

KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

August 2021 SUMMARY
IPPF-PPC, Palawan



10

Bilang ng nagawang patrolya



442.1

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot ng patrolya



67.3

Kabuuang oras ng patrolya



3

Bilang ng illegal na aktibidades



0

Bilang ng naaresto



2200

Bilang ng halaman sa nursery



120

Pinakamataas na bilang sa tulugan ng Katala



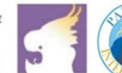
4

Pinakamataas na grupo ng Talusi na nakita



25

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)

August 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

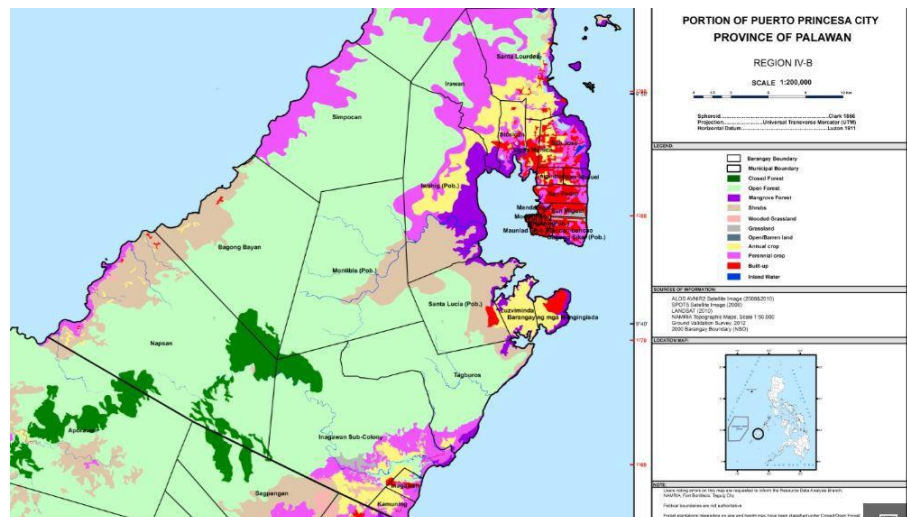


Figure 1. Land use of southern Puerto Princesa, including IPPF according to NAMRIA. Large areas were classified as open forest (bright green signature); this is not in line with observations on site, where large areas of closed forests were recorded particularly in portions of Iwahig, Tagburus (“Zigzag”) 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 *Anthracoseros 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 comprising of KFI, DENR, IPPF personnel, and wildlife wardens conducted nest characterization of nest trees, habitat monitoring of wildlife and biodiversity; and continued city 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 **442.1 km** for August. Please refer to the list of team members on the last page.

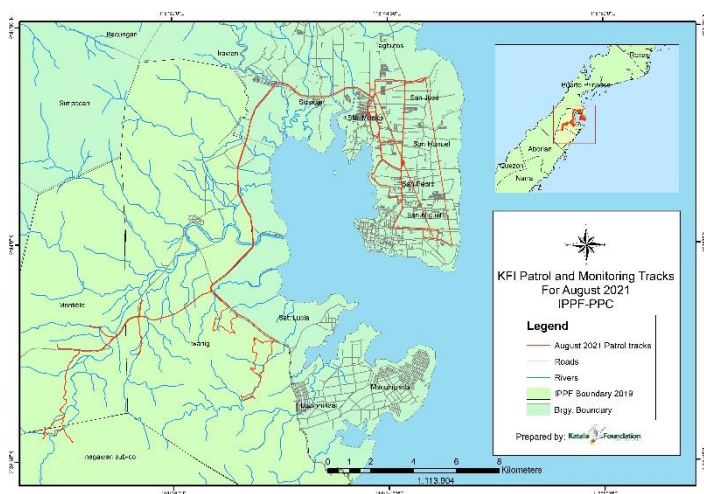


Figure 2. Patrol tracks for August 2021 ©KFI

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 81 individuals; meanwhile, we also recorded 39 cockatoos in Montible the same day for **a total of 120 cockatoos**, the highest count in the City! The cockatoos foraged in various trees like Pagatpat, Moringa, and Ipil-ipil in downtown area. Meanwhile, the cockatoos in Montible were observed crossing the Bacoco river to Iwahig central.



