734 Murillo Velarde Map of the Philippines is the **first official Spanish Government map showing Philippine territory during the Spanish regime**. The map was printed in Manila under the authorship of Fr. Pedro Murillo Velarde, a Spanish Jesuit priest. The artist who drew the map was a Filipino, Francisco Suarez. The engraver of the map was another Filipino, Nicolas dela Cruz Bagay. The names of both Suarez and Bagay appear in the map. The map, 44 x 47.24 inches in size, is the “**Mother of All Philippine Maps**.”

Cartouche on Upper Right Side



On the upper right side of the map is a cartouche with the Spanish royal coat of arms. This means that the map is an **official map of the Philippines during the Spanish regime**. The map was made upon the instruction of King Philip V of Spain in 1733 to Governor-General Fernando Valdes Tamon, who commissioned the Jesuit priest Pedro Murillo Velarde to make the map.

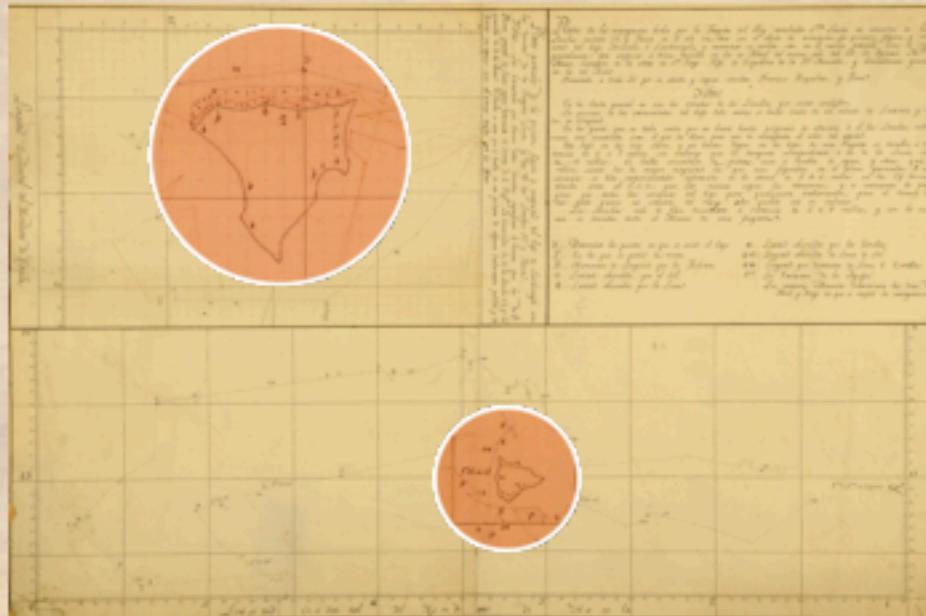
Malaspina Sailed to *Panacot* in 1792

Alessandro Malaspina visited *Panacot* on May 4, 1792 aboard the *Sta. Lucia*. Forty-four years earlier, the British merchant ship *Scarborough* ran aground on the rocks of *Panacot* on September 12, 1748 and European cartographers renamed the shoal *Scarborough*. In his Journal on May 4, 1792, Malaspina wrote: **“On (this shoal) Spanish and foreign ships have been lost.”**

An officer named **Josef Espinosa**, Malaspina’s chart maker, was on board the *Sta. Lucia* when Malaspina visited *Panacot*.

Espinosa later headed the *Direccion Hidrografia*, the charting agency of Spain. Under Espinosa’s leadership, the *Direccion Hidrografia* issued the **1808 *Carta General del Archipielago de Filipinas***, the second official map of Philippine territory, which

1800 *Plano de la Navigacion: "Bajo Masinloc o Scarborough"*



This map is a reproduction from the archives of the Museo Naval de Madrid, copied by the Philippine Embassy in Madrid. This map is the first ever hydrographic survey of the shoal that is named in the map as “*Bajo Masinloc o Scarborough*.” The hydrographic survey was undertaken by Captain Francisco Riquelme who headed the 1800 Spanish expedition to survey “*Bajo Masinloc o Scarborough*.”

