

# KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY SEPTEMBER 2021 SUMMARY IPPF-PPC, Palawan



11

Bilang ng nagawang  
patrolya



364

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot ng  
patrolya



83.4

Kabuuang oras ng patrolya



1

Bilang ng illegal na  
aktibidades



0

Bilang ng naaresto



2200

Bilang ng



120

Pinakamataas na bilang sa  
tulugan ng Katala



5

Pinakamataas na  
grupo ng Talusi na nakita



40

Pinakamataas na bilang ng  
katala sa kinakainan



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

**September 2021**

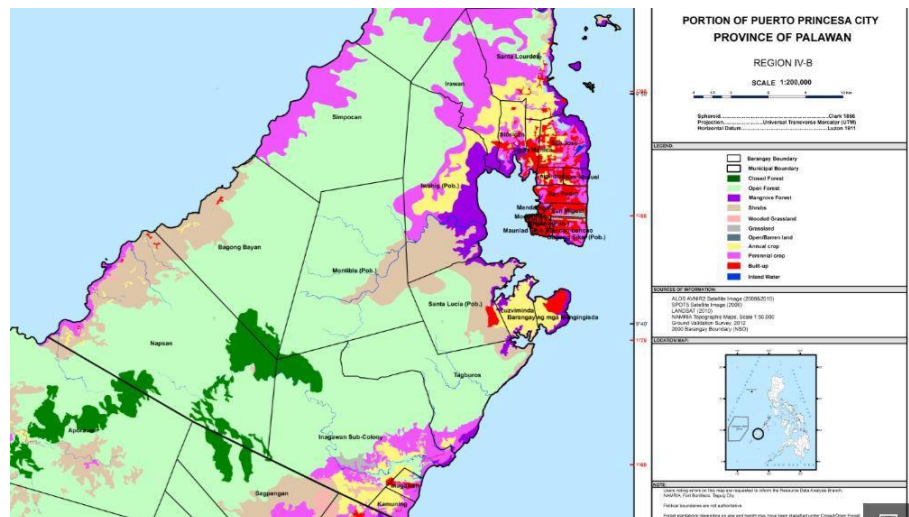
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### I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSERVATION AREA, CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES, CONSERVATION TARGETS AND METHODS

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-Banca. 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 *Anthracoceros marchei*, 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

Deputized 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, IPPF personnel, and wildlife wardens conducted synchronized counting and habitat monitoring. The main areas monitored were foraging areas in the City and the surroundings of the penal farm. The team conducted ten patrols and covered a total of **364 Km** for September. Please refer to the list of team members on the last page.

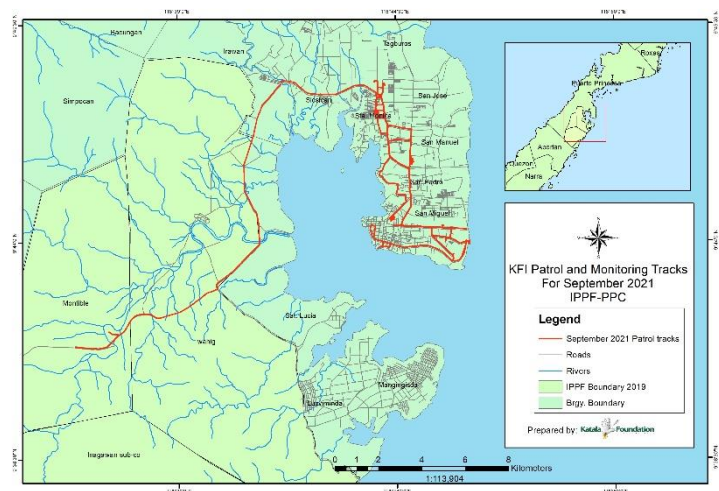


Figure 2. Patrol tracks for September 2021 ©KFI



### 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 was 90 cockatoos; meanwhile, we recorded 39 cockatoos in Montible. On September 2, we counted **120 cockatoos** in the city area and within the penal farm, the highest count in Puerto Princesa! The cockatoos foraging in various trees like Pagatpat, Moringa, and Ipil-ipil. The cockatoos in Montible were observed crossing the Bacoco river to Iwahig central some were observed perching on Acacia and Kapok tree in the Lapu-Lapu area, while some were observed foraging in Taluto and other fruiting trees in the area.



