

KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

November 2022 SUMMARY

IPPF-PPC, Palawan



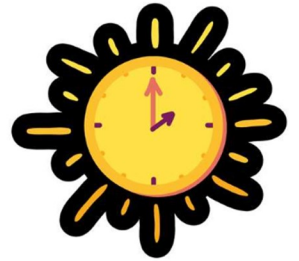
11

Bilang ng nagawang
patrolya



150.23

Kabuuang kilometrong
naabot ng patrolya



37.7

Kabuuang oras ng patrolya



1

Bilang ng illegal na
aktibidades



0

Bilang ng naaresto



1634

Bilang ng halaman sa nursery



77

Pinakamataas na bilang sa
tulugan ng Katala



2

Pinakamataas na
grupo ng Talusi na nakita



20

Pinakamataas na bilang ng
katala sa kinakainan



Anonymous
Donor



PHILIPPINE
COCKATOO
CONSERVATION
PROGRAMME



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Biodiversity Management Bureau



09675176935



048-434-7693



kficacatua2016@gmail.com



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

November 2022

Prepared by:

Matt Brian P. Ong, Vicente Abendan Jr., Peter Widmann and Indira D.L. Widmann

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 Puerto Princesa City,

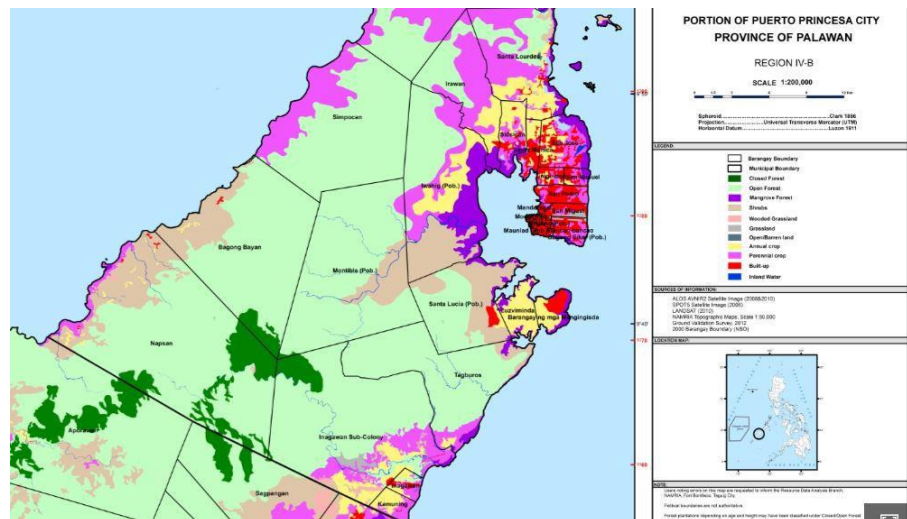


Figure 1. Land use of southern Puerto Princesa, including IPPF according to NAMRIA. Large areas were classified as open forest (bright green signature); this is not in line with observations on site, where large areas of closed forests were recorded particularly in portions of Iwahig, Tagburus ("Zigzag") and Montible (Source: NAMRIA)

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. Increased number of Philippine Cockatoo breeding pairs in Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm by at least 10% by 2024 (Baseline: average breeding pairs 2019 to 2021: 9.3).
2. Reduced threats in the area by 50% from 2022 to 2024.
3. Restored at least two hectares of cockatoo breeding and foraging habitats annually by 2024
4. Established a critical habitat for the Philippine cockatoo and other threatened wildlife species within the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm and support the protection of the proposed Montible watershed.

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 them 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, Tagbanua tribe, and wildlife wardens conducted monitoring of roosting, and foraging areas within the city, breeding habitat, and the surroundings of the penal farm. The team covered a total of **150.23 km in November**. Please refer to the list of team members on the last page.

