

KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

January 2022 SUMMARY
Dumaran Island Critical Habitat
Dumaran, Palawan



20

Bilang ng nagawang
patrolya



244.92

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot ng
patrolya



41.33

Kabuuang oras ng
patrolya



Bilang ng natanim



0

Bilang ng nai-report sa mga
awtoridad



0

Bilang ng ilegal na
gawain na naobserba



28

Pinakamataas na bilang sa
tulugan ng Katala



4

Pinakamataas na
grupong Talusi na nakita



41

Nakitang namumunga at
namumulaklak na puno



Bilang ng napinsalang pugad ng katala
at ibang cavity nesters:

Katala— 2	Woodpecker— 4
Pikoy— 4	Talusi— 4
Kilik— 6	ANB— 2



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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.

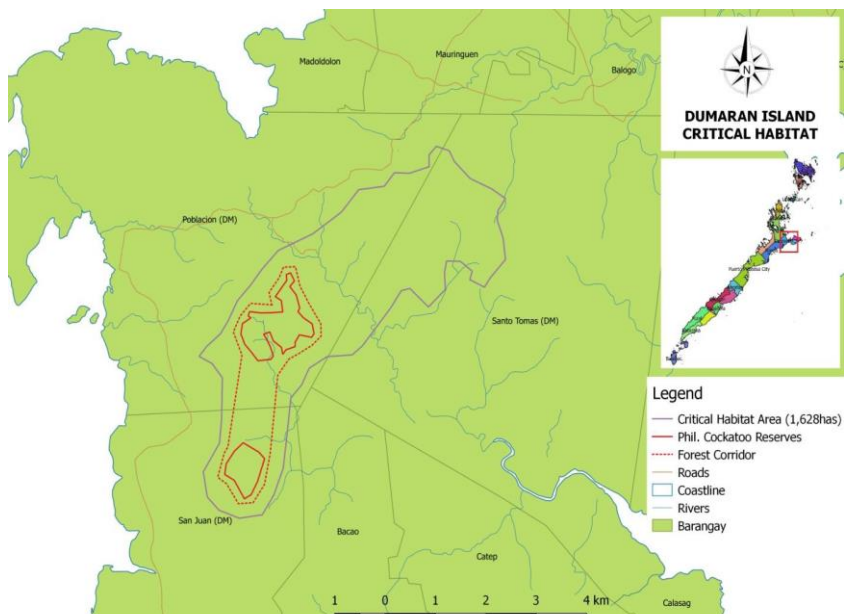


Figure 1. Dumaran Island Critical Habitat connects two locally declared cockatoo reserves and establishes a corridor through reforestation and assisted regeneration.

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 KAP 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

The monthly patrol consisted of recording fruiting wild trees for cockatoos and other wildlife as well as threat monitoring inside and outside the Critical Habitat. We have also inventoried fallen trees and nest trees in the forests. Nest monitoring and visitation were also conducted as part of the breeding season assessment. The wardens covered 244.92km and 41.33 hours from 20 patrols within the Omoi and Manangbaling Protected Area, forested area within Bulalakaw, Candez, Kasipulo and Bgy. San Juan.

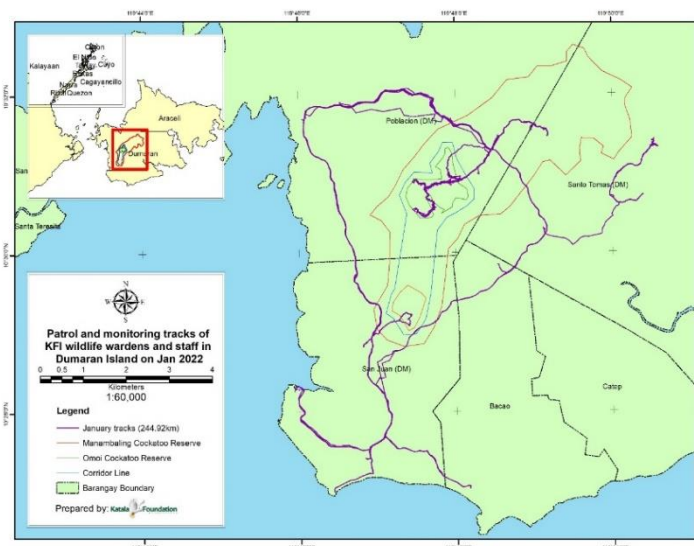


Figure 2. Patrol tracks of wildlife wardens and staff in January

Regular monitoring in the roost was conducted for the month. Fourteen to 28 cockatoos were observed in the site. In the morning, there were usually 15 cockatoos observed i.e., observed in eight days while in the afternoon the highest number i.e., 28 cockatoos, were usually observed (nine times). Fair weather was observed most of the time in the roost, with occasional strong winds brought by the Northeast Monsoon or Amihan. We also placed water basins near the roost site for the birds.



Figure 3. Nest monitoring of wildlife wardens and putting of water basins (drinking station) in nest trees (top-left); open-canopy caused by typhoon Odette in the forest of Dumarán (top-right and bottom-left); dry forest one month after the typhoon struck DICH ©KFI

PATROL OBSERVATIONS

Breeding season assessment and monitoring

Three cockatoo nest trees and two artificial nest boxes (ANB) for the species were monitored. Two of the nests and one of the ANBs have signs of occupations e.g., cut twigs. We put water basins made from bamboos on branches near the nest tree to provide water and prevent dehydration as it was so dry after the typhoon. Some fallen ANBs were also fixed. It is still difficult to traverse some nest trees due to felled trees during the typhoon last month.