**Figure 3.** Some cockatoos in the city area. ©MBO-KFI

- Synchronized counting of the Philippine cockatoo.* KFI conducted a synchronized counting of the Philippine cockatoo in two roosting sites in the city and other strategic locations with previous sightings to estimate their total population and trace their flight path within the city and penal farm. During the count, we recorded **Ninety-seven cockatoos**, 2-22 of which have crossed Puerto bay in the morning while other foraging grounds in the city were stationed by KFI staff. Meanwhile, only 8-12 cockatoos were observed in Montible during the daytime; they were observed perching in a Kapok tree inside the Penal Farm before crossing the Bacoco river going to Iwahig. Meanwhile, some cockatoos were also observed in the old airport in San Miguel. During the count, there were no sightings of cockatoos crossing the airport to Banca-banca, but reports and during the patrol monitoring in the city, we observed cockatoos crossing the airport in the morning and afternoon.



**Figure 4.** Snapshots during synchronized counting in the city with children also explained as to why we keep cockatoos in the wild instead of hurting them. ©VA-KFI

- *Observation of wildlife and other cavity nesters monitoring.* Five hornbills were seen in the Sibakan area going to Montible. Meanwhile, we also recorded flocks of Hill mynas and Blue-naped parrots in the area. Some notable species observed during the monitoring period were: White-bellied Sea eagle, Common Sandpiper, Grey-Tailed Tattler, Pacific Reef-Heron, Eurasian Curlew, Whimbrel, Golden-bellied Gerygone, Common Iora, Kingfishers, Palawan Hornbill, Blue-naped Parrot, Blue-headed Racket-tail, Red junglefowl, White-vented Shama, Asian fairy-bluebird, Red-Headed Flameback. Non-avian species observed: Squirrel and Palawan Bearded Pig.

#### IV. Other Highlights

During the synchronized counting, KFI also distributed more than 100 pins, flyers, and tucked posters in the city area (reported sightings) to prompt the locals that they are sharing their areas with wild cockatoos as its flight range. Meanwhile, volunteers and other concerned citizens reported that some children were using a slingshot in their backyard to persecute birds, including the cockatoos. KFI immediately interviewed the children and informed their parents that the persecution of birds or other wildlife species is punishable by law.

#### V. ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS, AND ACTIONS TAKEN

- The continued and persistent destruction of lowland forests in these parts of Puerto Princesa is alarming and growing, and yet no concrete actions are done by authorities, especially DENR.
- Forest destruction and illegal occupation in IPPF grounds. Environmental laws, primarily PD 705 and RA 9147, should be enforced in full force, hoping prosecution can deter further unlawful activities.
- The COVID 19 restrictions should not be a reason for lax law enforcement. These times more than ever, we think enforcement should be thoroughly carried out because the violators are also using the same reason. We will continue our monthly patrols so long as we are able and allowed. We follow minimum health protocols.
- Persecution of birds within the city exists, and we hope we address this issue with conservation education and stricter law enforcement.
- The increasing number of COVID positive cases in Montible prevented us from monitoring the cockatoos in the areas.

#### VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies on and better enforcement of lowland forest protection and conservation must be implemented and sustained, especially within IPPF and the Victoria Anepa'am Mountain Range (VAMR)! Lowland forests harbor more biodiversity than montane forests; thus, they should be protected against encroachment and further destruction.

City-wide campaign against persecution of wild birds should be pursued.





**Figure 6.** Tucked Katala posters in some houses in the city area (Top), Children reading Katala flyers (middle-left), KFI tucking poster and flyers in waiting sheds (middle-right), Kids that were reported to be playing with slingshots (bottom-left), and a guard of Camella homes receiving 40 posters, 100 flyers and 60 Katala pins (bottom-right) for homeowners distribution. ©KFI



## VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are grateful and appreciative to our partners from the DENR-CENRO Puerto Princesa City, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS), Western Command, and Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF) for their unrelenting support.

We also appreciate the help of CTOIII Earl Jude A. Arias and CSupt. Joel R. Calvelo for his leadership from the IPPF.

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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