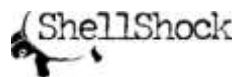


KATALA INSTITUTE FOR ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION (KIEBC)

Annual Report 2010



By



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Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines

June 2011

**KATALA INSTITUTE FOR ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
(KIEBC)**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name: KATALA Institute for Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation (KIEBC)

Location: Antipuluan, Narra, Palawan, Philippines

Proponent: KATALA Foundation, Inc., (KFI)
2nd Floor JMV Building, National Highway, Santa Monica, Puerto Princesa
City 5300 Palawan, Philippines
Mailing address: P.O. Box 390, Puerto Princesa 5300
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Environmental Compliance Certificate: ECC-4B-042-PA-5012-2007

SEP Clearance: KFI-121505-006

Goal: Conservation of Palawan's biodiversity through establishment of an education, conservation and research institution in close vicinity to threatened target species and ecosystems.

Objectives: To serve as a venue for conservation education with local population, youth, national and international visitors as main target groups.
To develop procedures for rescue, conservation breeding, habitat restoration and eventually re-introduction of selected highly threatened wild species of Palawan, like Philippine cockatoo and Philippine forest turtle.
To establish an institution for research on applied ecology and biodiversity conservation, with focus on threatened species management, priority area conservation and restoration.

Time Frame: Preparatory Phase: August to November 2006
Operational Phase One: December 2006 to December 2008
Operational Phase Two: January 2009 to December 2010
Operational Phase Three: January 2011 to December 2012

Philippine Project Cooperators:

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)
Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB)
Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center (PWRCC)
Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS)
Municipal Government of Narra, Palawan, Philippines

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Rationale

The Palawan faunal region is of high species diversity, reminiscent of the close-by island of Borneo, but at the same time holds a high percentage of endemics, therefore resembling the Oceanic Philippines. Although still extensive areas of pristine forests, mangroves and coral reefs exist on Palawan, the rate of destruction, deterioration and fragmentation of these ecosystems is one of the highest in Southeast Asia.

Since 1998, KFI is implementing the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program (PCCP) in Narra, Palawan. It is one of the first community-based species conservation programs in the Philippines, and was deemed as one of the most successful of its kind. Within ten years, the population of the critically endangered Philippine cockatoo increased tenfold in a protected area specifically established for this species. Rasa Island is now the single-most important habitat for the Philippine cockatoo and is one of the most accessible wild places in the Philippines for a broader public to experience first-hand a rare and endemic species in its natural habitat.

In order to institutionalize this project and to broaden conservation efforts within southern Palawan, the establishment of the KATALA Institute for Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation (KIEBC) was envisioned by KFI and its local and international partners.

Project Location

The project site is located in Barangay Antipuluan, Narra, Palawan. It is situated about 1.5km northeast of the Narra town proper in the coastal plain, only about 200m away from the National Highway. Here the Katala Institute for Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation will be established. The site encompasses a total land area of 2.18ha donated by the municipal government of Narra. The area is surrounded by pastures and paddy fields, with the Victoria Range as spectacular backdrop.

Project Goal and Objectives

The goal of the KATALA Institute for Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation can be summarized as follows:

Conservation of Palawan's biodiversity through establishment of an education, conservation and research institution in close vicinity to threatened target species and ecosystems.

Objective 1: To serve as a venue for conservation education with local population, youth, national and international visitors as target groups

Objective 2: To develop procedures for rescue, conservation breeding, habitat restoration and eventually re-introduction of selected highly threatened wild species of Palawan

Objective 3: To establish an institution for research on applied ecology and biodiversity conservation

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Reports

- The KIEBC annual report 2009 was submitted to concerned agencies on January 27, 2010.
- The self-monitoring-report (SMR) for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarter were submitted to authorities on April 14, July 15, Oct. 15, 2010, respectively.
- The annual progress report of the PFTCP was submitted to concerned agencies on March 1, 2010.
- For the new aviary, a final report and a financial statement were submitted to the funding agencies in April 2010.
- A final project report was submitted to the TSA/TCA and funding partners in October 2010.
- A final report of the project “Captive care of the Palawan porcupine *Thecurus pumilus*” had been submitted to ZGAP and funding partners in October.

