

KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY September 2022 SUMMARY Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary and its environs, Narra, Palawan



21

Bilang ng nagawang
patrolya



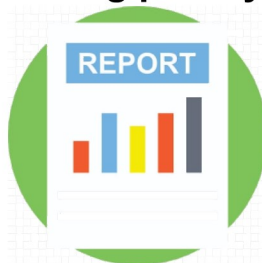
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Bilang ng illegal na
kailangang aksyunan



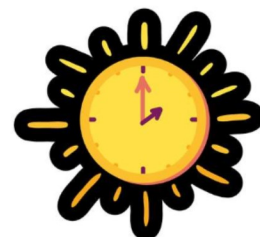
387

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot
ng patrolya



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Bilang ng mga issues na
nai-report sa PAMO



76.5

Kabuuang oras ng
patrolya



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Bilang ng naaresto



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Pinakamataas na bilang sa
tulugan ng Katala



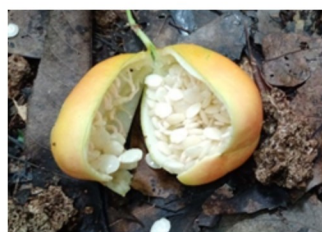
32

Bilang ng ibang uri ng
ibon na nakita



124

Pinakamataas na bilang
ng Katala sa kinakainan



11

Uri ng halamang namumunga



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

SEPTEMBER 2022

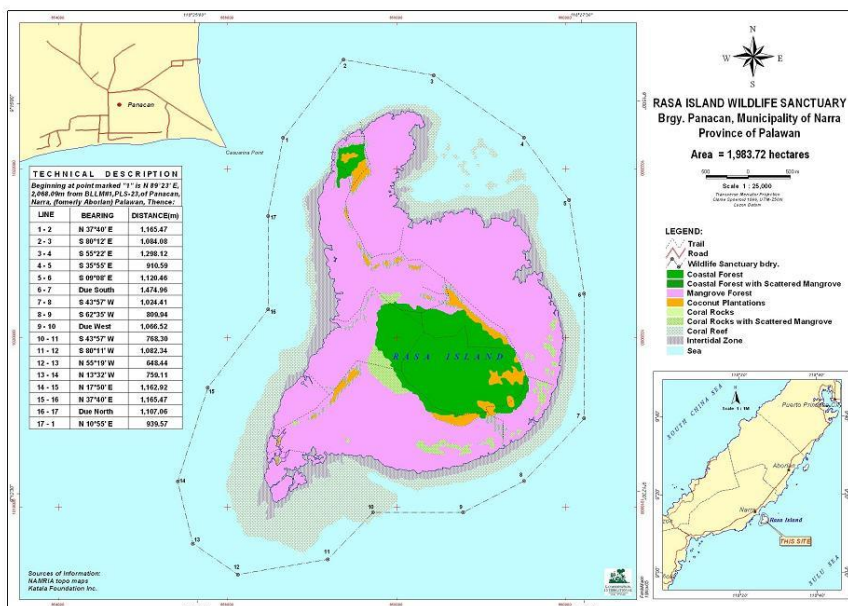
Prepared by:

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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 km² land area situated in the Sulu Sea, just offshore of the Municipality of Narra, Palawan, Philippines (Fig. 1). About 1.75 km² are covered with coastal forest, mangrove (5.60 km²), cultivated areas (predominantly coconut; 0.39 km²), 0.60 km² 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. Wardens' teams covered **387kms** of nest checking, wildlife monitoring and patrol around Rasa. Total of precipitation in September 2022: **63mm** on Rasa, **69.1mm** at Panacan 2 and **103mm** on Katala Institute.

