

# KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

June 2022 SUMMARY

Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary and its environs,  
Narra, Palawan



48

Bilang ng nagawang  
patrolya



0

Bilang ng illegal na  
kailangang aksyunan



208

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot  
ng patrolya



0

Bilang ng mga issues na  
nai-report sa PAMO



67

Kabuuang oras ng  
patrolya



0

Bilang ng naaresto



190

Pinakamataas na bilang sa  
tulugan ng Katala



34

Bilang ng ibang uri ng  
ibon na nakita



25

Pinakamataas na bilang  
ng Katala sa kinakainan



200

Pananim ang naipamahagi



11

Uri ng halamang namumunga



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## KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY RASA ISLAND WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

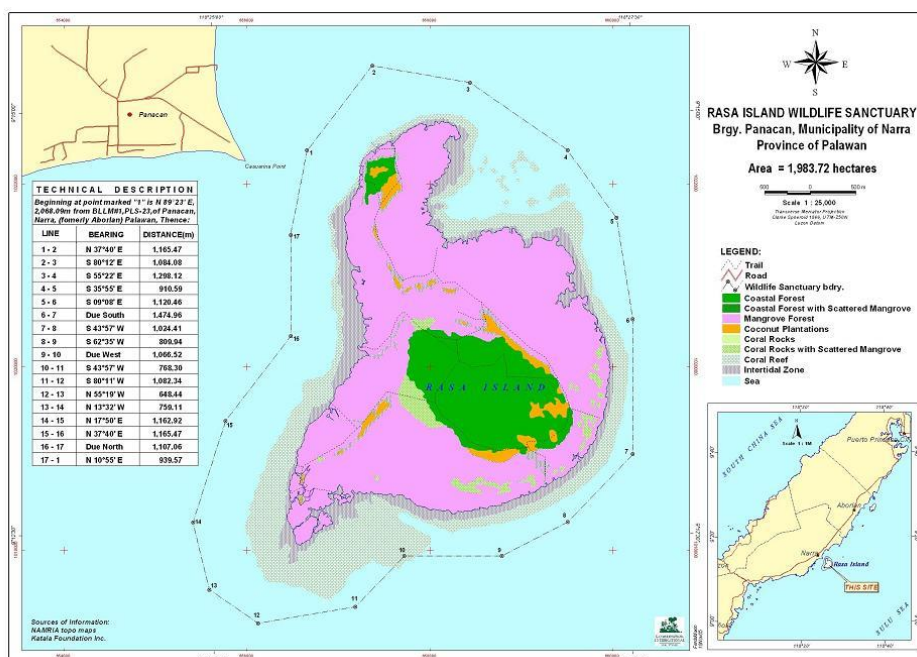
**JUNE 2022**

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

Rasa is a small coral island of 8.34 km<sup>2</sup> land area situated in the Sulu Sea, just offshore of the Municipality of Narra, Palawan, Philippines (Fig. 1). About 1.75 km<sup>2</sup> are covered with coastal forest, mangrove (5.60 km<sup>2</sup>), cultivated areas (predominantly coconut; 0.39 km<sup>2</sup>), 0.60 km<sup>2</sup> are barren or sparsely vegetated sand and coral outcrops. In February 2006, the island became a Wildlife Sanctuary through Presidential Proclamation 1000 and since a Protected Area Management Board manages the Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary (RIWS). In 2008, RIWS was chosen as Top 13 Bird Watching Sites in the Philippines by the Department of Tourism.



**Figure 1.** Landuse map of Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Narra, Palawan, Philippines

The island is the pilot site of the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program since 1998. Due to intensive poaching, only 23-25 Philippine cockatoos were left on the island then. Key component of this project site is the warden scheme which involves ex-poachers as wildlife wardens whose main task is to patrol and protect the wildlife in particular the Philippine Cockatoo during and outside its breeding season. This scheme has proven to be efficient and lead to the dramatic recovery of the Philippine Cockatoo population to nearly 400 individuals as of to date. This makes RIWS the most important population of the species in the wild!

Not only Philippine Cockatoos live on the island, but a variety of other species, with an unusual high percentage of globally threatened and near-threatened taxa (IUCN 2019), considering the small size of Rasa. Noteworthy among the 112 recorded bird species are Red-headed Flameback *Chrysocolaptes erythrocephalus* (EN), Grey Imperial-pigeon *Ducula pickeringii* (VU) and Mantanani Scops-owl *Otus mantananensis* (NT).

