

U.S. sets world's largest marine protection area

Parts of three Pacific island chains, comprising 500,000 sq km of sea and sea floor, are being designated by President George W. Bush as national monuments to protect them from oil and gas extraction and commercial fishing in what will be the largest marine conservation effort in history

NEW NATIONAL MONUMENTS

1 Marianas Marine N.M.

String of undersea volcanoes and vents of **Mariana Trench**, which at 11,000 metres is world's deepest underwater canyon

Coral reefs around three northernmost islands of Marianas

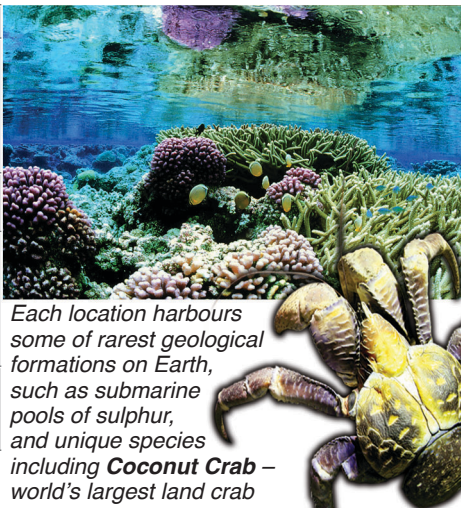
2 Pacific Remote Islands N.M.

Coral reefs surrounding Kingman Reef, Palmyra Atoll, Howland, Baker and Jarvis islands, Johnston Atoll and Wake Island

3 Rose Atoll Marine N.M.

Highest proportion of live coral cover anywhere on planet

Protection to extend 50 nautical miles off coral reefs and atolls



Each location harbours some of rarest geological formations on Earth, such as submarine pools of sulphur, and unique species including **Coconut Crab** – world's largest land crab