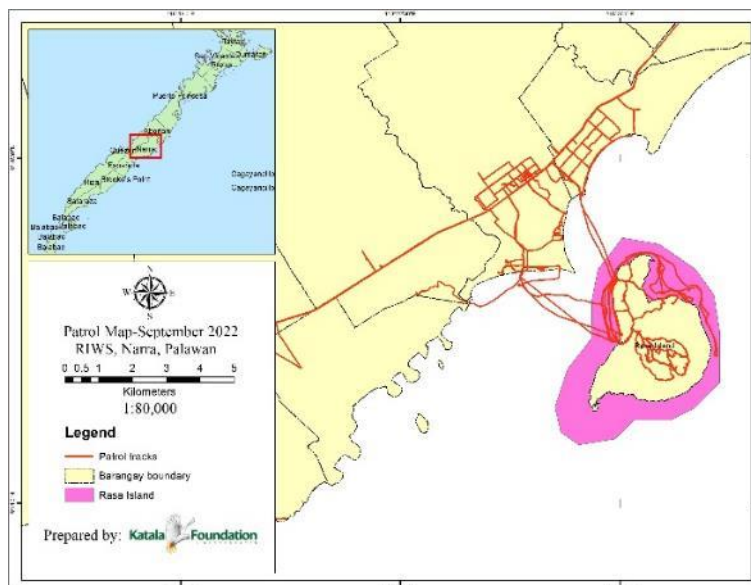


Figure 2. Patrol tracks in red marks in August 2022

Six camera traps were deployed around Rasa while two were at hanging aviary. 15 data loggers were still mounted on Rasa.

III. PATROL OBSERVATIONS

A. WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

In September 2022, fledglings were observed with adult cockatoos often during wildlife monitoring. **205 individuals** were recorded on Sept. 15 in the afternoon at traditional roost site. Cockatoos were observed sleeping on nest trees at western part of Rasa with a total of 9 individuals while 156ind were roosting on traditional roost site on Sept. 12. Meanwhile, on Sept. 17, 5:57-7:00PM, Loreto noted 6ind sleeping on branch of Baginsurod tree at Alisto area. Cockatoos left the area at 5:58AM heading Gaspar area. He also observed roosting 10 cockatoos on another nest tree at eastern Rasa on Sept. 23 at 6:20PM. No roosting cockatoos at Borbon station during schedules of roost counting.

This month, the highest foraging count is **124 individuals** alone at Borbon, Panacan station flying back from mainland to Rasa on Sept. 27, 6:30-9:46AM. 44ind were the highest foraging at Marcelo area which was also counted on Sept. 27 in the morning. Earlier on Sept. 2, a total of 67 cockatoos were recorded at Borbon and Parco, Antipuluan station with 46 and 21ind respectively. On Sept. 23, One cockatoo was foraging at Princess Urduja while on Sept. 30, a flock was recorded feeding near Parco, Antipuluan, Narra (Fig. 3). Earliest and latest foraging recorded at 6:08AM and 5:05pm at Parco and Borbon station respectively.

Other noted species in this month on Rasa were Nicobar Pigeon, Red-headed Flameback/ Woodpecker, Tabon Scrubfowl, Blue-headed Racquet-tail (BHRT), Egret sp., Western Osprey, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Oriental Dwarf-kingfisher, Great-billed Heron, Rufous Night-heron, Changeable Hawk-eagle, White bellied sea-eagle, Whimbrel, Sunbird sp., Grey-cheeked Bulbul, Large-tailed Night-jar, Green Imperial-Pigeon, Reef Egret, Greater Coucal, Pipit, Blue-Paradise Flycatcher/ Black-naped Monarch, Swiftlet sp., Ashy Drongo, White-vented Shama, Fruit-dove sp., Emerald Dove, Common Koel, Asian Glossy Starling, Rufous-tailed Tailor-bird, Dollarbird, and Zebra Dove. Monitor Lizard were frequently encountered. Wardens observed roosting site of Rufous Night-Heron (RHN) on coastal forest of Rasa on Sept. 1. Feces were noted on the ground under the trees (Fig. 4).

Spot-throated Flameback was recorded on one nest in August 30, 2022 at 9:43AM through camera trap (Fig. 5). On July 16, 2022 at 9:00AM, one cockatoo fledgling was peeking from a nest hole while an adult one was guarding (Fig. 6). Cockatoos with gold rings on left tarsus were spotted on Pagatpat nest tree which were banded in 2017 on July 15 and 17, 2022 (Fig. 7). Meanwhile, on Sept. 5, four cockatoos were spotted around Pagatpat nest on western Rasa (Fig. 8). Sleeping cockatoos were also recorded on Pagatpat nest through camera footages from August 28, 2022 to September 4, 2022 (Fig. 9).