### Conservation Objectives

1. Maintain the species diversity and function of ecosystems and species within Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary.
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

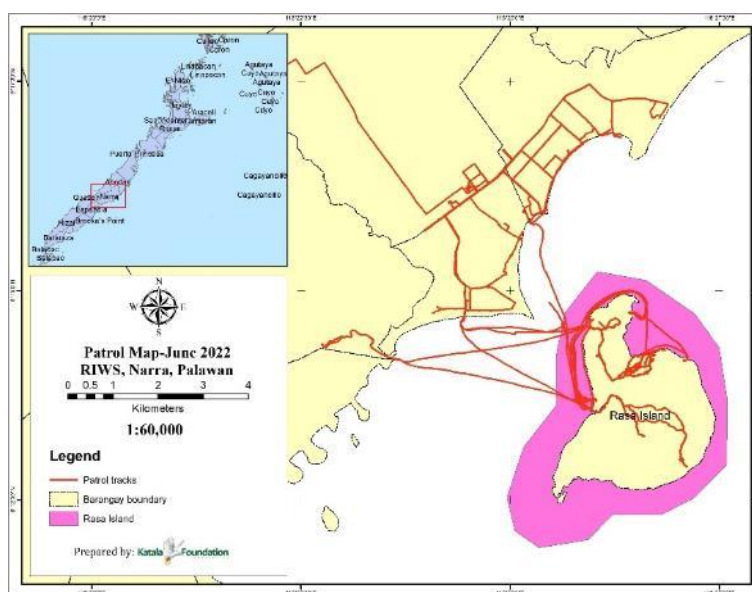
1. To stabilize number of Philippine Cockatoo breeding pairs on Rasa Island and vicinity by 2024 (Baseline: average breeding pairs from 2019 to 2021: 33.0).
2. Conduct weekly patrol and permanent presence of wildlife wardens with daily reports during breeding season per year.
3. Conduct at least 12 school/community visits (with at least 20 percentage point increase in KAPP survey results for individual interventions) and one festival annually.
4. Rehabilitate at least one hectare per year through reforestation or enrichment planting within cockatoo foraging area.
5. Monitor and reduce threats in the area by 50% from 2022-2024; if any.

### 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/ArcGIS. Patrols are coordinated with the concerned barangay and protected area office wherever it applies.

## II. PATROL TEAM AND EFFORT

The patrol and monitoring team members are our wildlife wardens and mainland volunteers: **REYNALDO ALBELAR, LORETO ALISTO, BERNITO BASIO, EDWIN BATAAC, MARIO BATAAC, LUCITO DANGIS**, Veronica Marcelo, Danilo Villaruz, Monico Beleg and Antonio Marcelo.



**Figure 2.** Patrol tracks in red marks in June 2022



In June 2022, three nest trees were infested with mites. The mites from the hatchlings and nest chambers were immediately treated with cock shampoo which were gone after number of visits and treatments. These five hatchlings were all in good condition and some had fledged already. Seven camera traps are positioned on Rasa. Endoscope is still utilized to check on deep nest chambers as the breeding season concludes. Data loggers are also deployed in nest trees. No expansion was recorded on lobster fry at Borbon. Floating cage was also placed far from Rasa boundary. Three teams of wardens on Rasa covered **208kms** of nest checking, wildlife monitoring and patrol around Rasa. Total precipitation in June 2022: **18mm** on Rasa, **16mm** on mainland.



**Figure 3.** Reynaldo checks on nest chamber with endoscope (left); Wardens altogether assisted with portable ladder to check on some nest trees (right) ©KFI



**Figure 4.** Reynaldo climbs on portable ladder to check on nest (left) while Mark collects biometrics of chicks (right) ©KFI

### III. PATROL OBSERVATIONS

#### A. WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

In June 2022, three teams of wardens visited 69 nest trees on Rasa. 38 nest trees are occupied where a total of 67 eggs were recorded and 31 of which hatched. 17 hatchlings were banded and fledged this month. Two hatchlings are being monitored at northwest Rasa which we hope to band soon. The highest recorded number of cockatoos around nest trees during visits were six individuals. New fledglings were also observed around nest trees. Some flew immediately as wardens approached checking on nests while others were seen being fed by adult cockatoos.

Lucito counted **190 individuals** on traditional roost site on June 13 from 6:00-6:28am. On June 27 (6:29-6:36pm) and 28 (5:49-5:57am), Lucito recorded 173 and 181 individuals on traditional

roost site respectively. He also noted sleeping fledglings at roost site. No roosting cockatoos at Borbon station during sync counting. On the other hand, On June 28, one cockatoo went from Rasa to Borbon at 6:48pm and slept on coconut tree. On the same date, the last cockatoos noted going back to Rasa were at 5:45pm. There is strong Habagat (southwest monsoon) winds already felt in the area.

