

KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

February 2022 SUMMARY Dumaran Island Critical Habitat Dumaran, Palawan



14

Bilang ng nagawang
patrolya



207.25

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot ng
patrolya



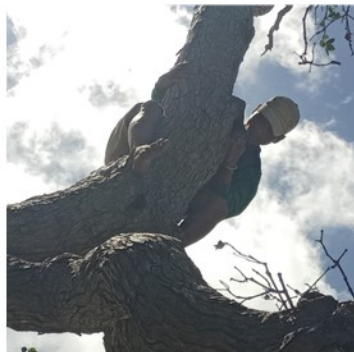
24.59

Kabuuang oras ng
patrolya



0

Bilang ng natanim



15

Bilang ng nabisitang pugad
ng mga cavity nesters



36

Nakitang namumunga at
namumulaklak na puno



25

Pinakamataas na bilang sa
tulugan ng Katala



4

Pinakamataas na
grupong Talusi na nakita





KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY Dumaran, Palawan

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

Dumaran is situated in north-eastern Palawan between 10°22' and 10°41'N and 119°28' and 119°55'E. Nine Barangays are situated on the Palawan mainland, seven on western Dumaran Island. The island is situated in the Sulu Sea and separated by a ca. seven km wide channel from the mainland.

On Dumaran Island only a few small and isolated forest patches remain, none of them larger than 103 ha. The most abundant formation is evergreen and semi-evergreen lowland forest with Ipil *Intsia bijuga*, Amugis *Koordersiodendron pinnatum* being emergent tree species of commercial value. Ornithological surveys conducted by Katala Foundation so far yielded 136 species from the island. A prominent species of conservation concern is the Philippine Cockatoo, which can be found with viable populations in the mangroves and forest remnants of Dumaran Island, but apparently not anymore on the mainland. The last remaining forest patches are therefore of global conservation concern. This notion is supported by the recent records of other globally threatened species, particularly the Palawan Forest Turtle *Siebenrockiella leytenensis* (CR). Other species of conservation concern are Palawan Hornbill *Anthracoceros marchei* (VU), Blue-headed Racquet-tail (VU), and Palawan Pencil-tailed Tree-mouse *Chiropodomys calamianensis* (DD).

Habitat degradation and destruction, rather than poaching, remain the biggest challenge for cockatoo conservation in Dumaran.

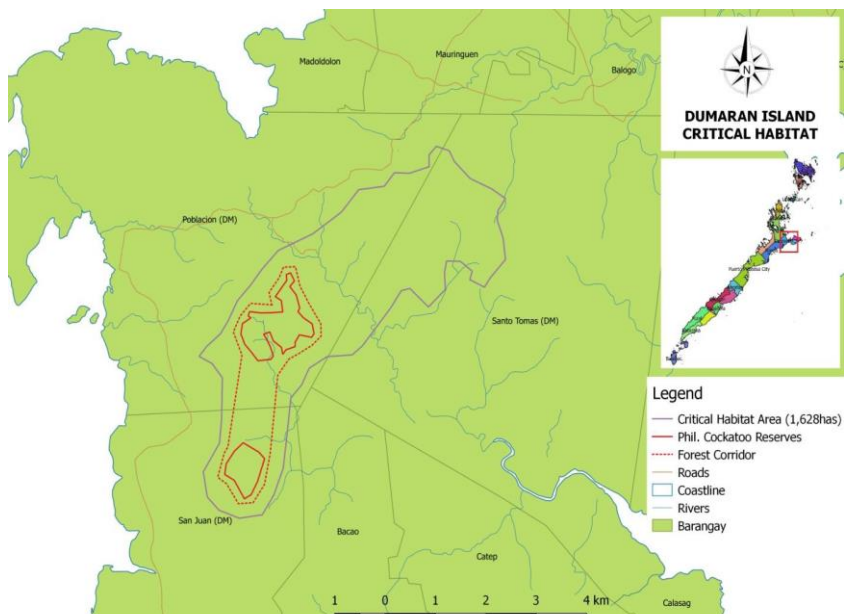


Figure 1. Dumaran Island Critical Habitat connects two locally declared cockatoo reserves and establishes a corridor through reforestation and assisted regeneration.

The Dumaran Island Critical Habitat (DICH), comprising 1,628 ha, was established through PCSD Resolution No. 14-513 that connects the two existing cockatoo reserves through a corridor and extends to include remaining forest fragments in the area (Fig. 1). This is the first critical habitat established in the Province of Palawan. A Local Protected Area Management Committee (LPAMC) functions as its interim management body.

Conservation Objectives

1. Maintain the species diversity and function of ecosystems and species within the declared Critical Habitat.
2. Identify and preserve priority sites for conservation and maintain their ecological functions.
3. Prevent and report to enforcement agencies illegal activities that compromise the integrity of the conservation area.

