

KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

April 2021 SUMMARY
IPPF-PPC, Palawan



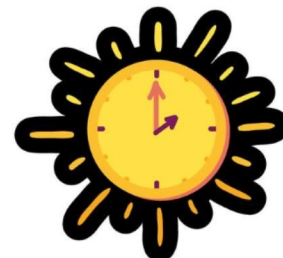
8

Bilang ng nagawang
patrolya



170.6

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot ng
patrolya



98.3

Kabuuang oras ng patrolya



2

Bilang ng illegal na
aktibidades



0

Bilang ng naaresto



765

Bilang ng halaman sa nursery



33

Pinakamataas na bilang sa
tulugan ng Katala



5

Pinakamataas na
grupo ng Talusi na nakita



10

Bilang ng mga inakay ng
Katala



09675176935



048-434-7693



kficacatua2016@gmail.com



KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY IWAHIG PRISON AND PENAL FARM (IPPF)

APRIL 2021

Prepared by:

Matt Brian P. Ong, Vicente Abendan Jr., Peter Widmann and Indira D.L. Widmann

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSERVATION AREA, CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES, CONSERVATION TARGETS AND METHODS

IPPF is part of a larger landscape, the Sulu Sea plain, which comprises the lowlands of central Palawan facing the Sulu Sea and including areas of Puerto Princesa City, and the municipalities of Narra and Aborlan. The area is bordered by the Victoria-Anepahan Range to the west and the Sulu Sea to the east; the northern edge runs roughly along 9° 47' N, the southern along 9° 9' N.

Philippine Cockatoos have long been known to persist in the IPPF south of Puerto Princesa City. More recent are flocks of cockatoos from Rasa feeding on the mainland of Narra, and from Iwahig Penal Colony feeding in coastal areas of

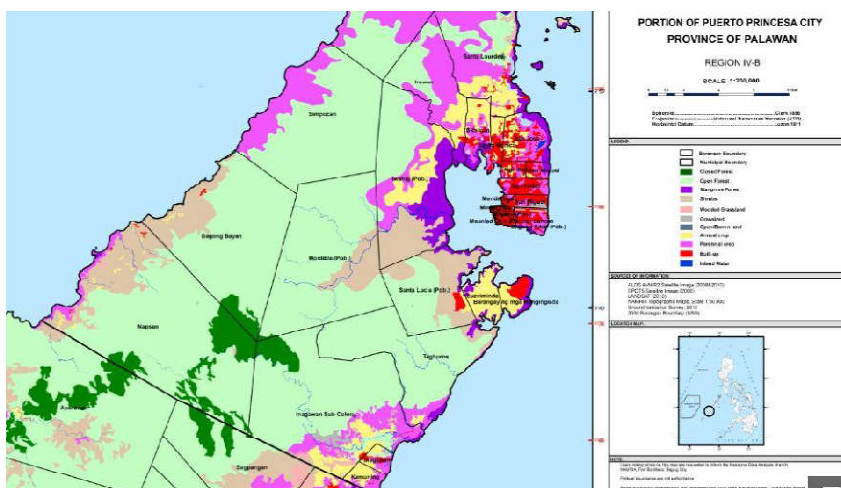


Figure 1. Land use of southern Puerto Princesa, including IPPF according to NAMRIA. Large areas were classified as open forest (bright green signature); this is not in line with observations on site, where large areas of closed forests were recorded particularly in portions of Iwahig, Tagburus (“Zigzag”) and Montible (Source: NAMRIA)

Puerto Princesa City, particularly in the compound of the Western Command (WESCOM) and Bgy. Banca-Bancao. Large parts of the coastal plains are cultivated, mainly with coconuts and rice paddies, particularly in Narra and Iwahig, where irrigation is available. Extensive areas of disturbed grassland-forest mosaics persist, which are habitats for a surprisingly high number of Palawan endemics. One explanation for this phenomenon could be that the present vegetation resembles that of some periods in the Pleistocene. These areas are used as pastures, but also for the collection of a wide variety of forest products. Grass fires are a regular occurrence and partly the vegetation is adapted to these occurrences (*Antidesma* fire savanna). Extensive evergreen and semi-evergreen lowland forests exist at the foot of the Victoria Anepahan Range, on fossil limestone reefs in Narra and Aborlan, south of the Bay of Puerto and in the Iwahig Penal Colony. Particularly the latter area is of outstanding

