

# KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

## January 2022 SUMMARY

### Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary and its environs, Narra, Palawan



20

Bilang ng nagawang  
patrolya



0

Bilang ng illegal na  
kailangang aksyunan



256.2

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot  
ng patrolya



0

Bilang ng mga issues na  
nai-report sa PAMO



73.8

Kabuuang oras ng  
patrolya



0

Bilang ng naaresto



194

Pinakamataas na bilang sa  
tulugan ng Katala



37

Bilang ng ibang uri ng  
ibon na nakita



90

Pinakamataas na bilang  
ng Katala sa kinakainan



7

Uri ng halamang namumunga



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

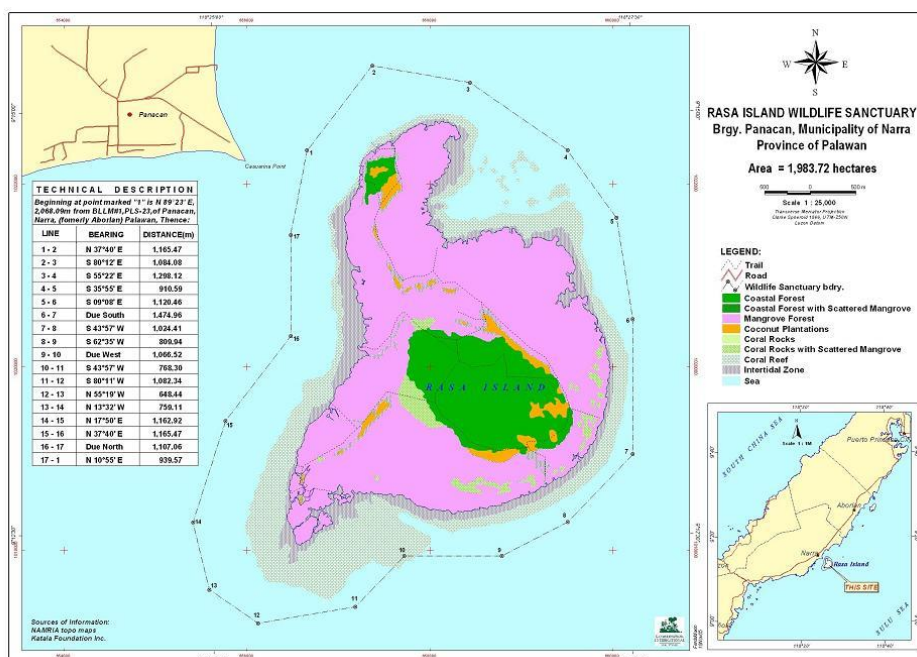
**JANUARY 2022**

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 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

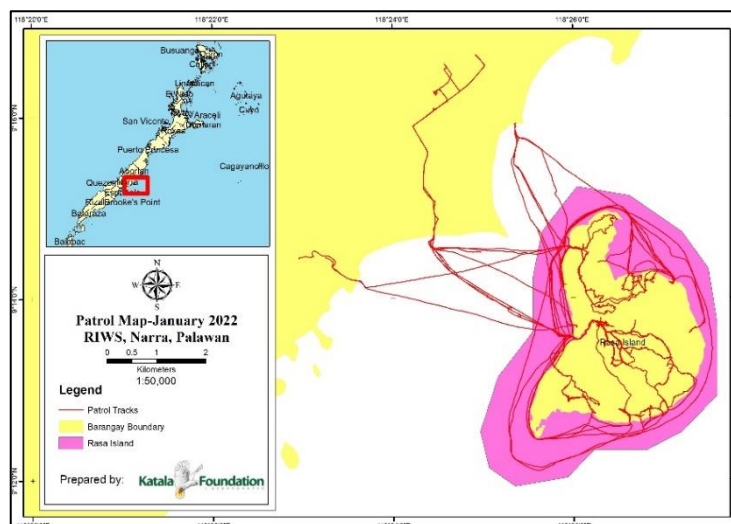
1. Stabilized number of Philippine Cockatoo breeding pairs on Rasa Island and vicinity by 2024 (Baseline: average breeding pairs from 2019 to 2021: 33.0).
2. Conducted weekly patrol and permanent presence of wildlife wardens with daily reports during breeding season per year.
3. Increased at least 20 percentage points in KAP survey results by 2024.
4. Rehabilitated at least one hectare per year through reforestation or enrichment planting within cockatoo foraging area.
5. Monitored and reduced 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

All active nest trees were visited in January 2022. Of those visited, 48 nest trees and one new potential nest tree (NPT) exhibit indications of occupation. Eight individuals were the highest recorded number around nest trees on Rasa specifically on two nests on coastal forest. 15 Data loggers were installed on nest trees while seven camera traps were retrieved and mounted back randomly on Rasa. Teams' monitoring covered **256.2kms**. Total of precipitation in January 2022: **138mm** on Rasa, **104mm** on mainland.