Landscaping

- During the first quarter of 2010, the access road to the center was finally built. In December we added additional gravel to the road.
- Mid of February we demolished the old storage hut that also served as quarters for the bird keeper to give way for the upcoming construction of a filter tank system for the turtles. At the same time the bird watch tower near the info hut that was not any longer safe was brought down and now serves as resting area near the nursery.
- Due to the extreme drought caused by El Nino planting was limited to native bananas, screw pines and some cockatoo food-providing tree in and near the new aviaries in the first half of the year. A total of 207 plants were set.
- In May, a backhoe was hired for two days to excavate areas near the future garden, beside the porcupine enclosure and to start backfilling the foundation of the future education building. Numerous native trees and seedlings (Serese, Malunggay, Saging, Anabiong, Macaranga, Bangkal, Papaya) were planted along the canals that surround and cross the KIEBC area. Canals were deepened and widened for better drainage. Major trails / dikes leading through KIEBC were backfilled with rice hulls to cover mud and allow dry access of areas.
- By the end of July we had finished the installation of the new water supply system composed of surface pump, pump hut, pressure tank, electric connections and circuit breaker, and pipes to supply care taker house, bathroom, clinic area, IEC hut (that is regularly used as quarter of wardens during duty at KIEBC), and all turtle enclosures. To protect the water pump and electric accessories from rain we build a protective roof.
- Mid August preparation for the permanent fencing of KIEBC had started and materials ordered. In the third week of September we started construction work for the permanent fencing of KIEBC. We used prefabricated concrete post and barbed wire. Due to water logging not all concrete post could be set and temporary wooden posts had to be used to fix the barbed wire in some parts.

- In total we planted 132 Malunggay seedlings in KIEBC near the IEC hut and 12 Talisay saplings near the turtle water tank system in September and in November respectively.
- In October we continued backfilling muddy trails to and within KIEBC with rice hulls.



Figure 1: Landscaping with the help of a backhoe in May.



Figure 2: Concrete post for the permanent fencing have been set along the KIEBC periphery.

Nursery

- In the nursery we kept 623 seedlings of 28 different species during the first quarter of the year, but several died due to lack of water.
- In June the nursery was moved to its final location beside the future parking area. A new shed was built with yellow bamboo and Buri palm fronds. Around 5000 new Malunggay seedlings were bagged.
- Around the nursery and on a trail leading to it a thick layer of rice hulls was placed to provide dry access to the area. The nursery was fenced with bamboo to prevent intrusion of cattle.
- As of December 31, 2010 we had the following seedlings in the nursery: Bangkal - 586, Mahogany - 33, Binunga - 218, Anabyong- 234, Lipanga – 90, Ipil – 30, Aropag - 19, Barinbin – 30, Narra – 8, Kalampinay – 3, Tolang-pagi – 5, Lanite – 25, Tubo-

bato – 60, Ginlalid – 54, Albotra/Alagak – 35, Tabangaw – 33, Taluto – 149, Parina – 423, Durian – 10, and Manggis – 12.

Philippine Cockatoo

- The highlight during this reporting period was the transfer of the five cockatoos from their small aviaries to the large new aviaries on Feb. 1, 2010.
- The transfer was witnessed by PASu Emmanuel Alfaro of DENR-CENRO Narra, Dr. Glenn Rebong veterinarian of the Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center (PWRCC), and consultant veterinarian Dr. Sonja Luz from Singapore.



Figure 3: The transfer of the cockatoos to the new aviary was supervised by veterinarians.

Freshwater turtles

- Funding to improve the husbandry conditions of the Philippine Forest Turtle was approved by the Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA) and the Turtle Conservation Fund (TCF) in March and April, respectively. On May 29, we signed contract with an engineer for the construction after which construction started immediately. During the later part of the construction heavy rain sometimes hampered work but on August 12 the filter tanks and new enclosures were finished and for the first time filled with water. Unfortunately, six turtle tanks and parts of the filter tank system had leakages that still needed to be repaired. Finally on Aug. 31, all expect three *S. leytensis* that are still under treatment were transferred to the new enclosures. The new system improved the water quality significantly but it did of course not solve all health

problems in an instant. We still had some incidence of shell rot as mentioned above. We might only know how effective the new system is after one year or two.

- As of 31 December 2010, KIEBC holds an assurance colony of 31 *S. leytensis*, 33 *Cuora amboinensis*, 10 *C. dentata*, and 1 *Dogania subplana*. All were monitored and underwent thorough health inspections on a weekly basis.



Figure 4: The enclosures of the Philippine Forest Turtle (left) had been completely rebuilt and a water filter system was constructed to improve water quality (right).

Palawan porcupine

- The construction and landscaping of the enclosure took longer than expected. The lack of an access road prior to December 2009 was one reason, another was El Niño. Early 2010 we were supposed to plant shade providing trees but this had to be postponed to August / September 2010 due to the extreme draught during the first half of the year. The bases of the trees in the enclosure were wrapped with mesh wire to prevent the future porcupines to destroy the stem. Banana plants were planted outside along two sides of the enclosure to provide additional shade.
- Finally in the last quarter of 2010, the enclosure was ready to receive inhabitants. We were hoping that we could loan a pair of porcupine from PWRCC where they had been maintaining a group of several individuals until recently. Unfortunately, the only male died and PWRCC intends to keep the remaining individuals for educational tours at the rescue centre. We have discussed the problem in acquiring specimens with DENR-PAWB in November 2010.



Figure 5: The porcupine enclosure is ready.