Figure 3. Cockatoo foraging in the city. ©MBO-KFI

- *2021 breeding season: We have banded thirteen Philippine Cockatoos, confirmed fledglings of the ff: four Blue-naped parrots, four Dollarbird, two Palawan-scops Owl, and two Hill Myna.* The team conducted a four-day nest characterization of fourteen active nest trees in Montible, Sta. Lucia, and Luzviminda. Parameters like tree height, DBH, nest hole, chamber characterization (position, diameter, depth), canopy, and GPS coordinates were collected. We also noted that some of this year's cockatoo fledglings were still roosting in their nest trees; thus, affecting the roost count in the city area and Montible. Synchronized count will be conducted in the next month to determine and update dispersal routes and flight path and help in the estimate of the cockatoo population in Puerto Princesa City.



Figure 4. Snapshots during the nest characterization. ©MBO-KFI

- *Observation of wildlife and other cavity nesters.* Four hornbills were the highest number that was seen during the monitoring. Meanwhile, we also recorded flocks of more than ten Hill Mynas and 15 Blue-naped parrots in Montible. Some notable species observed during the monitoring period were: White-bellied sea-eagle, Crested serpent eagle, Palawan peacock-pheasant, Palawan Hornbill, Blue-naped Parrot, Blue-headed Racket-tail, Red junglefowl, White-vented Shama, Palawan fairy blue-bird, White-bellied and Spot-throated woodpecker. Non-avian species observed: Reticulated python, Palawan flying squirrel, Palawan Stink Badger (scent), and Palawan Bearded pigs (tracks).

B. THREAT OBSERVATIONS

- We documented five illegally logged trees (>60cm DBH and >30m height) that were ready for hauling in the forest of Luzviminda/Sta. Lucia. The team also heard a chainsaw and some ax being operated in the area. Since no security escorts were with us during these trips, we decided not to risk searching for the actual site. We also observed a man carrying an ax.
- Snares were also seen along the trails in Sta. Lucia. The team destroyed the traps along the way, which was believed to be for wild pigs in the area.
- A Philippine Cockatoo was turned-over to PCSDS and we were informed by Dr. Rebong that the bird has a fractured ulna and radius bone (wing); and was operated. The bird was allegedly hit by perhaps a slingshot or an airgun in Bancao-bancao area. Immediately when this was known to KFI, we visited the site reported as the rescue site and talked to some residents. It appears that the said bird might be a pet and was released or had escaped probably. From the way it behaves while at PWRCC, the bird acted like a tamed one. We distributed flyers, posters and other prompts to children and adults alike in the area and in the vicinity.



Figure 5. Logged trees ready for hauling (Top), a man carrying an ax in the forest (bottom-right), and remnants of charcoal-making in Luzviminda. ©MBO-KFI

IV. Other Highlights

On August 26, 2021, KFI was invited to the public consultation for the Protected Area Suitability Assessment (PASA) of Palawan flora, fauna, and watershed reserve. We shared some information regarding our projects in the Iwahig central, specifically for the Philippine Cockatoo and Palawan Porcupine. The PASA staff also shared an overview of its projects, initiatives, and programs for PFFWR.



Figure 6. KFI team during the IEC and dissemination of info materials. ©MBO-KFI

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, at all levels. We look forward to legal actions and prosecution happening before it is too late. Hunting of the Hornbill was reported in the past, yet we are not aware that the case was filed.
- 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.
- Availability of uniformed personnel during the patrols in Luzviminda and Sta. Lucia could help in apprehending violators within the IPPF area.
- 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 can address this issue with conservation education and stricter law enforcement.

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.

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 appreciate the participation of representatives from these offices: Mr. Jessie Escandalio of DENR, Mr. John Christian Castillo of PCSD, and from the IPPF; we thank CTOIII Earl Jude A. Arias and CSupt. Joel R. Calvelo for his leadership.

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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