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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For immediate release**

**Philippine Cockatoo in the City: A call for more green spaces and an informed citizenry**

**Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.** Over 30 individuals of the critically endangered Philippine Cockatoo were sighted within Puerto Princesa City from August to September 2016. The Katala as locally known were recorded foraging in fruiting trees situated within the last stands of coastal forests in the city proper. This is shortly after this year's breeding season of the species.

Prompted by the urgency to ensure their protection against persecution and possible, the Katala Foundation launched an intensive conservation education campaign to 17 priority elementary and secondary schools within August to September 2016. A total of 1,193 elementary and secondary students were reached out within the period. All participants were subjected to pre- and post- exposure surveys to measure the effectiveness of the intervention. The occurrence of the correct/desirable answers increased by an average of 33 percentage points after the intervention.

Three modules—Philippine and Palawan Biodiversity, Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program (PCCP) and Climate Change were prepared for the school visits. Initial results revealed an average of 34 percentage points (up from 46%) increase in knowledge of the students about Philippine Cockatoo, biodiversity and climate change. In terms of attitude towards co-existence between the Philippine Cockatoo and other wildlife resources with humans, 38% points increase (up from 10%) was achieved. We also tried to measure the student's perception on how they could help in the conservation of the Katala and other wildlife. This revealed 27% points increase (up from 51%) of students knowing doable ways/activities wherein they could help to include in particular refraining from persecuting the Philippine Cockatoo as well as other bird species using slingshot (pagtitirador), dumping their thrashes properly, reporting the observed illegal activities to authorities and sharing what they learned from the campaign to other students.

The Katala Foundation encourages more green spaces within the city amidst all development plans not only for the unique biodiversity of the island province but also for its constituents to enjoy the benefits of green spaces and corridors. Priority schools were those which are within the foraging, nesting, roosting and/or flyway of the Philippine Cockatoos. School visits ended with the Katala Fun Day when the famous mascot Katala danced with the students. We also awarded top students and schools with high percentage points increase. Valentin Macasaet Elementary School bagged as the top school among the 17 priority schools followed by San Miguel National High School and San Miguel Elementary School. All students participated and enjoyed the prepared environmental games for everyone.

The sighting of the Katala in the city is regularly monitored by the KFI as this route is already established since years. It is hoped that many more monitors will volunteer to provide substantial counts of sightings. These birds are residents at the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF), where the third-most globally important population of critically endangered Philippine Cockatoo is located. The IPPF is a project site of the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program implemented by the KFI.

For more information, please contact Mary Chris Nierves, Katala Foundation, P.O. Box 390, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan or at mcnierves2313@gmail.com and visit our homepage at [www.philippinecockatoo.org](http://www.philippinecockatoo.org).

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**Editor's Note:**

- Katala Foundation, Inc. (KFI) uses the endemic Philippine cockatoo as its flagship species to achieve its vision of conserving biodiversity with the active community involvement. The IPPF is a project
- The IPPF-BCP is a joint effort of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff, DENR-CENRO Puerto Princesa City, Katala Foundation Inc. and the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm.
- Pictures attached:

**CE-Press Release Photos:**



Awarding of Plaque to San Miguel National High School as one of the top three schools for CE 2016



All out acting during Paint Me a Picture game in Matahimik-Bucana NHS Science Camp



Finding the Answer game in Iwahig Elementary School



Face Painting in Wescom Elementary School



Kataly dance showdown with the Iwahig ES students



Kataly interaction with the Luzviminda Elementary Schools students



Kataly dance showdown with West Central School students