1808 *Carta General del Archipielago de Filipinas*



This 1808 map of Luzon is the upper half of the 1808 *Carta General del Archipielago de Filipinas* published by the *Direccion Hidrografia*, the charting office of the Spanish Government. This upper map of the Philippines and the full map are both official maps of Philippine territory during the Spanish regime. The head of the *Direccion Hidrografia* when this map was published was Josef Espinosa who served in the **Malaspina Expedition**.

1808 *Carta General del Archipielago de Filipinas*

This is the full map of the Philippine Archipelago published by the *Direccion Hidrografia*, the charting and mapping office of the Spanish Government from 1787-1927.

Bajo Masinloc o Scarborough Shoal is the only geologic feature in this map with depth soundings. This makes this map very unique.



1875 *Carta General del Archipielago Filipino*

This map of the Philippine Archipelago was first published in 1875 by the *Direccion Hidrografia*, and reissued in 1888 with minor corrections. **This map shows “B. Masingloc o Scarborough.”** A large part of the Spratlys, including Thitu (Pagasa) island which is about 260 NM from Palawan. This is the last official map of the Philippines published during the Spanish regime.

This is the definitive map depicting all the islands of the Philippine Archipelago.



[https://bibliotecavirtual.defensa.gob.es/BVMDefensa
/es/consulta/registro.do?id=16321](https://bibliotecavirtual.defensa.gob.es/BVMDefensa/es/consulta/registro.do?id=16321)

US Government Adopted and Reissued the 1875 *Carta General del Archipiélago Filipino*



Source: *Geographicus Rare Antique maps*

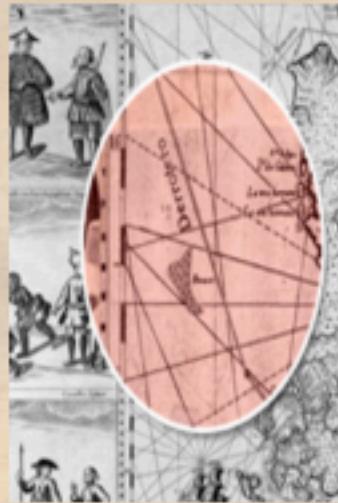
US Government Adopted and Reissued the 1875 *Carta General del Archipiélago Filipino*

The US War Department added the following to the 1875 Carta General del Archipiélago Filipino:

- Military Telegraph Lines
- Military Cable Lines
- Eastern Cable Company's Lines
- Military Department Boundaries.

The US War Department reissued the 1875 Carta General del Archipiélago Filipino **in four (4) editions from 1899 to 1902.**

Scarborough Shoal in Four Maps



1734 Murillo Velarde Map



1800 Plano de la
Navegacion: Bajo
Masinloc o
Scarborough



1808 Carta General del
Archipielago Filipinas



1875/1902 Carta
General del
Archipielago Filipino

China has no map of Scarborough Shoal that predates any of these four maps of the Philippines

Panacot Is Bajo de Masinloc



**1752 *Carte Reduite des Isles Philippines*
by Jacques Nicolas Bellin**

Panacot Is Bajo de Masinloc



1790 *Mapa de las Islas Filipinas* by Pedro de Gongora, Duque de Almodovar

Panacot Is Bajo de Masinloc



1799 *Indie Orientali Di Qua E Di La Dal Gange Col Loro Arcipelago* by Antonio Zatta

