

# KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

February 2022 SUMMARY  
IPPF-PPC, Palawan



11

Bilang ng nagawang  
patrolya



221.4

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot ng  
patrolya



56.8

Kabuuang oras ng patrolya



5

Bilang ng illegal na  
aktibidades



0

Bilang ng naaresto



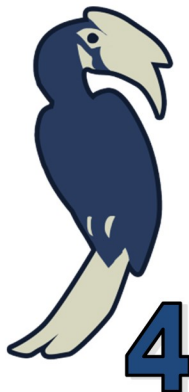
877

Bilang ng halaman sa nursery



73

Pinakamataas na bilang sa  
tulugan ng Katala



4

Pinakamataas na  
grupo ng Talusi na nakita



35

Pinakamataas na bilang ng  
katala sa kinakainan



5

Bilang ng pugad na may indi-  
kasyon ng cavity nester



Anonymous  
Donor



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

**February 2022**

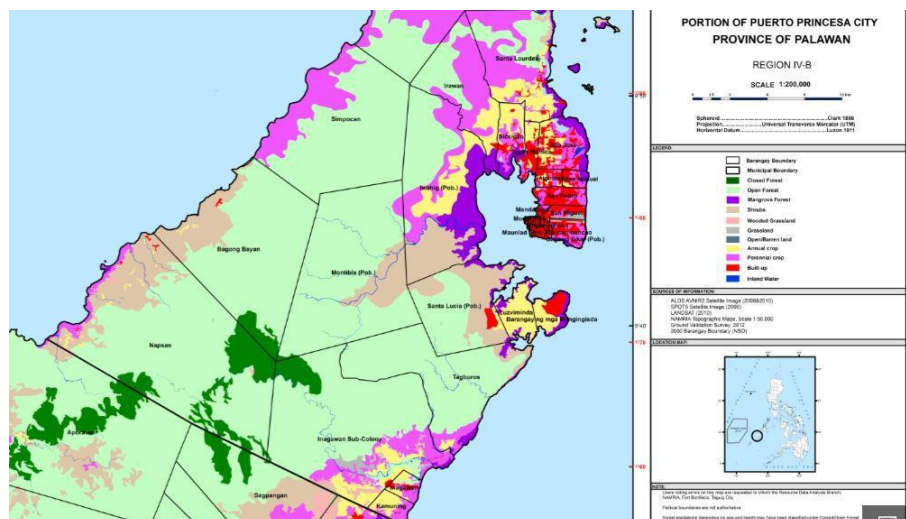
Prepared by:

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### 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



**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)

Princesa City, 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.

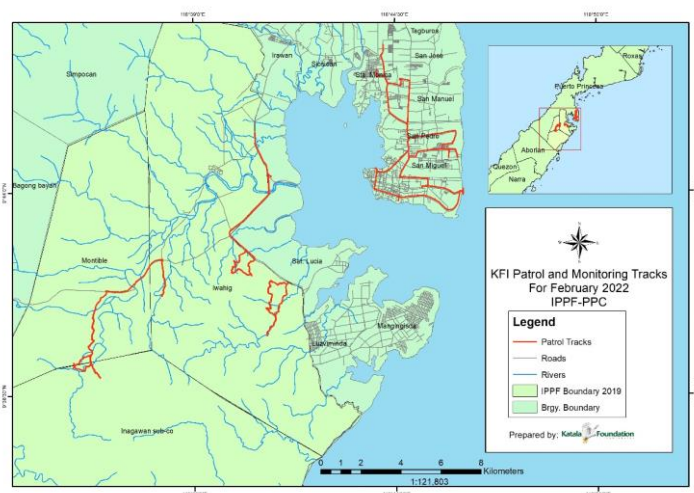
### Methods

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 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 comprises KFI, PCSDS, DENR, IPPF personnel, and wildlife wardens conducted patrol monitoring. The main areas monitored were foraging areas in the city and the surroundings of the penal farm. The team conducted 16 patrols and covered **221.4 Km** for January. Please refer to the list of team members on the last page.