Figure 3. Cockatoo feeds on Malunggay at Princess Urduja (left); while a flock was feeding near Parco, Antipuluan (right) ©KFI



Figure 4. Roost site of Rufous Night-Heron in coastal forest of Rasa monitored on Sept. 1 (left); Feces of RHN on ground (right) ©KFI



Figure 5. Spot-throated Flameback perching on Pagatpat nest on Aug. 30, 2022



Figure 6. Cockatoo fledgling was peeking on nest hole of Pagatpat nest tree on Rasa while the adult guided on July 16, 2022 at 9:00AM



Figure 7. Cockatoo with gold ring on left tarsus and brown/gold ring on right tarsus on July 15, 2022 on Pagatpat nest tree on Rasa (left) while on July 17, cockatoo with gold ring on left tarsus and silver/yellow/y-green ring on right tarsus was also observed on the same tree (right)



Figure 8. Four cockatoos spotted around Pagatpat nest tree on western Rasa on Sept. 5, 2022



Figure 9. Roosting cockatoos on Pagatpat nest tree from August 27, 2022 to September 4, 2022

Release of rescued Philippine Cockatoos

On Sept. 19, Angel (DENR-70-22) from Rasa and Anna (DENR-131-22) from IPPF were transferred back to Katala Institute from Rasa. The two birds were monitored weak and with decreased weight after three weeks of observation in hanging aviary. Mites were also observed on both. They were under appropriate care in bird clinic to gain weight and strength. After more observations, the two will be transferred back to Rasa for soft release.



Figure 10. Checking on cockatoos DENR 131 and 70-22 in Rasa aviary ©KFI

Vegetation assessment

In September 2022, green vegetation was predominant on Rasa both on mangrove and coastal forest (Fig. 11). Among the inventoried food-plant species for cockatoos and other fauna on Rasa, five species were fruiting namely Balete, Ginlalid, Gatasan, Kanumay and Rhizophora sp. Most food-plant species were fruiting abundantly in 2nd quarter of 2022 (Fig. 13). Some other fruiting food-plant species on Rasa were Balindadagat, Magtalisay, Pagatpat, Bogong, Lanete, Tubo bato, and vine sp. (wild orange). Likewise, Malunggay trees were fruiting in abundance at Panacan and Panacan 2, Narra between first and second quarter of the year. Malunggay trees were more fruiting at Villaruz area than on other areas in September 2022 (Fig. 14). Flowering trees and vines on Rasa were Gatasan, Magtalisay, Lanete, Kanumay and Tulang pagi. Less precipitation was noted in the 3rd quarter of than in the previous quarters of 2022 (Fig. 15).

On Sept. 1, dead Gindaon in coastal forest of Rasa fell. It was recorded occupied by cockatoos with two successful fledglings in 2021 (Fig. 12). A beehive was also observed at Alisto area which implied that vegetation on Rasa was fruiting this month (Fig. 12).

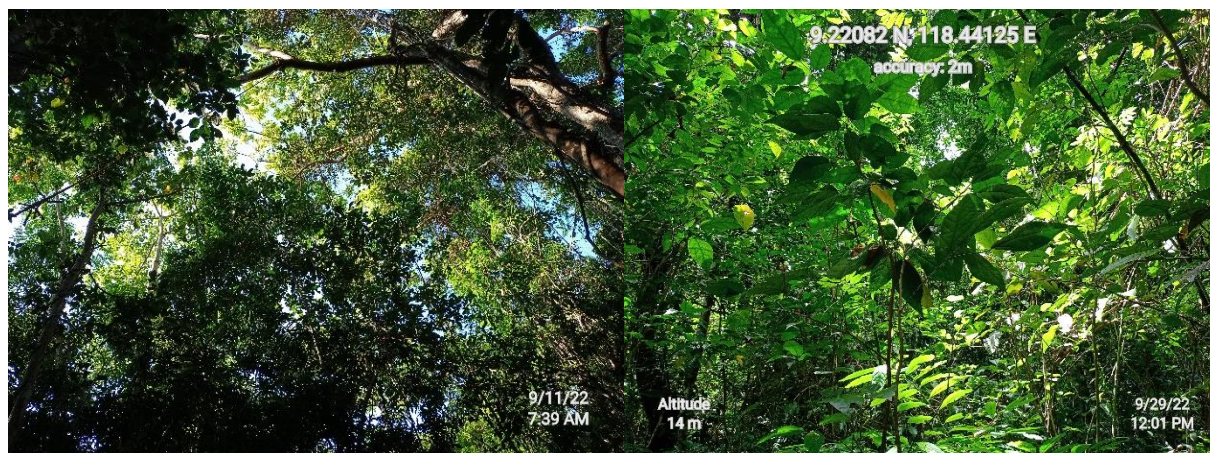


Figure 11. Green vegetation on inner coastal forest on Rasa Island ©KFI



Figure 12. Dead Gindaon on coastal forest of Rasa fell on Sept. 1 (left); Beehive near Favila area ©KFI