**Panacot Is
Bajo de Masinloc**

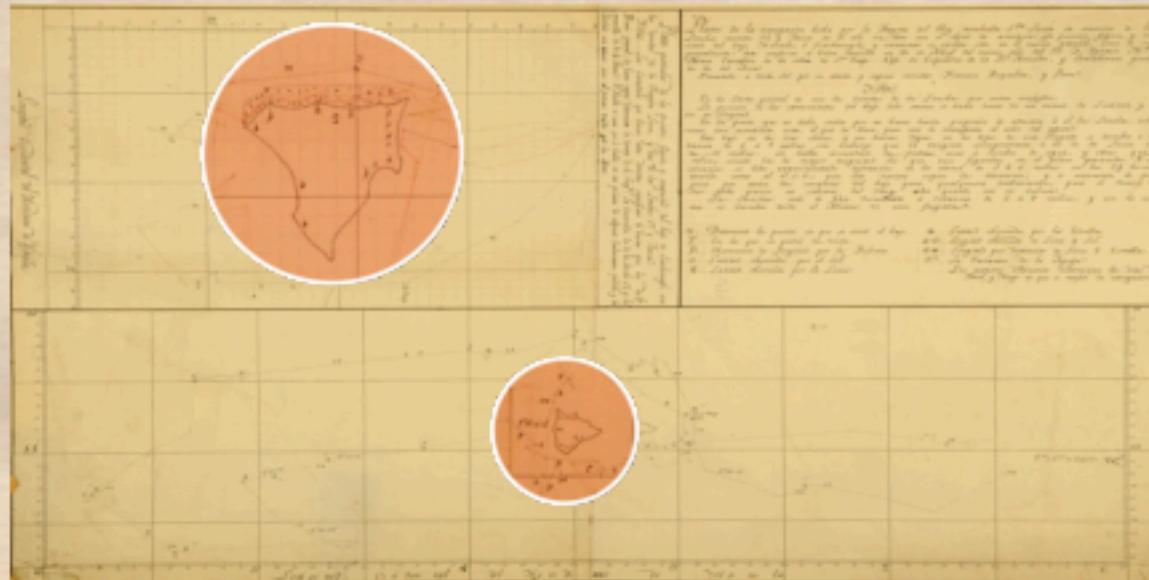
Letter of Thomas J. Maher, Director of Coast Surveys to Wayne Coy, Office of the U.S. High Commissioner in Manila, December 10, 1937
(Reference: BIA 907.127 NARA)

“Copies of charts on file in this office, the originals apparently dating back to 1727 indicate that there is a strong possibility of Scarborough Shoal or Reef having been known prior to the grounding on it of the Scarborough, as they show a shoal in the same latitude as Scarborough but differing in longitude, in the direction in which navigation in those days was most weak.

These old charts show several shoals off the west coast of Luzon. One is listed as Bco de Masingolo O' Panacot. Other charts show a similar shoal with the name somewhat modified. All are in practically the same latitude as Scarborough Reef or Shoal, but situated closer to Luzon, yet Scarborough Reef or Shoal, is today the closest known reef or shoal to Luzon in that latitude.”*

* Annex 2, **Transcriptions of some records**, concerning Scarborough Shoal, in the Bureau of Insular Affairs papers (BIA) in the U.S. National Archives Records Administration (NARA), *Geopolitics of Scarborough Shoal*, Francois Xavier Bonnet, IRASEC, November 2012.

Bajo de Masinloc Is Scarborough Shoal



This 1800 *Plano de Navigacion* made by Captain Francisco Riquelme refers to “*Bajo de Masinloc o Scarborough*” as stated in the map. This map is the definitive identification of Bajo Masinloc as Scarborough Shoal and the first hydrographic survey of this shoal.

The 1800 *Plano de Navigacion* Referred Expressly to “Bajo Masinloc o Scarborough”

Plano de la navegacion hecha por la Fragata del Rey nombrada S^{ta} Lucia en companya de las Lanchas numero 57, y 7ama en el año 1800 con el objeto de averiguar la posicion, figura, y magnitud del bafio Macinloc, ó Scarborough, y examinar si existia otro en el mismo paralelo, como se crua generalmente: todo conforme á Orden recibida en 20 de Abril del mismo año del Sr. D. Ignacio M.^r de Alava Caballero de la orden de S^{ta} Tiago: Xefe de Esquadra de la R^{ia} Armada, y Comandante general de la del Asia.

Presentado a dicho Sr. por su atento, y seguro servidor, Francisco Regulme, y Ponce.

