



# SMARTER, CLEANER, and STRONGER: THE 1000-PISO POLYMER BANKNOTE

## Learn about the 1000-Piso polymer banknote



Portrait of the Philippine Eagle by Mr. Floyd P. Bermejo

### 1. Why is the BSP introducing the polymer banknote?

In line with global best practices, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) continuously improves the country's banknotes with new designs and materials every 10 years, in response to the evolving needs of Filipinos and the availability of modern technologies.

Recent public concerns are making the transition to polymer banknotes more urgent:

- **First**, since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, sanitizing frequently touched objects, including banknotes and coins, has become a widespread need.
- **Second**, while the Philippines does not have a major counterfeiting problem, crime syndicates keep improving their techniques in counterfeiting the New Generation Currency (NGC) banknotes that are currently in circulation.
- **Third**, given the increasing scarcity of water, energy, and other inputs, our banknotes should be made to last longer and be fully recyclable, considering both environmental sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

These concerns can be addressed by using polymer substrate in our banknotes, which is known worldwide to be more durable, cost-effective, hygienic, difficult to counterfeit, and sustainable.

### 2. Why are polymer banknotes smarter?

The use of advanced technology and optimal resources makes polymer banknotes smarter than paper banknotes.

First, polymer banknotes have more security features, making them **harder to counterfeit** than paper banknotes. Detailed images and sophisticated security features are embedded with the use of advanced technology designed to decrease the likelihood of counterfeiting.

Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Mexico, Fiji, and Vietnam have experienced a great reduction in counterfeiting cases after shifting to polymer banknotes. For instance, in Canada, after 8 years of using polymer notes, detected counterfeits were reduced from a high of 470 down to 15 counterfeits for every million banknotes in circulation.

Second, polymer banknotes have a **smaller carbon footprint**, lower water and energy usage, and less environmental toxicity. The longer lifespan of polymer banknotes reduces the environmental impact associated with the regular production of banknotes to replace those that become unfit from wear and tear.

When deemed unfit, a polymer banknote can be recycled to produce various products, such as building components, plant pots, and garden furniture.

### 3. What makes polymer banknotes cleaner?

Polymer banknotes tend to be **significantly cleaner** than paper banknotes due to their smoother and non-absorptive surfaces, which are more resistant to water, oil, and dirt. Other countries, such as the United Kingdom, also report that polymer banknotes can be washed and sanitized with less risk of damage unlike paper banknotes.

Scientific studies reviewed by the Department of Health (DOH) found that

viruses and bacteria survive for shorter periods on polymer compared to paper banknotes.

DOH also found a **shorter survival period of the SARS-CoV-2 virus on polymer compared to paper banknotes**.<sup>1</sup> SARS-CoV-2 survived for seven days at 30 degrees Celsius on polymer banknotes, while it survived three times longer on paper banknotes at 21 days. Also, the average amount of bacteria encountered on polymer banknotes was approximately 25 percent of that found on cotton-based paper banknotes.

### 4. Why are polymer banknotes stronger?

Polymer banknotes are more durable and therefore more cost-effective than paper banknotes. They have been found to last at least **2 to 5 times longer than paper banknotes**, which offsets the high production cost. Canada has polymer banknotes that last 2.5 times the life of paper banknotes. Usability is even longer in New Zealand, which reported a useable life of 4.8 times that of paper banknotes.

Polymer banknotes are also water- and dirt-resistant.

### 5. What makes polymer banknotes more cost-effective than paper banknotes?

Given that paper banknotes in the Philippines last about **1.5 years, on average**, the BSP would only need to print polymer banknotes in amounts equal to a third or up to half the number of paper banknotes. This will lead to **significant savings in printing costs**. The savings will more than offset the difference in production cost.

<sup>1</sup> Riddell, S.; Goldie S.; Hill, A.; Eagles, D.; & Drew, T.W. (2020). The Effect of Temperature on Persistence of SARS-CoV-2 on Common Surfaces. *Virology Journal*.

Scan the QR code or visit [bit.ly/PolymerPH](https://bit.ly/PolymerPH) to learn more.

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## 6. Why was the 1000-Piso chosen to be the first polymer banknote instead of lower denominations (e.g., 50-Piso to 100-Piso)?

The 1000-Piso is the **most circulated currency** in the country, accounting for 33.2 percent of the total volume of all banknotes in circulation (20-, 50-, 100-, 200-, 500-, and 1000-Piso denominations) as of end-December 2021 (78 percent in value).

It is also the **most counterfeited denomination**, accounting for 48.6 percent of the volume of counterfeited banknotes in the country in 2021.

These two reasons make the 1000-Piso suitable for the initial circulation to test the durability and security features of polymer banknotes.

## 7. When will the BSP issue the new 1000-Piso polymer banknote? What is the timeline for the initial circulation?

The BSP will release for public circulation 500 million pieces of 1000-Piso polymer banknotes, in phases, starting April 2022 up to June 2023. This represents 31.9 percent of the estimated total volume of 1000-Piso banknotes in circulation.