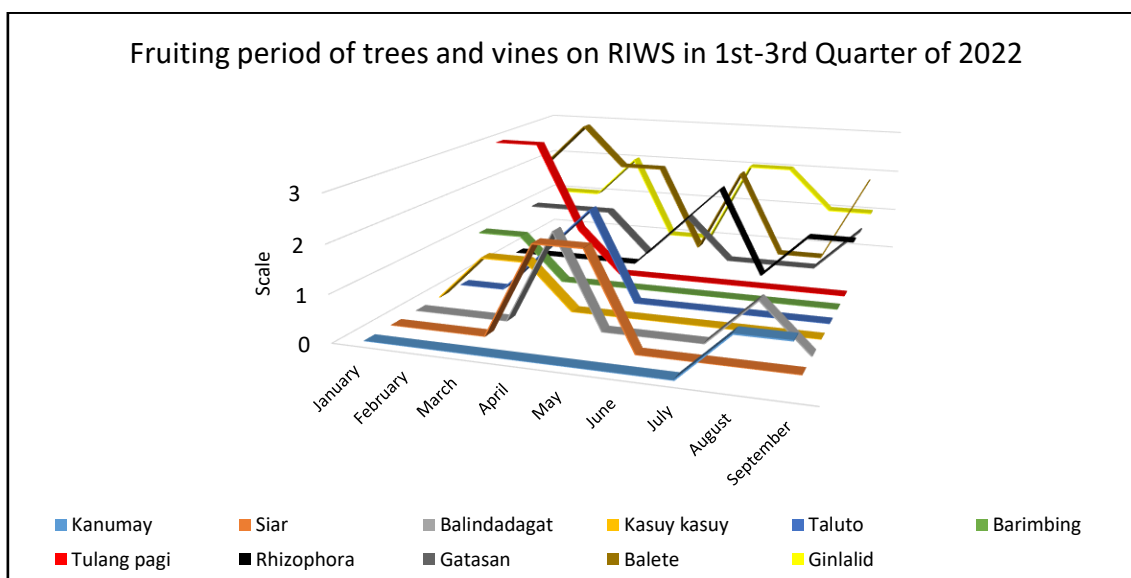


Figure 13. Fruiting period of food-plant species of cockatoos and other fauna on Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary (RIWS), Narra, Palawan in September 2022 (scale: 0-no fruit; 3-most)