Notas

The 1800 *Plano de Navigacion* Referred
Expressly to “*Bajo Masinloc o Scarborough*”

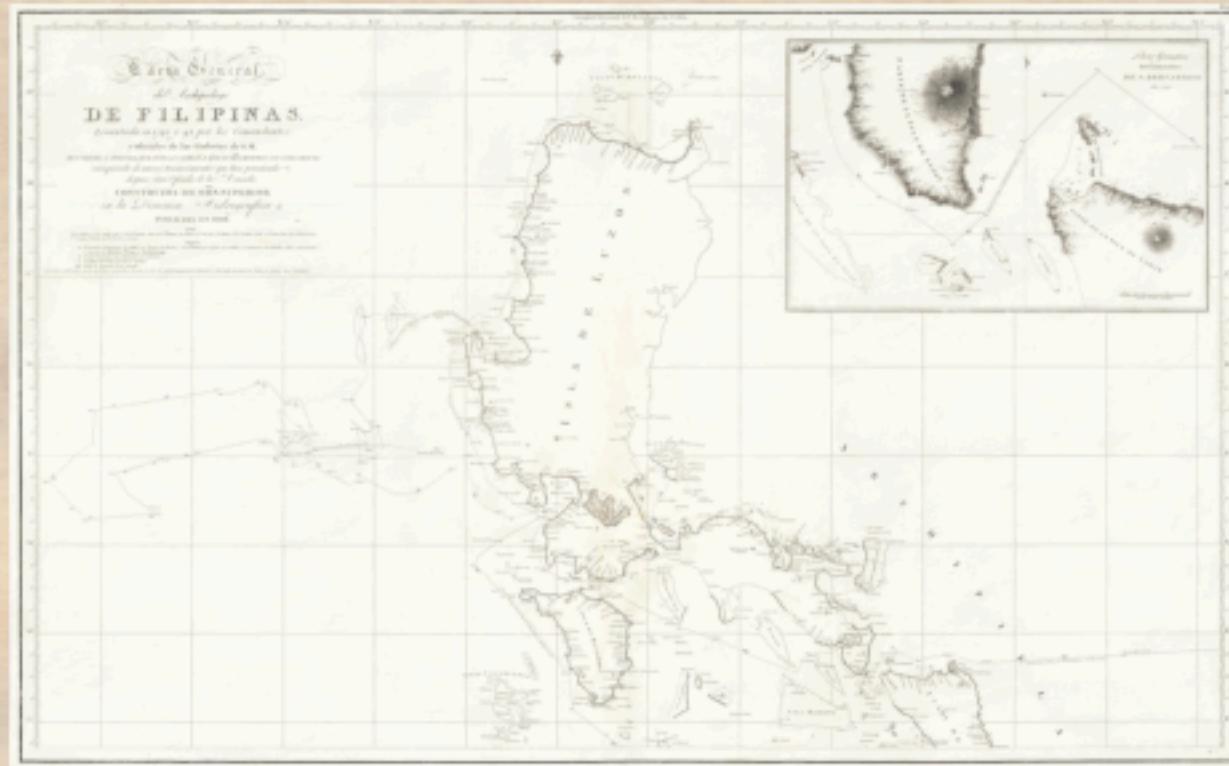
“Plan of the
navigation

Panacot, Galit and Lumbay



When Captain Riquelme surveyed *Bajo Masinloc* in 1800, he found out that the other two features in the 1734 Murillo Velarde map - *Galit* and *Lumbay* - did not exist. Only *Panacot* existed and thus *Galit* and *Lumbay* started to disappear from new maps after the survey of Captain Riquelme.