Conservation Targets

1. Increased number of Philippine Cockatoo breeding pairs on Dumaran by at least 20% by 2024 (Baseline: average breeding pairs 2019 to 2021: 5.0);
2. Increased percentage points in KAPP survey results by at least 20%;
3. Pursued supplementation of Philippine Cockatoos using suitable rescued birds;
4. Reforested or enrichment-planted at least eight hectares per year;
5. Reduced threats in the area by 50% from 2022-2024.

Methods

Deputized wardens patrol by foot within site and there are times by boat especially when patrolling is done along the mangroves area or within the separate island. Patrol members use a technology-based system to register all observations (threats, status, and wildlife data) in the android and transferred them to a smart application to generate reports (Critchlow et al., 2017; Teacher et al., 2013). Species to be monitored are based on their red-list status and their value as bio-indicators(IUCN, 2019). Ease of identification in the field was considered as well. The maps are generated and analyzed through ArcGIS. Patrols are coordinated with the concerned barangay, LGU, and Bantay-Dumaran wherever it applies.

II. PATROL TEAM AND EFFORT

KFI team regularly patrol the forested areas inside and outside DICH for the month. They have recorded fruiting trees, threats, and other wildlife observed. Suitable driftwoods to be used as artificial nest boxes (ANB) were also collected if available. Nest monitoring and visitation were also conducted in which 15 nest trees of several cavity nesters were visited. An ANB was also reinstalled after it was felled by Typhoon Odette.

Monthly patrols covered 207.25km and 24.59 hours from 14 patrols within the Omoi and Manangbaling Protected Area, forested area within Bulalakaw, Camaya, Candez, Kasipulo and Bgy. San Juan. No threats were observed during monitoring but chainsaw cutting of felled trees was prevalent in the area.

Regular monitoring in the roost was conducted for the month. Fifteen to 25 cockatoos were observed at the site. There were mostly 18 cockatoos observed in the roost every morning and afternoon counts (13 times). Fair weather was observed all month long except at the end of the month when the strong northeast wind was observed.



Figure 2. Patrol tracks for February (top-left); reinstallation of felled ANB (top-right); water basin for cavity nesters placed last month still in the area (bottom-left); and cut twigs as signs of occupation (bottom-right)

PATROL OBSERVATIONS

Breeding season assessment and monitoring

Out of the 15 monitored nests, three Philippine cockatoo nests were recorded to have signs of occupations e.g., cut twigs at the base of tree, feces, while two ANB for the said species were visited but no signs of occupation were observed.

Two Blue-naped Parrot nests were also visited but no feces nor cut twigs were observed, however, there are adults perched nearby each nest. Three Blue-headed Racquet-tail nests were visited in which one has no sign of occupation while two have bitings on the side of the nest holes. An ANB occupied previously by a Dollarbird has cut twigs on its base. Other cavity nests visited were those of the Red-headed Woodpecker and White-collared Kingfisher; no signs were recorded in each nest. An installed camera trap in front of an ANB recorded Blue-naped Parrot, Philippine Cockatoo, and crows in the vicinity of the ANB.



Figure 3. Blue-naped Parrot (left) and Philippine Cockatoo (right) observing the ANB.

Supplementation of natural population

Released birds in recent years were now foraging and inhabiting the island just like the wild cockatoos. They were sighted passing, perching, and feeding on wild fruits at Omoi, Candez Area, Bgy. Poblacion, Brgy. Bacao, Manangbaling and Bgy. San Juan. Birds that reached households and kaingin areas were shooed away by residents due to their knowledge that taming cockatoos will be detrimental to the population.

Foraging

Most of the trees in the phenology plots of Omoi, Candez, and Manambaling were not fruiting and flowering except for Kulayan, Ipil, Taluto, and, Kalampinay. Trees in these plots are in various stages of leaf growth and abscission. In Lagan phenology plots, all trees of Pagatpat were flowering and fruiting.

Thirty-six food-providing trees were recorded during this month. Included in this were eight trees whose flowers were foraged by wildlife i.e., Acacia, Binunga, Casay, Catmon, Duguan, Iniol, Maranggo, and Taluto, and two trees with nectars taken in by birds i.e., Kulayan and Magabo. Some fruiting trees observed were Apatot, Balite, Bangkudo, Berrie, Binatalan, Bunuang, Dangkalan, Domalta, and Duguan among others.

Palawan Hornbill Monitoring

Hornbills were observed in eight areas in the island namely: Omoi, Candez, Kasipulo, Manambaling, Bacao, Bulalakaw, Aranlegan, and Poblacion. Observations range from a single individual to groups of four hornbills. They were observed perching, calling, biting, and making noise in trees of Panapuan, Acacia, Mango, Narra, Amugis, Cashew, Binunga, Gmelina, Bobog, Kulayan, Binunga, and Iniam. Two hornbill nests were monitored but no signs of occupation were observed.