conservation importance. All endemic lowland bird species are recorded from the area. Globally threatened species, aside from the cockatoo, include Palawan Peacock-pheasant *Polyplectron napoleonis*, Blue-headed Racquet-tail *Prioniturus platenae*, Palawan Hornbill *Anthracoseros marcheii*, Red-headed Flameback *Chrysocolaptes erythrocephalus*, Great Slaty Woodpecker *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*, Falcated Wren-babbler *Ptilocichla falcata*, and Palawan Flycatcher *Ficedula platenae*. Because of the abundance of brackish and freshwater wetlands Iwahig Penal Colony is an important wintering ground for waterbirds, including the endangered Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*.

Conservation Objectives

1. Maintain the species diversity and function of ecosystems and species within Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF).
2. Identify and preserve priority sites for conservation and maintain their ecological functions.
3. Prevent or report to enforcing agencies illegal activities that compromise the integrity of the conservation area.

Conservation Targets

1. To increase Philippine Cockatoo population within Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF) by at least 3% from 2018 to 2021.
2. Increase viable population of endangered and endemic target cavity-nesters e.g. Palawan Hornbill, Blue-naped Parrot, Blue-headed Racquet-Tail etc. in Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm from 2018-2021.
3. Reduce threats in the area by 50% from 2018 to 2021.
4. Establish critical habitat for Philippine Cockatoo and other threatened wildlife species within Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm.

Methods

Deputised wardens patrol by foot or by boat monthly within site. Patrol members use a technology-based system to register all observations (threats, status and wildlife data) in the android and transferred to a smart application to generate report (Critchlow et al., 2017; Teacher et al., 2013). Species to be monitored are based on their red-list status and their value as bioindicators (IUCN, 2019). Ease of identification in the field was considered as well. The maps are generated and analyzed through QGIS.

Patrols are coordinated with the concerned barangay, prison farms, protected area office wherever it applies.

II. PATROL TEAM AND EFFORT

The patrol team composed of KFI, DENR, PCSO, IPPF, representatives from the Tagbanua community of Culanduan, Aborlan and wildlife wardens conducted habitat monitoring of wildlife and biodiversity and continued monitoring within foraging areas in the city and surroundings of the penal farm. A total of **170.6km** were covered for the month of April. Please refer to list of team members in the last page.

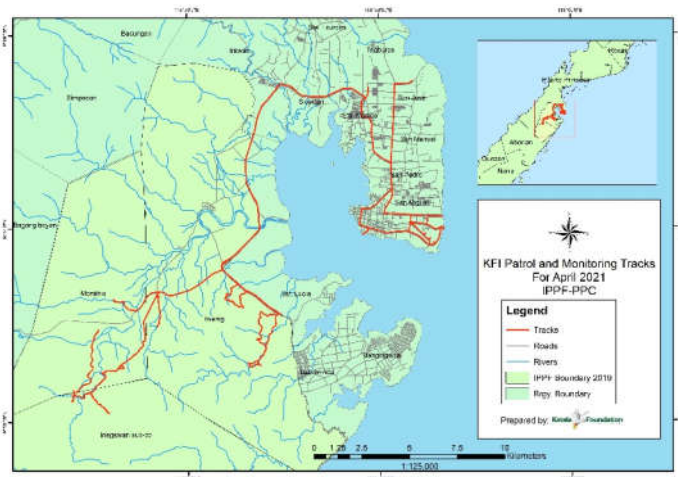


Figure 2. Patrol tracks for April 2021©KFI

III. PATROL OBSERVATIONS

A. WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

- Intensive monitoring on foraging and roosting area continued.* For this month the highest number of cockatoos recorded roosting in the city area and in Montible were 10 and 33 respectively. For the past few months we observed a drop in the numbers of cockatoos that roost in the city area mainly because few were roosting in their natural breeding habitat and many moved to their traditional roost site in Montible. Nevertheless, we will monitoring roost sites.