On June 27, the highest recorded foraging cockatoos were **25 individuals** at Antipuluan station crossing from mainland to Rasa from 5:11-5:39am. Lesser cockatoos were observed crossing to mainland this month. Less cockatoos were also observed on each monitoring station. Even on foraging site at Marcelo area, the highest frequenting cockatoos were 12 individuals. Probably, this happened because abundant food was present on Rasa. Next month's monitoring will focus on synchronized monitoring. Earliest cockatoos' flight to mainland was at 5:40am while the latest flight to Rasa was 6:09pm recorded at Borbon station, though one cockatoo was observed crossing from Rasa to Borbon at 6:48pm and even slept at coconut area. It went back to Rasa early in the morning in the next day. Cockatoos were still observed around foraging sites even between 9:00am-3:00pm.

In June 2022, other noted bird species were Red-headed Flameback/ Woodpecker, Nicobar Pigeon, Tabon Scrubfowl, Blue-headed Racquet-tail (BHRT), Osprey, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Egret sp., White-bellied Sea-eagle, Mantanani Scops-owl, Spotted Wood-owl, Great-billed Heron, Pied Imperial-Pigeon, Oriental Dwarf-kingfisher, White-collared Kingfisher, Changeable Hawk-eagle, Rufous Night-heron, Blue-Paradise Flycatcher/ Black-naped Monarch, Fruit-dove sp., Large-tailed Night-jar, Whimbrel, Reef Egret, Ashy Drongo, Green Imperial-Pigeon, Sunbird sp., Greater Coucal, Common Koel, Emerald Dove, Pipit, Asian Glossy Starling, Rufous-tailed Tailor-bird, Dollarbird and Zebra Dove. Blue-naped Parrot was still observed around and Monitor Lizard was frequently encountered on Rasa. On June 3, four cockatoos including two fledglings perched and called from a Tubo-bato then eventually flew to coastal forest. On June 5, two fledglings were calling on nest tree then transferred to another nest tree. On June 7, 8ind of cockatoos including two fledglings perched on Barenben at Alisto area. On June 17, three fledglings were observed around nest in southwest Rasa. On June 25, four cockatoos were seen at Alisto area. They were perching on Bogo and adult cockatoo was seen feeding a fledgling. 27ind of Rufous Night-Heron were noted on June 3, perching on Bogo then flew. No nest was found.



**Figure 5.** Nest checking using endoscope on Rasa: hatchlings from nest southwest (left) and spoiled egg from nest on northeast Rasa (right) ©KFI

### ***Vegetation assessment***

In June, areas in Kabaguhan, Kaburihan, Kaipilan, Dapdap, coastal camp and boundaries on Rasa Island are lush and green. Likewise, mangrove forest exhibits green vegetation, fruiting and flowering likewise. Leaf litters on ground are denser. Fruiting trees and vines: Pagatpat (dominant), Siar, Sapisapinet, Balindadagat, Ginlalid, Kalampinay, Balete, vine sp., Gubaay, Piagaw, Rhizophora sp. And other mangrove species. Flowering trees and vines: Pagatpat,



Barenben, Balindadagat, Ginlalid, Magtalisay, Kalampinay, Banaro, *Ceriops* sp., *Rhizophora* sp. and other mangrove species. Total of precipitation in June 2022: **18mm** on Rasa, **16mm** on mainland (Marcelo area).



**Figure 6.** Green vegetation on Rasa Island ©KFI

## B. THREAT OBSERVATION

No adverse human activities observed on Rasa during monitoring. No expansion was recorded on lobster fry at Borbon. Floating cage was also placed far from Rasa boundary.

*Monitoring on marine resources and coconut plantations on Rasa.* On June 4, three persons collected 15kgs of lato at camp entrance for 2hrs. Lucito noted broken coconut and coconut husks on June 2 at Alisto area. On June 10, four persons gathered 1000kgs of copra at Alisto area for 15 days. On June 15, four persons harvested 7000kgs of coconut at C. Batac area for four days. On June 18, three persons gathered 300kgs of copra at Satina area in 10 days while another three persons gathered 500kgs of copra at Deig area in 6 days. On June 25, Boyet Villarias and Efren Paragatos got their things for harvesting of coconut from Villarias area.