1808 *Carta General del Archipiélago de Filipinas*

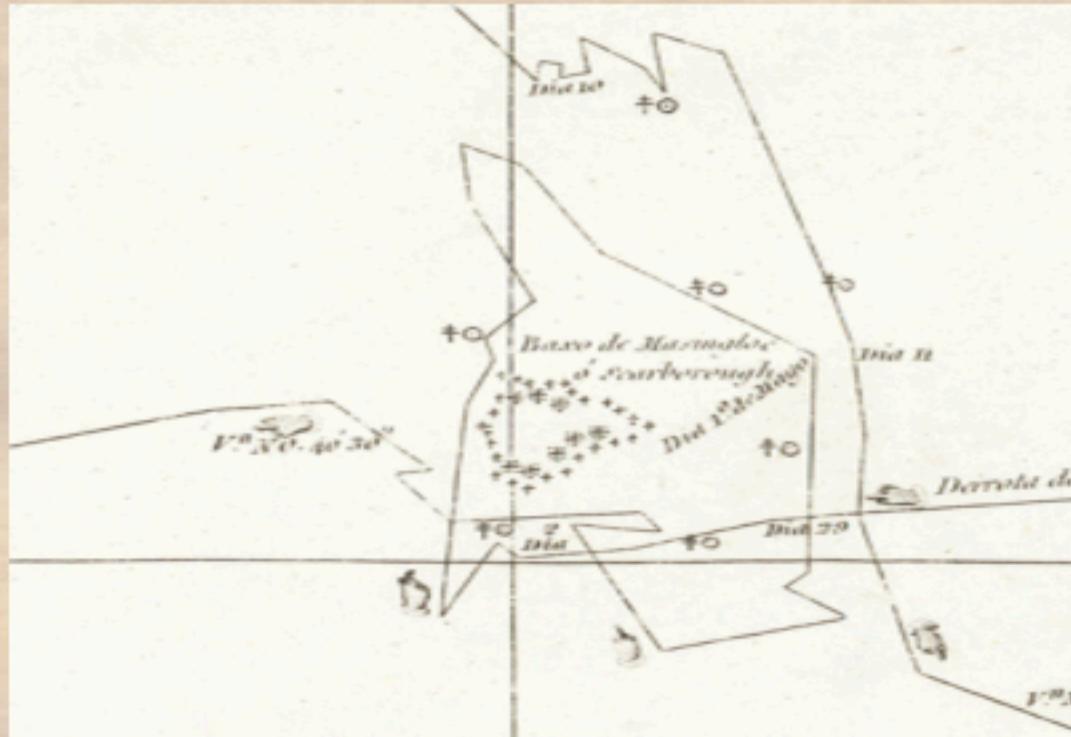


1808 *Carta General* : “*Bajo de Masinloc o Scarborough*”



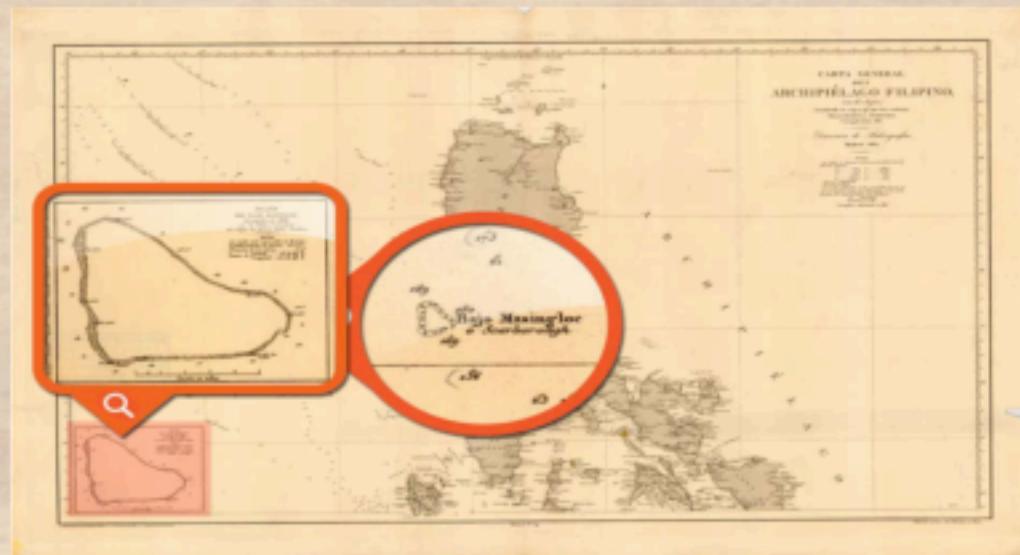
This is the hydrographic survey that Captain Riquelme made of “*Bajo de Masinloc o Scarborough*” in 1800. This survey was inserted in the 1808 *Carta General del Archipielago de Filipinas* as the only geologic feature in the entire Philippine archipelago with a hydrographic survey.