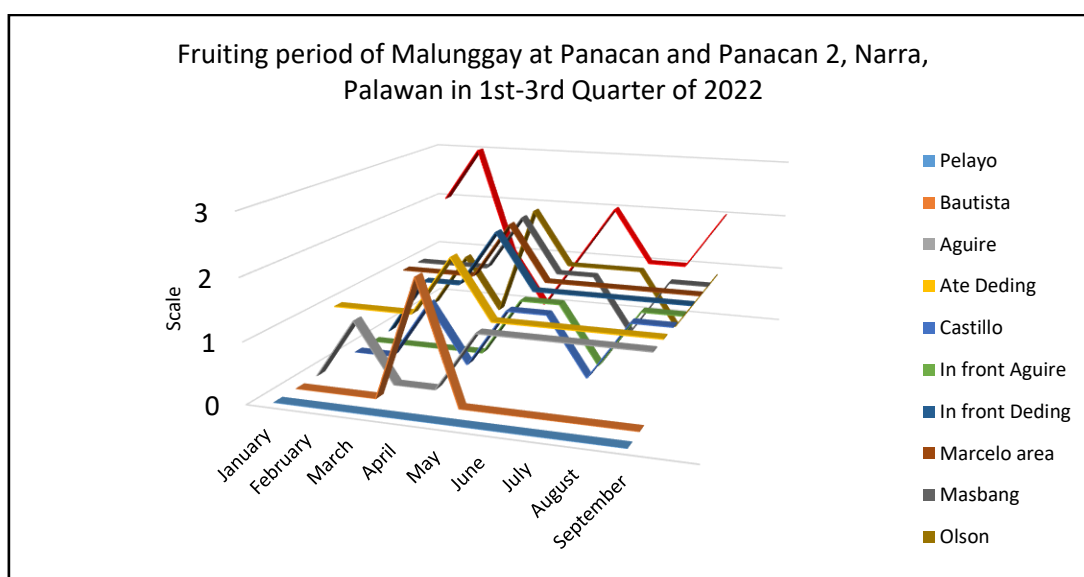


Figure 14. Fruiting period of Malunggay, most preferred food of cockatoos at Panacan and Panacan 2, Narra Palawan

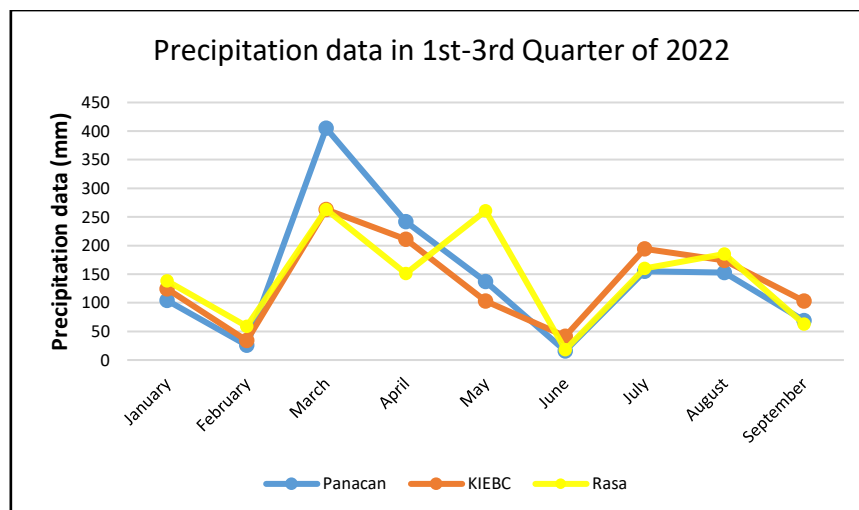


Figure 15. Precipitation data on Panacan 2, KIEBC, Antipuluan and RIWS in 1st to 3rd quarter of 2022

B. THREAT OBSERVATION

No adverse human activities observed on Rasa during monitoring. No expansion was noted on lobster fry at Borbon. Floating cage was still on its former status (Fig. 16).



Figure 16. Lobster fry pens (left) and floating cage (right) at Borbon, Panacan ©KFI

III. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Monitoring on coconut plantations on Rasa. On Sept. 20, five persons collected 800kgs of copra from Alisto area in two weeks while on Sept. 24, four persons including Boyet Villarias gathered 4000kgs of copra on Rasa in 24days.

On Sept. 14, Theresa Roessler was glad to see on Rasa Island the Philippine cockatoos, a closer relative of Tanimbar corella which she works for. She shared that she was fascinated by the cockatoos and congratulated the great conservation efforts of KFI. Theresa was assisted by Mr. J. Bautista of Protected Area Management Office (PAMO). Mario joined focus group discussion among coconut plantations claimants on Rasa which was initiated by the PAMO on Sept. 16 at Malinao, Narra (Fig. 17). Around 300ind from LGU-Narra, KFI, NGAs, academe and private sectors in Narra, Palawan participated on International Coastal Clean-up Day on Sept. 17 at the coast of Bgy. Antipuluan (Fig. 17).



Figure 17. PAMO conducts talk with Rasa claimants at Bgy. Malinao (left); BJMP personnel with KFI staff collect plastics at Antipuluan coast in celebration of International Coastal Clean-up (right) ©KFI

IV. ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS AND ACTIONS TAKEN

Owners of lobster traps at Borbon, Panacan must be continuously informed to not encroach inside Rasa boundary. Prescriptions for each zonation must be disseminated by PAO and with other PAMB members to encourage more active role in protection.

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 Calso Jr., 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 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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