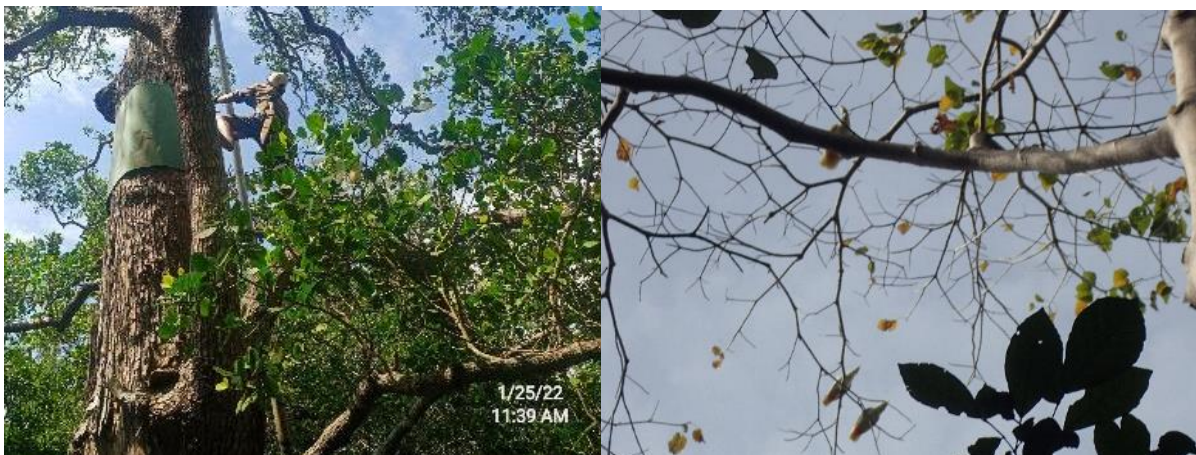


**Figure 2.** Patrol tracks in red marks in January 2022





**Figure 3.** Reynaldo and Mark set up camera trap on coastal forest in Rasa (left); Data logger mounted in the nest chamber (right) ©KFI



**Figure 4.** Mario checks on Pagatpat nest tree for potential occupation (left); Philippine Cockatoo observes during nest monitoring (right) ©KFI

### III. PATROL OBSERVATIONS

#### A. WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

This month, Philippine cockatoos were frequently observed with sub-adults and some were even fed. In Jan. 14, one nest in coastal forest was observed with eight cockatoos around that included two sub-adults of which one was the released bird in November 2021.

**194 individuals** were recorded on traditional roost site by Lucito on Jan. 10, gathering from 5:28pm and hovered on patches of lower *Rhizophora* sp. at 5:40pm. During our synchronized counting in Jan. 6 (PM) and 7 (AM), Loreto counted 157 and 171ind respectively while Lucito also counted cockatoos on nest trees on northwest Rasa. No cockatoos were observed roosting at Borbon, Panacan and Asinan area during sync counts.

**90 individuals** (including nine sub-adults) were recorded crossing at Borbon station (from Borbon to Rasa) in the afternoon of Jan. 19 basically after foraging. During our sync counts on different stations, less cockatoos were crossing from Rasa to mainland in the afternoon while more were crossing back to Rasa particularly at Borbon station. During early mornings of this month, we noted strong winds that could affect the foraging of cockatoos early in the morning. This month less cockatoos were observed crossing to forage in the morning in our timed counts. Moreover, 14ind were the highest recorded foraging cockatoos at Katala lot in Panacan 2 on Jan. 26 at 6:27am. At Panacan station, cockatoos were mainly passing by and flying along the



coast due to Malinao. Cockatoos' flight to mainland in January 2022 is earliest at 6:15am and latest at 6:19pm recorded at Borbon station.