Bajo de Masinloc Is Scarborough Shoal



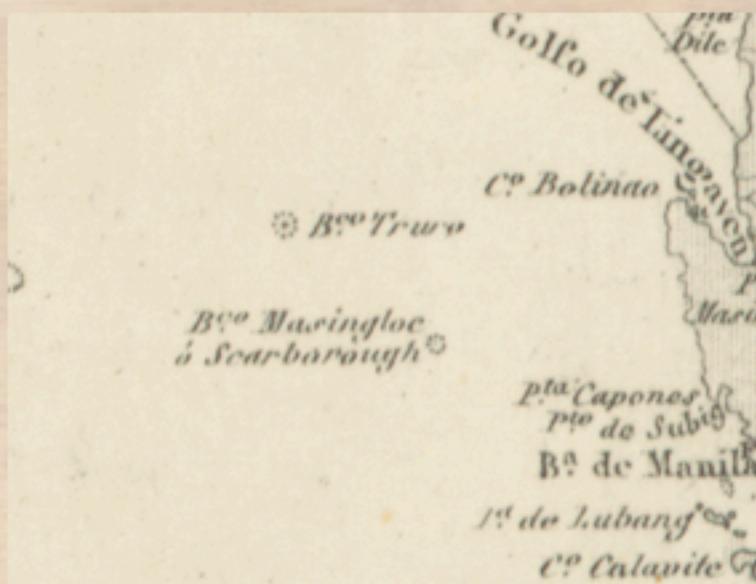
1808 Carta General del Archipiélago de Filipinas

Bajo de Masinloc Is Scarborough Shoal



Published in 1867 in Madrid by the *Direccion de Hidrografia*, this map is entitled “*Carta General del Archipielago Filipino*.” This map shows “Bajo Masingloc o Scarborough.” There is an inset of Scarborough Shoal (1866 map of Commander Edwards Wilds of HMS Swallow) on the lower left side of the map. This reproduction is from the archives of the Museo Naval de Madrid, copied by the Philippine Embassy in Madrid.

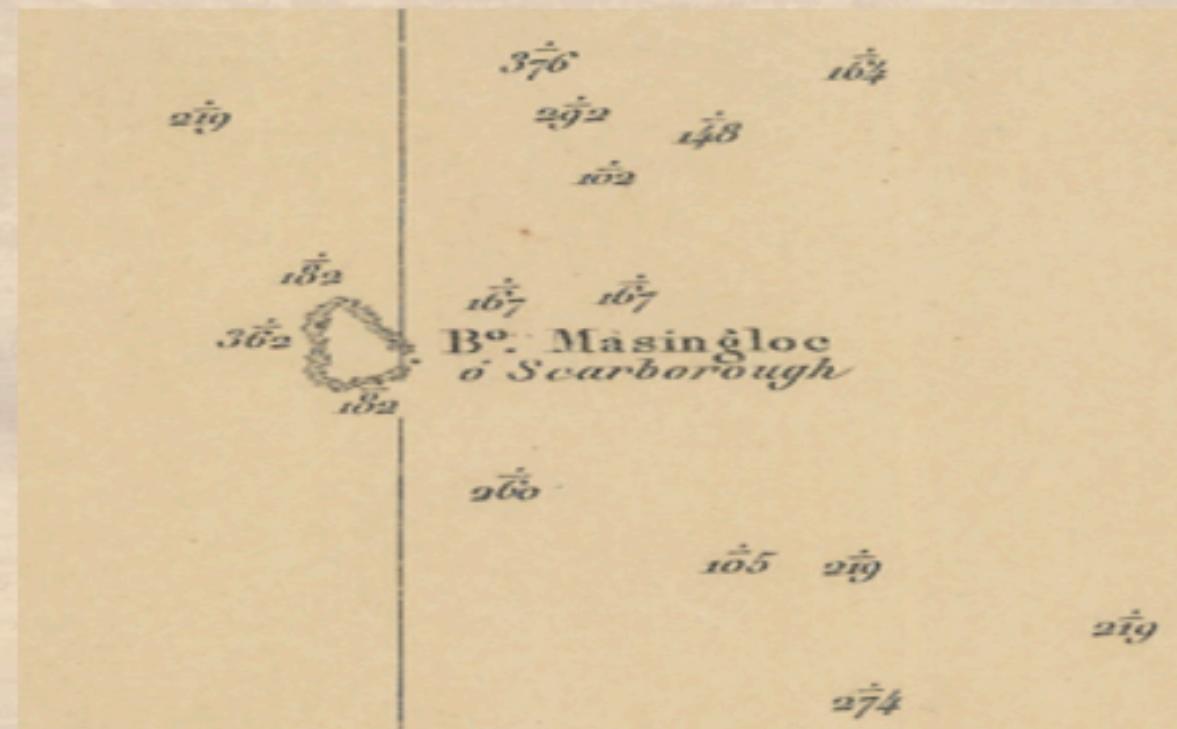
1873 *Carta General del Oceano Pacifico*
Published by *Seccion de Hidrografia*