The first bulk delivery of **10 million pieces** of polymer banknotes was made available to banks in April 2022. This is equivalent to 0.7 percent of the estimated total volume of 1000-Piso banknotes in circulation. The delivery of the **remaining 490 million pieces** of polymer banknotes will be from October 2022 to June 2023.

The issuance of polymer notes shall be complemented with targeted technical training for banks, machine suppliers, and cash-in-transit (CIT) service providers, as well as public information campaigns on the design, security features, and proper handling of these newly issued notes.

## 8. Will the banknotes be available via ATMs or will these be available through OTC transactions?

The 1000-Piso polymer banknote will initially be available through over-the-counter bank transactions. Banks are already working on making polymer banknotes available through their ATMs.

## 9. Can we use the new 1000-Piso polymer banknote for payment transactions?

Yes. The 1000-Piso polymer banknote is **legal tender**. One should not hoard or buy it

at a higher price. **They can be used for daily payments and transactions.**

## 10. Will the 1000-Piso paper banknote be demonetized?

No. There will be no demonetization of any currency under the leadership of BSP Governor Benjamin E. Diokno and the current Monetary Board.

The new 1000-Piso polymer banknote will be circulated alongside the existing New Generation Currency (NGC) paper banknote series featuring the three heroes: Jose Abad Santos, Vicente Lim, and Josefa Llanes Escoda.

This means that both the polymer and paper banknotes will be continuously printed over the next few years, and both can be used for payments and transactions.

## 11. What are the design elements of the 1000-Piso polymer banknote?

The design of the 1000-Piso polymer banknote is consistent with the principles of currency integrity, social relevance, efficiency, unified theme, aesthetics, and enhanced security features.

The **obverse side** features two of the country's national symbols—the Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*), as its focal point, and the Sampaguita (*Jasminum sambac*). The Philippine Eagle exemplifies the Filipino's uniqueness, strength, power, and love for freedom,<sup>2</sup> as well as a sharp vision for the country's future. Meanwhile, the Sampaguita symbolizes purity, simplicity, humility, and strength.<sup>3</sup>

The **reverse side** of the new 1000-Piso polymer banknote features images of the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, T'nalak weave design, and the South Sea Pearl.

## 12. Why feature the Philippine Eagle?

The Philippine Eagle is one of the world's most powerful birds of prey and is native to the Philippines. As such, it is a source of national pride and identity.

We find the Philippine Eagle apt for the 1000-Piso polymer banknote—the highest denomination—because **it depicts strength and love for freedom of Filipinos**, as well as independence and a clear vision of the BSP to help achieve **a better and more inclusive economy**.

Moreover, the Philippine Eagle is also one of our endangered species. As such, highlighting the importance of its

preservation, such as by featuring it in our banknote, is very apt and timely.

**This is not the first time we are featuring the Philippine Eagle in our currency.** It was featured in the 50-centavo coin that was in circulation for decades. It was also featured in the 500-Piso commemorative coin issued in 2018 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the BSP.

BSP's selection of currency design themes is cyclical, and we feature our sources of national pride at various times and using different denominations. For example, *Lapulapu* was featured on the 1-centavo coin decades ago, and now he is on the 5000-Piso commemorative banknote. At present, the 1-centavo coin carries the flora and fauna theme.

## 13. Why choose flora and fauna? Why not keep the same design for the 1000-Piso polymer banknote?

Over several decades, the BSP has consistently featured both our national heroes and our country's natural environment in our currency.

The BSP has printed and minted more than 70 circulated and commemorative coins, banknotes, and medals featuring national heroes.

The BSP believes that both national heroes and flora and fauna are deeply important to the Filipinos' cultural and heritage promotion and preservation—and both are worthy of being celebrated through our coins and banknotes.

Selecting both these themes enables us to enrich our country's numismatic artistry and dynamism.

As with the heroes theme, the flora and fauna theme demonstrates our pride and distinction as Filipinos. The change is intended to remind Filipinos of our nation's commitment and actions to ensure a sustainable future for everyone, including the current and future generations of Filipinos. This is very important given the pressing challenges of climate change and other environmental risks.

Alongside financial sector regulators and relevant government agencies, the BSP contributes to promoting the sustainability agenda by mainstreaming and accelerating green and sustainable investments, including those that address climate change and encourage a resilient and low-carbon economy.

<sup>2</sup> Proclamation No. 615, Series of 1995 (<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1995/07/04/proclamation-no-615-s-1995/?msclid=78aa027da8c211eca7c2d8689e07f1b1>)

<sup>3</sup> National Commission for Culture and the Arts (<https://ncca.gov.ph/about-culture-and-arts/culture-profile/philippine-fast-facts/national-flower-sampaguita/?msclid=c6db2e6aaa8611ec9b19eac3706d4c71>)