## III. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

On June 3, wardens assisted DENR on assessing on Rasa boardwalk and camp. Extension of camp roof on Rasa is accomplished (Fig. 7). This was done by wardens in between nest checking. KFI wardens, volunteers and staff in Narra conduct Katala Savings Club meeting regularly every 15<sup>th</sup> and end of the month (Fig. 7). Katala fiberglass boat is painted with logos and registered at LGU-Narra (Fig. 8).

16<sup>th</sup> Katala Festival in Narra, Palawan together with 19<sup>th</sup> Kalabukay Festival and Talusi Day in Dumaran, Palawan were celebrated on June 28 via Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program (PCCP) Facebook page. Few joined the contests this year in comparison to the previous years possibly because of overlapping school activities e.g. graduations, moving-up recognitions and preparations of schools to face-to-face learning.

Wardens and Mark had meeting about deputation at Rasa camp with PAMO personnel on June 8. Bernito and Mark participated on 3-day orientation and training on LAWIN system for watershed conservation on June 20-22 held by LGU-Narra together with USAID (Fig. 9). On June 22, Anna talked with Antipuluan Bgy. Officials about PCCP updates while PAMO tackled solid waste management at Barangay and other laws relevant to environmental management (Fig. 9).

Relevant to KFI's new partnership with the Energy Development Corporation (EDC)-BINHI Program, personnel from EDC-BINHI personnel with Peter visited Katala Institute on June 10.

Consequently, they visited Taritien river and Apis lot in Aborlan. KFI has existing forest restoration initiatives, propagation of Palawan endemic species, establishment of arboretum, survey and documentation of Palawan endemic species which are all aligned with the BINHI main streamlining initiatives specifically for Palawan threatened species (Fig. 10).

On June 23, 10 and 8 students with their teachers from San Francisco Javier College participated in the test for Guided Plant Tour in Katala Institute (KI). Two sessions were conducted. In the next day, 18 students with Mr. Ismael Pacete from Narra Integrated School joined another session of guided plant tour in KI (Fig. 11).

PNP Aborlan Municipal Police Station initiated tree planting activity on June 7, 2022 at Plaridel National High School. 200 seedlings were provided by KFI which were then monitored by KFI staff. Ms. Indira Widmann was invited to give a message in the event which was ably delivered by Mr. Pacete. The event was participated by LGU-Aborlan, Plaridel NHS, PCG, Fire, local officials of Plaridel, Palawan PPO and KFI (Fig. 12).



**Figure 7.** Regular meeting on Katala Savings Club (left) and finished extension of roof of camp site (right) ©KFI



**Figure 8.** Painting of logos on fiberglass ©KFI





**Figure 9.** Talk re PCCP updates with Antipuluan Bgy. officials (left) and LAWIN orientation and training for watershed conservation and law enforcement stakeholders on (right) ©KFI



**Figure 10.** Peter introduced some palm species at Katala Institute to EDC staff (left) and Fruiting Potat *Barringtonia palawanensis* at Apis, Aborlan, good for wetland management (bottom) ©KFI



**Figure 11.** Guided Plant tour in Katala Institute on June 23-24, 2022 ©KFI





**Figure 12.** Gathering of seedlings from Katala Institute and tree planting at Plaridel NHS on June 7 initiated by Aborlan PNP ©KFI

#### **IV. ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS AND ACTIONS TAKEN**

Owners of lobster traps at Borbon, Panacan must be informed to not encroach inside Rasa boundary. Prescriptions for each zonation must be finalized and disseminated by PAO and with other PAMB members to encourage more active role in protection. Update on pending cases e.g. establishment of fish corral on Rasa is appreciated. Vigilance as to collection of fossilized Taklobo must continue; monitoring around Rasa at night is also encouraged.

## V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The PCCP acknowledges the key players on the ground: our wildlife wardens and mainland volunteers: REYNALDO ALBELAR, LORETO ALISTO, BERNITO BASIO, EDWIN BATAAC, MARIO BATAAC, LUCITO DANGIS, Veronica Marcelo, Danilo Villaruz, Monico Beleg and Antonio Marcelo. Thank you very much to the LGU-Narra through Mayor Danao and staff, Vice Mayor Lumba, and the municipal council, department heads, barangay officials, and everyone in the LGU for their unrelenting support and appropriation per year for our wardens and volunteers. Also, we thank the Narra community for pursuing the cause of cockatoo conservation in Narra. We also thank the PAMO through former PASu Pablo Cruz for his leadership and for PASu Ma. Teresa V. Ayson for her kind attention. We are grateful to KFI family and board members for their help, assistance and sharing expertise and ideas. We are indebted to the following organizations and agencies for providing funds for this project:



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