“B. Masingloc o Scarborough”



Bajo de Masinloc Is Scarborough Shoal



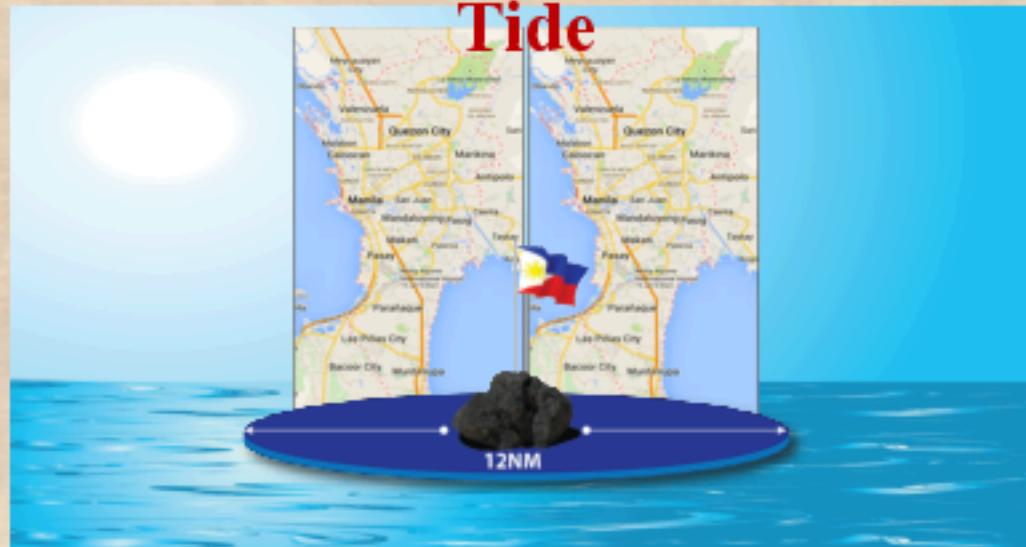
*1875/1902 Carta General del
Archipiélago Filipino*

One and the Same Shoal

Panacot is *Bajo de Masinloc*, and *Bajo de Masinloc* is *Scarborough Shoal*. Therefore, *Panacot* is *Scarborough Shoal*.

The other names of *Panacot* are *Maroona Shoal* and *Panatag*. All these names refer to the same shoal.