Figure 3. Few cockatoos were observed in the city area (left) Patrol team during the nest and habitat monitoring (right). ©KFI

- Philippine cockatoos were observed back in their natural breeding habitat.* A total of 10 active nest trees from last year and four new nest trees were visited this month. Some indication like feathers, feces, cut twigs were present in nest cavities and at the base of the nest trees. Out of the **16 eggs** that were recorded **10** hatched successfully. Meanwhile four eggs were dropped due to nest competition between Philippine Cockatoo, Dollarbird and Hill Myna while the other two haven't hatched yet. We have also recorded four eggs of Palawan hornbill in Sta. Lucia. Other cavity nesters that were recorded are Blue-naped parrot, Dollarbird, Hill myna, Great Slaty woodpecker and Fruit bats.



Figure 4. Three eggs of Palawan hornbill (left) and one of the four eggs that were dropped due to nest competition (right). ©KFI

- Wildlife and other cavity nesters monitoring.* Some notable species that were observed during the monitoring period were: Speckle-bellied Keelback Snake, Reticulated Python, Indonesian Keeled-bellied Whip Snake, Palawan Hornbill, Blue-naped Parrot, Blue-headed Racket-tail, Palawan Flowerpecker, Palawan Blue Flycatcher, Oriental honey buzzard, Large-tailed nightjar, Red-headed Flameback, Great Slaty Woodpecker, White-vented shama, Green Imperial Pigeon, Hill Myna, Dollarbird, Palawan Scops Owl, Palawan Rock Frog, Calamianes Frog, Philippine toad, Palawan flying squirrel, quills and tracks of Palawan Porcupine, tracks of Philippine Pangolin, Palawan Stink Badger Palawan Peacock-Pheasant, Philippine megapode and Palawan Bearded pigs.

- Some tree species like Panau, Kandis, Lupot, Garisan, Maramamaan, Manggachapui, Bakulot, Apitong and Daligan were observed fruiting in Montible and Inagawan forest during the duration of patrol. Mangrove species like *S. alba* were also recorded fruiting in the coastal area of the city. Other Fabaceae species like Malunggay and Fire tree were observed fruiting as well. Seeds of Taluto and Banaran were collected and will be propagated in Montible Nursery.



Figure 5. Speckle-bellied Keelback Snake (left) and Philippine toad (right). ©KFI

B. THREAT OBSERVATIONS

- Illegal activities prevalent in the surroundings of the penal farm.* About 2000sqm of kaingin was discovered in Luzviminda and some sacks of charcoal were also seen along with it. Meanwhile illegal encroachments were persistent in different areas of the penal farm; household wastes like food containers and sachets were observed along the riverbanks as well.



Figure 6. The slash and burn activity that was observed in Luzviminda. ©KFI

ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS AND ACTIONS TAKEN

- We look forward to legal actions for previously reported illegal activities in the area like the poaching of the hornbill, the destruction of lowland forests of Luzviminda, etc.
- Forest destruction and illegal occupation in IPPF grounds. Environmental laws especially PD 705 and RA 9147 should be enforced in full force hoping prosecution can deter further similar illegal activities.
- With increasing numbers of Covid-19 cases in the city and restrictions may be imposed in the future, we hope we can pursue habitat and nest monitoring without compromising safety and health of team members.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies on and better enforcement of lowland forest protection and conservation must be implemented and sustained especially within IPPF! Lowland forests harbor more biodiversity than montane forests; thus, should be protected against encroachment and further destruction.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are grateful and appreciative to our partners from the DENR-CENRO Puerto Princesa City through CENRO Cayatoc and Vivian Soriano, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS) under the leadership of Atty. TJ Matta, Western Command and Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF) through CSupt. Levita's leadership for their unrelenting support.

We appreciate the participation of representatives from these offices: Mr. JessieM. Escandalio of DENR-CENRO, Mr. Nerben Salazar and Mr. Eugene Venturillo of PCSDS and from the IPPF we thank CTOIII Earl Jude A. Arias and CSupt. Raul P. Levita for their active roles.

We also want to thank those community members who send us their cockatoo sightings in the City.

To all those who in one way or the other had contributed to the achievement of our shared vision for the conservation of biodiversity in the IPPF, great thanks!



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