Other wildlife species

Forty species were observed in Biodiversity Monitoring System (BMS) stations in DICH while 32 species were recorded in the reforestation site. Twenty species were recorded in both areas; these are Ashy Drongo, Asian Glossy Starling, Barred Button Quail, Blue Naped Parrot, Philippine Cockatoo, Common Iora, Dollar Bird, Dwarf Kingfisher, Green Imperial Pigeon, Hooded Pitta, Lovely Sunbird, Monitor Lizard, Palawan Hornbill, Pink-necked Green Pigeon, Red Jungle Fowl, Spotted Dove, Spangled Drongo, Tree Squirrel, White-collared Kingfisher, and Zebra Dove. Non-avian species observed were Palawan Bearded Pig, Asian Box Turtle, Green Crested Lizard, Long-tailed Macaque, squirrels, and rats.

Ground camera traps recorded several species including Philippine Megapode, Palawan Water Monitor, Common Palm Civet, Red-bellied Pitta, Northern Palawan Tree Squirrel, shrews, and rats.



Figure 4. Philippine Megapode (top-left); Red-bellied Pitta (top-right); Common Palm Civet (bottom-left); and Palawan Water Monitor (bottom-right) recorded by a ground camera trap.

III.OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

There are currently 11,439 wildlings in the main nursery with 113 dead. Most of the wildlings are Nato, Palomaria, Baslayan, and Dumaran. There were no collected nor dead wildlings in the satellite nurseries and the number of the wildlings were the same last month in Candez (1409) and Manambaling (1273) satellite nurseries. There are no wildlings in the growth chamber and no planted trees this month due to the unavailability of rain. No rainfall data was recorded in three monitoring stations. Regular activities in the nursery e.g., potting, landscaping, cleaning, were continuous.



Figure 5. Planting of wildlings in pots (left) and potting of soil (right) as part of regular activities in the nursery

Additional support for the affected families of the typhoon was continued; another 50 sacks of rice donations (added to the previous 50 sacks) were transported from the mainland to the island and were distributed to the families. LGU Dumarán was very instrumental in helping source rice from local partners and hauling to island barangays. The repair of the KEEC will soon come to fruition as we have talked with the Municipal Engineering Office for the plan and cost of the repair.



Figure 6. Transporting of donated rice from the mainland to the island

KFI attended and participated in the Environmentally Critical Areas Network (ECAN) board meeting of Dumarán and in the Local Protected Area Management Council (LPAMC) meeting last February 22 and 24 respectively. In the LPAMC meeting, we presented project updates of last year, this year's breeding season updates and a detailed presentation of our Work and Financial Plan (WFP) for this year which was duly approved by the council and signed by the presiding mayor. There were discussions on the presented results of the evaluation conducted by the DENR-CENRO on the areas covered with Certificate of Stewardship Contract (CSC) inside the Dumarán Island Critical Habitat (DICH). In the end it was agreed that said results

shall be endorsed to the LPAMC for further deliberation in particular on entering into conservation agreements and setting up terms and conditions for said CSC holders.

The drafted Palawan Hornbill Management/Action Plan was also presented by KFI. This was the product of the virtual workshop conducted in 2021 among key players to include PCSDS, KFI and LGU-Dumaran. It was agreed that the same plan could form as basis for the DICH Management Plan and KFI was tasked to distribute the said draft to all members to further comment on its content and its applicability to be incorporated in the DICH Management Plan. This move is due to the recent initiative of the DENR-BMB and its partners to come up with management action plan for each species. DENR in January 25-27, 2022 conducted Assess2Plan workshop with all conservationists, scientists and relevant groups in order to (1) identify sites in the Philippines with critical importance for conservation intervention in particular those with remnant threatened species and (2) identification of threatened terrestrial vertebrate species that are not currently covered by a plan or program of action and draft a plan to address that gap. IUCN Planning Specialist Group moderated the said workshop. In said workshop, the Palawan Hornbill will be lumped with other cavity-nesters for which a plan will be drafted. Hence, the LPAMC would be more focused on the management plan of the critical habitat and the drafted hornbill plan could be used as its basis.



Figure 7. LPAMC meeting with KFI as secretariat and presenter (left); and KFI management in talks with the municipal engineers for the KEEC repair (right).

IV.ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS, AND ACTIONS TAKEN

Apparently, the temporary easing or amnesty of the chainsaw registration is taken advantage by unscrupulous individuals to cut felled trees without proper coordination. We hope this could be stopped as soon as the said amnesty period.

Increased patrolling is necessary to ensure that fire is avoided. Other risks also need to be mitigated by the presence of patrollers include increased forest encroachment, including creation and widening of logging trails, as well as timber poaching of standing trees.

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