Importance of Rocks Above Water at High Tide



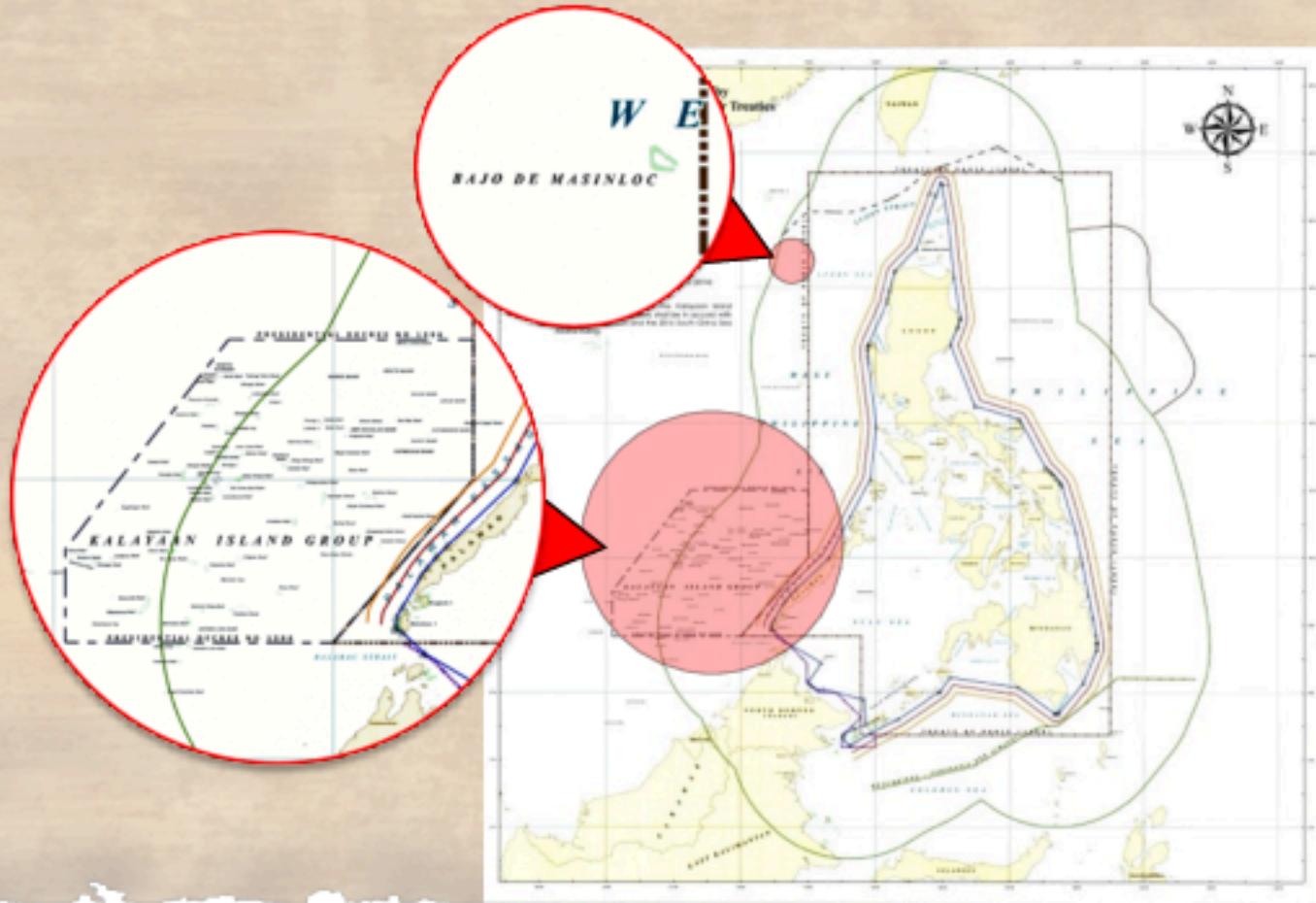
A rock, above water at high tide even by a few inches, is entitled to a 12 NM territorial sea around it (Article 121, UNCLOS). This amounts to 155,165 hectares of maritime space, more than twice the land area of Metro Manila of 63,600 hectares, and more than twice the land area of Singapore of 70,000 hectares. All the fish, oil, gas and mineral resources within this huge area belong to the state that has sovereignty over the rock.

1898 Treaty of Paris

“Article III.

Spain cedes to the United States the archipelago known as the **Philippine Islands**, and *comprehending the islands lying within the following line*: xxxx [Geographical coordinates] The United States will pay to Spain the sum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) within three months after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty.”

Bajo Masinloc and KIG



1900 Treaty of Washington between the US and Spain

The Treaty of Washington between the US and Spain, executed on November 7, 1900, provides:

“Spain relinquishes to the United States all title and claim of title, which she may have had at the time of the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace of Paris, **to any and all islands belonging to the Philippine Archipelago, lying outside the lines described in Article III of that Treaty** and particularly to the islands of Cagayan [Mapun], Sulu and Sibutu and their dependencies, **and agrees that all such islands shall be comprehended in the cession of the Archipelago as fully as if they had been expressly included within those lines.**”

Thus, the 1900 Treaty of Washington’s transfer of title of the islands belonging to the Philippine archipelago **lying outside the lines** of the Treaty of Paris **retroacted to the effectivity of the 1898 Treaty of Paris.**

1875 *Carta General del Archipiélago Filipino*



This is the most complete and detailed map of Philippine territory during the Spanish regime. The US adopted and reissued this map four times.

Thus, two colonial powers that ruled the Philippines successively for over 381 years agreed that this map depicts the entirety of Philippine territory during their rule.

The End