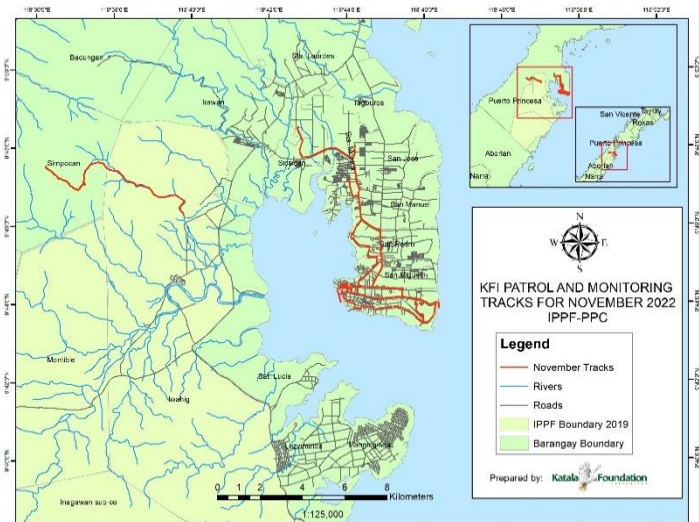


Figure 2. Patrol tracks for November 2022 ©KFI

III. PATROL OBSERVATIONS

A. WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

- *Intensive monitoring in foraging and roosting areas continued.* The highest roosting count for the cockatoo this month was **77**. Cockatoos were observed foraging in various tree species like Pagatpat, Taluto barks, Kapok, Balete, and Malunggay pods. From the roost site, cockatoos were seen crossing the mangrove area of the city to Puerto Bay, some cockatoos were also seen flying towards the old airport to San Miguel area. Cockatoos were frequently seen in a Kapok tree on Cabiguen Street near WESCOM on their way to the beach area. Other sightings of cockatoos were also reported by a concerned citizen, 10-20 cockatoos were seen foraging on a fire tree near the City Coliseum and near Shell Gas station and were heading to the beach area. Meanwhile, no cockatoos were observed roosting at the traditional roost site in Montible.
- *Field Survey in Mt. Thumbpeak.* On November 4-5, the 2nd field survey with the EDC-BINHI program continued at the higher elevations of Mt. Thumbpeak where we were able to record three priority species that were last documented from 1906 to 1911: the *Syzygium pulgarens*, *Syzygium iwagense*, and *Clethra pulgarens*. All species are critically endangered and endemic only to the highlands of Mt. Thumbpeak. We also recorded **two new species** of plant belonging to the genus *Lithocarpus* (oak) and *Scaevola*. More information on these new species will be described by UPLB botanist Prof. Pastor Malabrigo.



Figure 3. Rediscovery of *Syzygium iwagense* at 1000masl in Mt. Thumbpeak. ©MBong KFI

- *Observation of wildlife and other cavity nesters monitoring.* Volunteer inmates recorded a maximum of two hornbills that cross the Bacoco river heading to Tagtalaba forest. Some bird species recorded during the monitoring were: Blue-naped Parrots, Black-naped Oriole, Spot-throated Flameback, Blue-headed racket-tail, Palawan flowerpecker, Palawan blue flycatcher, Palawan-peacock Pheasant, and White-bellied Sea eagle. Non-avian species include tracks of Palawan Bearded Pig, Palawan porcupine, squirrels, Philippine macaques, Red-tailed green rat snake, and Palawan monitor lizards.

B. THREATS/ISSUES/ OBSERVATIONS

During the patrol period, almaciga collector was noted at the higher elevation of Mt. Thumbpeak. No other threats were documented in IPPF and in the city.

IV. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- In celebration of the Subaraw Biodiversity Festival, we joint the photo exhibit held on November 10-13 in Robinsons Place Palawan. More than 200 people took part in the discussion, played our wildlife matching game, and showcase their memory with our wildlife memory game in which they get the chance to win some tokens from us. Offices like DENR-CENRO, Conservation International, City-ENRO, PWRCC, and PCSD also joined the activity. Children, young adults, and even senior citizens had a chance to take a selfie with KFI's mascot and participated in the exhibit. The activity was mainly to educate people of all ages and from different backgrounds about the diversity and conservation of Palawan's natural resources.
- In November 16, IPPF celebrated its 118th founding anniversary where Katala Foundation was one of the awardees recognized during the event with the newly appointed CSupt. Gary A. Garcia handing the said recognition.

Figure 4. Matt Brian Ong receives the award from CSupt. Garcia of IPPF @KFI



- In November 17, KFI attended a meeting that discussed the PDRMO background and their research agenda. Some of the topics of research are the creation of information database management, the development of digitalized disaster assistance family access cards, the development of a knowledge portal, biodiversity vulnerability, climate risk assessment, and innovative nature-based flood defense. The meeting was initiated by the PCSDS and attended by PKP members for biodiversity and sustainable development.
- In November 4, the International Day of Biosphere Reserve was celebrated by PKP members where Ms. Indira was awarded Palawan Biosphere Reserve Champion for her contribution to the conservation of Palawan biodiversity.

V. ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS, AND ACTIONS TAKEN

- Increased patrolling in the sites is necessary to avert further destruction of lowland forests. Continued tree planting within these areas is a must.
- Collection of wildlings and seedlings of the 16 critically endangered species of trees should be a core project of both LGU, DENR, PCSD, and NGO to preserve and conserve this unique species that can only be found in Palawan.

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'an Mountain Range (VAMR)! Lowland forests harbor more biodiversity than montane forests; thus, they should be protected against encroachment and further destruction.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are grateful and appreciative to our partners from the DENR-CENRO Puerto Princesa City through CENRO Office and Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS) through Atty. Matta, Western Command, and Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF) through CSupt. Joel R. Calvelo and the current leadership of CSupt. Garry A. Garcia for their unrelenting support.

We also appreciate the help of CTOIII Earl Jude A. Arias from the IPPF, Prof. Pastor Malabrigo of UPLB, For. Jimson Solatre and For. Roñino Gibe of EDC-BINHI. 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!

We are indebted to the following organizations and agencies for providing funds for this project:



References

- Critchlow, R., Plumptre, A.J., Alidria, B., Nsubuga, M., Driciru, M., Rwetsiba, A., Wanyama, F., and Beale, C.M. (2017). Improving Law-Enforcement Effectiveness and Efficiency in Protected Areas Using Ranger-collected Monitoring Data. *Conservation Letters* 10, 572-580.
- IUCN (2019). IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2019.1. (www.iucnredlist.org).
- Teacher, A.G.F., Griffiths, D.J., Hodgson, D.J., and Inger, R. (2013). Smartphones in ecology and evolution: a guide for the app-rehensive. *Ecology and Evolution* 3, 5268-5278.



Figure 5. Snapshots during the Subaraw festival and photo exhibit. ©MBOn KFI



Figure 6. *Lithocarpus* sp. (top-left) and *Scaevola* sp. (top-right) two new species of plants in Mt Thumbpeak, *Syzygium pulgarens* last recorded in 1906 (middle), and *Clethra pulgarens* last recorded in 1911 (bottom). ©MBOnG KFI