Visitors

- In January a reporter from the Philippine Daily Inquirer conducted a series of interviews with KFI management and staff about the PFTCP and PCCP.
- Late January, KFI board member Debbie van den Beukel, her husband Erwin together with the parents of the PCCP co-manager visited KIEBC.
- Consultant Veterinary Dr. Sonja Luz and her team visited KIEBC on Feb. 2.
- On Feb. 11, 2010 the multi-partite management team headed by CENRO Tactay conducted a monitoring visit.
- In May two German volunteers who assisted KFI visited KIEBC.
- In December, Renz Fajardo, the Executive Assistant of Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri, KFI President visited KIEBC.

Staff/Training/Development

- The new full-time zookeeper who had just started work on January 1 was not extended after the three-month probation period because his services did not meet our needs. A new candidate was interviewed on April 1 and started a three-month probation period on May 6, 2010.

- The full-time zookeeper Angeles Guion finished her three months probation period on August 15 and was thereafter extended until Dec. 2010.
- After several discussions with the assistant keepers Ariel Dangis and Charlito Basio regarding their performance and short comings, the two young men resigned effective August 31, 2010.
- Bird keeper Monico Beleg retired effective February 2, 2010.
- Former turtle keeper and current pollution control officer and consultant veterinary assistant, Diverlie Acosta attended the Island Species-Led Action (ISLA) training in Iligan City from Sept. 13-22, 2010. Training was organized and sponsored by Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust.



Figure 6: Zookeeper Angeles Guion (left) and assistant bird keeper Doy Alisto (right).

Issues/Problems

- Draught caused by El Nino caused not only water shortage but also damage of existing enclosures.
- The bathroom in KIEBC needs tiles.
- Night patrols in KIEBC need to be improved among keeper Angeles and assistant keeper Doy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

KFI is indebted to the following individuals and organizations for their assistance and generous support to realize all these activities:

- Mayor Clarito D. Demaala Jr. and his wife Lucy, MENRO Rolando R. Tagyab, MPDO Ronald Fellizar, Municipal Engineer Parco, and the Sangguiniang Bayan of the Municipality of Narra.
- Regional Director Mr. Sixto E. Tolentino, Jr. of DENR-EMB; Director Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim of DENR-PAWB; PENRO Juan C. dela Cruz, Priscilla L. Adriano and Vivian Soriano of DENR-PENRO; CENRO/PASu Fernando T. Tactay, EMS Mercy Almorfe, and Deputy PASu Emmanuel Alfaro of CENRO Narra.
- OIC Director Dr. Glenn Rebong of PWRCC.
- OIC Director Romeo Dorado PCSDS.
- The veterinarians Dr. Glenn G. Rebong of PWRCC; Dr. Sonja Luz of Singapore Zoo;

Dr. Nimal Fernando of Ocean Park, and Dr. Esteven Toledo, Dr. Nielson Donato, Dr. Emilia A. Lastica of PAWVI.

- To our sponsors and donors: Loro Parque Fundacion (LPF), North of England Zoological Society - Chester Zoo (NEZS), Zoological Society for the Conservation of Species and Populations (ZGAP incl. Fonds für Bedrohte Papageien and Strunden-Papageien-Stiftung), Conservation des Espèces et Des Populations Animales (CEPA), and ZooParc de Beauval, European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) Shellshock Campaign, Turtle Conservation Fund (TCF), the Chelonian Research Foundation (“CRF”), Conservation International (“CI”), the Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA), and the IUCN Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group (TFTSG).
- Thanks to KFI, especially President Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri, Vice President Peter Widmann, Construction In-charge Siegfred Diaz, and staff.
- Special thanks also to the keepers Ariel Dangis, Charlito Basio, Loreto (Doy) Alisto, Emanuel Coñate, and Angeles Guion.
- Thanks to Pollution Control Officer Diverlie Acosta, who also conducted regular health check up of all animals at KIEBC.
- Thanks to all officials and residents of Bgy. Antipuluan, Narra.
- And to all staff, wardens, volunteers, and construction workers who help in the progress of KIEBC.

PERSONNEL INVOLVED

Indira Dayang Lacerna-Widmann and Dr. Sabine Schoppe – Program Managers, PCCP

Peter Widmann – KFI Vice-President

Maruji P. Manalo – Administrative Officer, Education Officer

Siegfred H. Diaz – Field Operations Coordinator

Ivy Regodos – Field Administrative Assistant

Angeles Guion - Zookeeper

Diverlie Acosta - Pollution Control Officer

Ariel Dangis and Charlito Basio - Assistant Turtle Caretakers

SDENRO Loreto Alisto - Assistant Bird Caretaker

Affiliated Scientists:

- Glenn G. Rebong, DVM, OIC, Project Director, PWRCC
- Dr. Nimal Fernando, Senior Veterinarian at Ocean Park, Aberdeen, Hong Kong
- Dr. Sonja Luz, Senior Veterinarian at Singapore Zoo
- Dr. Esteven Toledo, Dr. Nielson Donato, Dr. Emilia A. Lastica, PAWVI veterinaries