Beside the flagship species Philippine Cockatoo, other noted species in January 2022 were Red-headed Flameback, Grey Imperial-Pigeon, Tabon Scrubfowl, Blue-headed Racquet-tail, Nicobar Pigeon, Mantanani Scops-owl, Egret sp., Pied Imperial-Pigeon, Western Osprey, Spotted Wood-owl, White-bellied Sea-eagle, Changeable Hawk-eagle, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Oriental Dwarf-kingfisher, Common Tern, Blue-Paradise Flycatcher, Pink-necked Green-Pigeon, Sunbird sp., Great-billed Heron, Rufous Night-heron, Whimbrel, Reef Egret, Green Imperial-Pigeon, Swiftlet sp., Ashy Drongo, Large-tailed Night-jar, Quail, White-vented Shama, Greater Coucal, Common Koel, Emerald Dove, Rufous-tailed Tailor-bird, Pipit, Asian Glossy Starling, Dollarbird, and Zebra Dove. This month, Blue-naped Parrot is also observed. Monitor Lizard is also frequently encountered.

In Jan. 1, Bernito observed one marine turtle on seas in front of Rasa. On Jan. 2, 11ind of Grey Imperial-Pigeon were flying from mangrove to coastal forest. 9ind of Pied Imperial-pigeon were noted feeding on Buri fruits at Kaburihan on Jan. 6, while 7ind of Blue-headed Raquet-tail were flying from Tugbuan Caguisan to Villarias at 2:27pm. Mantanani-Scops-owl and Spotted Wood-owl were mainly observed at northern Rasa particularly near Mario and Espinosa's area.



