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PRESS RELEASE

THE PHILIPPINE COCKATOO FESTIVALS – Biodiversity is LIFE The Kalabukay and Katala Festivals

J-Kris C. Gaño and Debbie van den Beukel

10 June 2012, Palawan, Philippines – Come, celebrate and have fun while learning about conservation and its importance!

The most awaited annual fun and exciting Philippine cockatoo festivals initiated by the Katala Foundation (KFI) are just days away! Kalabukay Festival of the Municipality of Dumarán in Palawan will be held on June 17 while Katala Festival of the Municipality of Narra is set on the 22nd. Kalabukay Festival, which is on its 9th year now, is celebrated in partnership with Dumarán National High School and the Local Government Unit of Dumarán. It is celebrated along with the municipality's founding anniversary. Meanwhile, the 6th Katala Festival is held in cooperation with the Local Government Unit of Narra.

The Kalabukay Festival will showcase a whole fun day activity packed with exciting and entertaining actions like tree planting, basic bird watching exposure, face painting, interactive lectures, contests and games. Every year in Dumarán, the local partners, the KFI's youth arm Katala Children's Club (KCC) and the community look forward to celebrating the festival with much excitement and preparations. This year the KCC members prepared a special production number conveying conservation messages through guerilla marketing of conservation.

In Narra, different exciting and interactive activities are in line for the kids and adults alike. It kicks off with tree planting in the morning and then starts the Fun Day with street drawing, interpretative speed painting contest, extemporaneous speaking contest, environmental chant contest and more bird coloring and face painting.

These festivals hope to increase awareness and knowledge and further influence community's positive behavior towards protection and conservation. With understanding, follows pride and a willing heart to take on the shared responsibility to protect and conserve cockatoo habitats and important watersheds.

For several years of conducting these festivals, the awareness of the local community on protection and conservation is remarkably increasing.

Kalabukay and Katala are local terms for the critically endangered Philippine cockatoo *Cacatua haematuropygia*. Katala Foundation uses this endemic bird as its flagship species to achieve its vision of conserving biodiversity with the active community involvement.

For more information about the PCCP, please contact Indira Widmann, Katala Foundation, P.O. Box 390, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan or at idlacerna@yahoo.com or www.philippinecockatoo.org.

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Editor's Note:

- Katala Foundation, Inc. implements the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Programme (PCCP) presently in 3 project sites in Palawan: Dumarán, Rizal and Narra, being the pilot site in 1998.