



Contact: Dr. Sabine Schoppe
Director Philippine Freshwater Turtle Conservation
Program
Katala Foundation Inc.
Telephone No: 048-4347693
Email: sabine_schoppe@web.de

PRESS RELEASE **For Immediate Release**

Dumarao Youth celebrates Bakoko (Turtle) Day

February 20, 2017 – 5th Bakoko Day in Barangay Dumarao, Roxas. Bakoko is the local name for turtle of the people in Northern Palawan there the Palawan Forest Turtle is at home.

For the past five years, KFI in collaboration with the local government of Barangay Dumarao are celebrating Bakoko Day during the annual Foundation Day of the village. The day is dedicated to the Palawan Forest Turtle *Siebenrockiella leytenis* which is still relatively common in the wetlands of the village. In 2012, the village had adopted the species as its flagship species and sponsored a resolution to protect the populations of the species in Dumarao.

To celebrate Bakoko Day we invite students from the five Elementary Schools and the National High School in Dumarao. For the first three years this was an indoor activity and the highlight was a lecture about turtles and their habitats and subsequent Quiz Bee. Although well accepted and successful we decided in 2016 to have outdoor activities which would allow us to involve a higher number of students. At the same time the students would be closer to the Palawan Forest Turtle, its habitats and threats. This years' highlight was an "Amazing Race" with the theme "Share a place to live". Five teams of high school students had to answer questions, identify food trees, complete puzzles, come up with slogans and provide their ideas of what a student can do to protect turtles and their habitats. Meanwhile elementary students enjoyed environmental games like "Safe me", "Water is life", relay, question and answers etc. More than 200 students, teachers, parents and barangay officials attended Bakoko Day 2017.

Katala Foundation Inc. (KFI) works since 2007 on the conservation of the endemic Palawan Forest Turtle in Barangay Dumarao. It is in Dumarao where the first protected area for a freshwater turtle in the Philippines was established in 2013.

For more information, please contact Sabine Schoppe, Katala Foundation, P.O. Box 390, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan or at sabine_schoppe@web.de and visit our homepage at www.philippinecockatoo.org.

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Some 200 students attended Bakoko Day in Dumarao on Feb. 20, 2017.



The Amazing Race winning team received school supplies, wrist watches, certificates and a cash gift. Here with village councillor Delfin Gabo and Program Director Sabine.