Two nest trees of the Blue-headed Racquet-tail were also monitored; there were no signs of occupation. An ANB which was occupied last year by a Dollarbird was also visited; there were also no signs of occupation.

The forest canopy of the critical habitat was completely opened up, with most emergent trees succumbing to the high winds. The average height of 39 sampled fallen trees was 17.7m. Dumarán was so close to the eye of Typhoon Odette (Rai), that wind directions changed

halfway through, causing many still standing trees to fall in the opposite direction during the second half of the storm. Cockatoo count after the typhoon yielded 15 individuals, about one-third lower than expected at this time of the year. Fallen and damaged nest trees were reported last month, some of them were inside the phenology plots i.e., one Manga-manga, and two Luwas-luwas.

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

There were no fruiting and flowering trees inside the phenology plots of Omoi, Candez, and Manambaling except for a single tree each of Kulayan and Kalampinay. Three nest trees, one Manga-manga, and two Luwas-luwas, inside the Candez plot, were felled during the typhoon. Trees inside these plots have moderate to extreme leaf abscission and low- to moderate leaf growth. In Lagan phenology plot, two nest trees of Pagatpat fell. The opposite was recorded in the latter plot, where fruiting and flowering were observed but not leaf growth and abscission. A Casay nest tree was felled outside the plots.



Figure 4. Fixing of fallen ANB to supplement breeding population

There were 38 woody trees, two palms, and one shrub recorded outside the phenology plots during the month. Flowers of Amuraon, Binunga, Casay, and Catmon among others are eaten by cockatoos and other birds while fruits of Anan, Apatot, Balite, Bangkudo, Binatalan, Bunuang, Bunot-bunot to name a few, are eaten by local birds. The recorded palms were Barok and Batbat, whose fruits are eaten by monkeys, wild pigs, and bats. The sole shrub recorded was Berrie, whose fruits are favorites of sunbirds and bulbuls.

Palawan Hornbill Monitoring

Hornbills were observed on the island ranging from a single individual to groups of two to four hornbills. They were observed foraging, perching, and calling in Kulayan, Balite, Narra, Luwas-luwas, Gmelina, Iniam, Amugis, and Taluto trees at Omoi, Candez, Manambaling, Poblacion, and Bulalakaw areas. Most of the observations (11) were taken in Omoi. A dead hornbill was also recorded during patrolling; it probably died due to starvation after the typhoon as it was emaciated with its keel so protruding.

Other wildlife species

Thirty-nine species were recorded in the Biodiversity Monitoring System (BMS) Stations in DICH while 31 species were recorded in Omoi reforestation site. Nineteen species were recorded in both sites which included Ashy-headed Babbler, Ashy Drongo, Asian Glossy Starling, Black-naped Oriole, Common Iora, Copper-throated Sunbird, Dollar Bird, Green Imperial Pigeon, Grey-cheeked Bulbul, Hill Mynah, Palawan Water Monitor, Olive-winged Bulbul, Palawan Hornbill, Pink-necked Green-pigeon, Red Junglefowl, Spotted Dove, Palawan Tree Squirrel, and Zebra Dove.



Figure 5. A dead hornbill retrieved during monitoring (left); and a Red-headed Flameback observed during patrolling (right)

III. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

As of this writing, there are 7889 wildlings in the main nursery after 341 wildlings died (4% mortality rate). Most of the wildlings are Nato, Palomaria, and Dumarang. In Candez nursery, a total of 1409 wildlings remained after 26 wildlings died and 43 wildlings were collected; most of these are Nato, Bolabog, and Magabo. In Manambaling satellite nursery, there are 1273 wildlings in which Palomaria, Baslayan, and Bunog are the most abundant. There are no wildlings in the growth chamber.

There were only three and four rainfall data recorded in Candez and Omoi area for a total of 70mm and 109 mm rainfall respectively. No rainfall data was recorded in Lagan. Due to the absence of rainfall, tree planting was not conducted this month. Nursery repairs were conducted this month which consisted of roof shedding and the comfort room repair and removal of destroyed wildlings and fallen trees.



Figure 6. Nursery works including repairs and watering of seedlings.

Bayanihan spirit to help fellow wardens after the typhoon was continuous; support and donations for them were given by partners and funders.



Figure 7. Hauling of rice donations from mainland to Dumarán Island (top); corrugated galvanized iron sheets (bottom-left) and the donated rice (bottom-right) for the wildlife wardens

The KFI field station was greatly damaged. We are negotiating with LGU-Dumarán for its immediate repair. Assessment of the damage and an estimate for its repair is on-going through the Engineering's office and we hope to raise funds for such repair.



Figure 8. The current state of KEEC after the typhoon. Roofs were destroyed as well as walls and gates of the center.

IV.ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS, AND ACTIONS TAKEN

Increased patrolling is necessary to ensure that fire is avoided. We are thankful to the mayor of Dumarán, Mayor Arnel Caabay, who has issued an Executive Order, banning all open fires in forest vicinity, to support KFI's patrol and LGU's efforts to save the forests. Other risks also need to be mitigated by 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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We are indebted to our deputized wardens of Dumaran: Nestor Arzaga, Orlando Balmonte, Felipe Condesa, Eddie Derecho, Angelu Paduga, Maximo Pineda and volunteers Domingo Sy and Andres Aurelio for their services and efforts provided to the KFI-PCCP Dumaran project.

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