**Figure 2.** Patrol tracks for February 2022 ©KFI

### III. PATROL OBSERVATIONS

#### A. WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

- *Intensive monitoring on foraging and roosting area continued.* This month, roosting cockatoos were monitored in two roost sites within the penal farm and the city area. The highest recorded count in the city was 73, while there were no roosting cockatoos at Montible roost site. At day time (5:30 AM-6:35 PM), cockatoos in the city were observed foraging Pagatpat and Malunggay before dispersing in different parts of the city. In Bgy. San Miguel, 1-9 cockatoos were observed flying towards the WESCOM seaside, and some were seen flying, heading to San Pedro area. Concerned citizens also reported cockatoo sightings in the Mandaragat area. At the roost site, we observed that cockatoos struggle against strong winds. We noted that some Taluto, Malabulak, and Banaran are now flowering or fruiting in the city area while Pagatpat fruits are getting scarce. In Montible, cockatoos were observed flying from Malabo Forest crossing Tagtalaba and Bacoco river to Iwahig central to forage on other species of fruiting trees in the area.
- The composite team of KFI, PCSD, and DENR conducted nest monitoring, and forest assessment in Malabo, Tagtalaba, Menor, Sta. Lucia and Luzviminda forest. Sixteen nest trees, including some inactive nest trees, were visited for the month. Seven out of the sixteen nest trees indicated that cockatoo or other cavity-nesting birds are prepared. Feces and feathers were observed on the tree base and inside the nest cavities. One nest tree was occupied by a pair of Palawan flying squirrels in Sta. Lucia.
- The team also observed a higher number of cockatoos in their natural breeding ground in Montible, Malabo, and Sta. Lucia. While patrolling, we observed 3-9 cockatoos near the nest trees; very likely influencing the low counts at the city roosting area. The Montible roost yield no birds since the start of the month.
- *Observation of wildlife and other cavity nesters monitoring.* Four Hornbills were seen foraging in Malabo Forest, and some were observed in an acacia tree near the sub-colony. We also recorded Blue-naped Parrot, Blue-headed racket-tail, White-bellied sea eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher, Black-naped Oriole, Common Iora, Palawan Drongo, Palawan tit, Rufous-tailed tailorbird, Melodious babbler; Ashy fronted Bulbul, White-vented Shama, Palawan Flycatcher. Non-avian species include Palawan-Flying Squirrel, Palawan Stink badger, Palawan bearded pig, and a Paradise tree snake.

#### B. THREAT OBSERVATIONS

During the nest monitoring in Luzviminda, at least ten remnants of felled trees were already hauled. Meanwhile, in Malabo Forest, we documented at least two felled trees already in desired size and sliced with a chainsaw. No one was on site during the monitoring. Also, in Malabo forest, we encountered a certain Eric Villegas, resident of Barangay San Manuel, in his campsite which was a kilometer away from a known nest tree. Shavings of rattans were seen in the area. When interviewed, he stated that the rattan would be sold for 5 pesos per bundle in the city. The representative from DENR asked him to finish the last set of rattan and leave the area and was warned that a case be filed if no permit can be shown.

Meanwhile, we also observed some signs of poaching in Menor forest, foot tracks near the nest trees were seen 5 meters along the trail. An informant in Luzviminda reported that persecution of birds for meat consumption, especially hornbills were still prominent in the area.

### IV. Other Highlights

A tree planting activity was conducted in kilometer 31, Montible, on February 4, as part of the TOWWEST 49<sup>th</sup> pre-anniversary activities. The activity was initiated by the Tactical Operation Wing West led by their Wing Commander BGEN. Elpidio B. Talja PAF, with KFI, DENR-CENRO, City-ENRO, IPPF-BuCor, and other stakeholders. DENR-CENRO donated a total of 100 Narra and 100 Ipil trees; while 50 Bayoso and 50 Nato were sourced from KFI's nursery. After the program KFI staff measured planted trees within a plot for monitoring purposes.

Two representatives from KFI's partners visited our project sites in IPPF in particular at the nursery and the artificial nest boxes locations. In Montible nursery, fences were repaired with the help of three volunteer inmates from the sub-prison.

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

- During the monitoring, we observed several illegally cut trees. Since the DENR and PCSDS representatives were present during said monitoring, we hope these illegal activities are also reported to their respective offices. The temporary ban on the use of chainsaws for clearing up felled trees apparently is misused.
- Increased patrolling in the sites is necessary to avert further destruction on lowland forests.
- Reconstruction of fencing of Montible nursery is near completion while we start with construction of the small hut to store equipment and serve as seedlings shade. Improvised seed partitions and seedbeds will be made to accommodate wildlings and seedlings that will be collected for the subsequent months.

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

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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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!

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**Figure 3.** KFI's partners visited Montible nursery and Balasahan River where two artificial nest boxes were installed (top). Wildlife warden Jericho climbing cockatoo nest tree (mid-left) and signs of occupation on the base of the nest tree (mid-right). Snapshots during the tree planting activity in kilometer 31 in Montible. ©MBong KFI



**Figure 5.** Ramp/pathway of illegally cut trees in Luzviminda (top-left). Camp of rattan collector in Malabo forest one kilometer away from a known nest tree (top-right). Illegally cut trees in Luzviminda and Malabo forests (middle photos), slabs of lumber that was hidden underground (bottom-left), and cockatoo sharing its food that was observed in a known foraging ground in the city (bottom-right). ©MBong, KFI



**Figure 5.** Felled trees in Malabo forest as seen from above (top photo) and encroachment and kaingin areas in Luzviminda forest. (bottom photo) ©MBong, KFI