

Peter Widmann bestowed Cross of the Order of Merit by Germany

November 2018. Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. Peter Widmann was bestowed the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (*Bundesverdienstkreuz*) in November 28, 2018. German President Franz-Walter Steinmeier through the German Ambassador H.E. Dr. Gordon Kricke awarded the recognition in Puerto Princesa, Palawan for Mr. Widmann's extraordinary accomplishments particularly on biodiversity protection and conservation.

"Mr. Widmann has dedicated most of his professional life to the protection of the environment and the preservation of biodiversity, especially here in the Philippines. In 1998, the Katala Foundation was established with him as one of its founders. It has since become one of the most renowned and respected organizations for the protection of the environment and biodiversity", says H.E. Dr. Gordon Kricke during the bestowal. Mr. Widmann has spent the past two decades in Southeast Asia to assist communities develop conservation practices, universities to develop wildlife management curricula and help other organisations in effectively protecting important habitats and species. Currently, he serves as Science Director of the Katala Foundation and co-manages species conservation programs that ensure the active involvement of the communities in order to achieve a shared conservation goal.

"Wildlife conservation is not always a very easy and rewarding task. About four weeks ago the new WWF report on the state of our planet came out. It says that since 1970 we lost 60% of wildlife on a global scale. Not species; but individuals. In this time period, six out of ten fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals disappeared". This was excerpts of the acceptance speech of Peter during the bestowal. He adds that *"we have the know-how to save most species, but the majority of conservation projects do not work, or only do damage control, for various reasons, mostly financial or political."* He further was sharing how proud he is to be part of a successful conservation effort to save the Philippine Cockatoo from extinction.

The Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany is the only federal decoration of Germany. It was created by the first President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Theodor Heuss, on 7 September 1951 to visibly express recognition and gratitude to deserving men and women that contributes to the peaceful rise of Federal Republic of Germany.

The Katala Family is so humbled to be part of Mr. Widmann's journey and passion towards conserving biological diversity in the world especially in the Philippines where is he actively involved.

---XXXXXX---

Notes:

- Peter Widmann is a founding member of the Katala Foundation Inc. (KFI), a non-governmental organisation based in Palawan, Philippines. KFI implements the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program, Palawan Freshwater Turtle Conservation Program among others.



H.E. Dr. Gordon Kricke bestowing the Cross of the Order of Merit to Peter



H.E. Dr. Kricke and Peter pose after the certificate signed by German President Franz-Walter Steinmeier.



H.E. Dr. Kricke and Frau Kricke joined by Peter and Indira Widmann, Atty. Adelle Villena, Mayors Demaala and Feliciano, and Dr. Sabine Schoppe