**Figure 5.** Footages from camera trap at Alisto area: Monitor Lizard (left) and Tabon Scrubfowls (right)

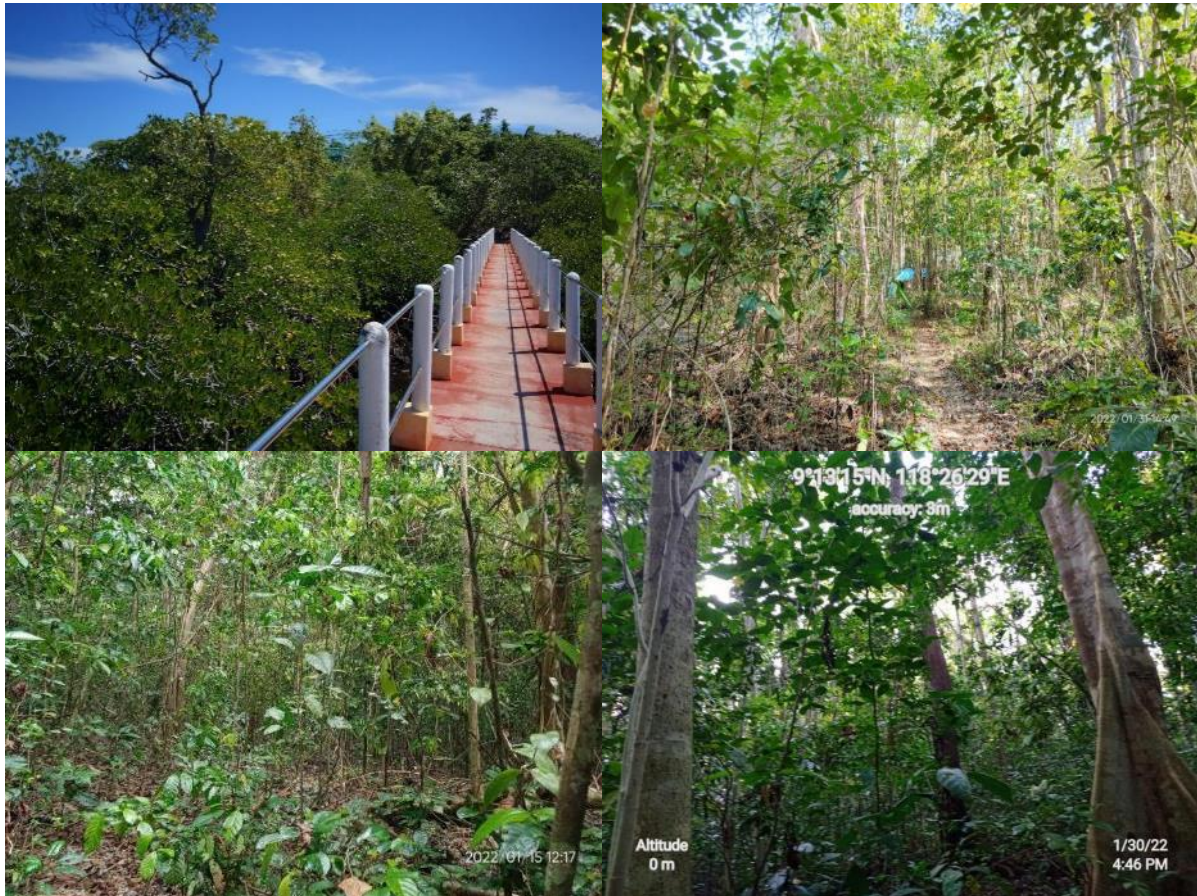
### ***Vegetation assessment***

In January 2022, Rasa exhibits greener vegetation, thanks to some rain after Typhoon Odette (Fig. 7). Fruiting trees and vines: Tulang-pagi, Lomo-lomo, Buntot-daga, Pagatpat, Gatasan, Barenben, *Rhizophora* sp. and other mangrove species. Flowering trees: Ginlalid, Gatasan, Balete, Rotok-rotok, *Rhizophora* sp. and other mangrove species.



**Figure 6.** Fruits of Tulang-pagi (left) and Lomo-lomo (right) are the most abundant on Rasa this month ©KFI





**Figure 7.** Green vegetation on Rasa Island in January 2022 ©KFI

Wardens also completed the hatchling area inside the camp on Rasa Island.



**Figure 8.** Hatchling area on campsite in preparation for this year's breeding season of Philippine Cockatoo ©KFI



## B. THREAT OBSERVATION

No adverse human activities observed on Rasa during monitoring. No nest trees on Rasa Island were seriously affected after typhoon Odette hit Palawan. Though some trees and branches on coastal and mangrove forest fell, most were not greatly affected. On Jan. 1, a collapsed Taluto leaning on nest tree on coastal forest was removed immediately to avoid predators from climbing up to nest hole. Likewise, a nest tree on mangrove area (most nearly dropped active nest) is still upright as well as the dead Gindaon on coastal forest (See figure 9).

Floating cage is still monitored at 20m away from 09°14'13.2"N, 118°25'15.8"E. No expansion noted during monitoring. Lobster traps are still at 20m away from 09°14'35.7"N, 118°25'36.9"E (Fig. 10).



**Figure 9.** Some collapsed trees (top); Standing dead Gindaon on coastal forest which was not affected even by strong winds (left bottom); and some barely dropped mangroves on Rasa north (right bottom) ©KFI



**Figure 10.** Lobster traps at Borbon (left) and floating fish cage near old trident pier (right) in Jan. 31, 2022 ©KFI

### III. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

*Monitoring on coconut plantations on Rasa.* No adverse human activities observed during visits. On Jan. 4, two persons gathered 100kgs of copra at B. Batac area for four days and on Jan. 22, they collected 300kgs of copra in five days at the same area. Moreover, on Jan. 26, six persons caught 3000pcs of coconut on Rasa in two days. On Jan. 24 at 3:00pm, five persons were gathering copra at Alisto area.

*Monitoring on marine resources on Rasa.* On Jan. 5, E. Paragatos fished on northeast Rasa. Two persons gathered 40kg of fish on Jan. 23 around Rasa for 6hrs.

In celebration of National Bird Day, awareness on local bird species in Palawan through a short quiz was conducted online at PCCP Fb page. Philippine Cockatoo and Palawan Hornbill were featured.

On Jan. 28, Indira and Peter presented to Mayor Danao the landscape approach project entitled “Nature-based management of Tuas Watershed (Taritien River), Narra, Palawan (Fig. 11).

This month, wardens have had their annual medical check-up which is also essential for renewal of deputation. On Jan. 12, Mario joined site monitoring and wildlings collection at So. Apis, Bgy. Apoc-apoc, Aborlan for forest rehabilitation activities..



**Figure 11.** Peter presented the proposal to Narra Municipal Mayor Danao



**Figure 12.** Reynaldo assembles woods for herbarium in preparation for collection and identification of wildlings and eventually on management of areas for rehabilitation ©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. Case filed against establishment of fish corral on Rasa must progress. Collection of fossilized Taklobo shells has been rampant even in other municipalities of Palawan hence intensive 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 BATA, MARIO BATA, LUCITO DANGIS, Veronica Marcelo, Danilo Villaruz, Monico Beleg and Antonio Marcelo.

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