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PRESS RELEASE **For Immediate Release**

Palawan Forest Turtle gets a safe home

May 15, 2017 – Katala Foundation Inc (KFI) through its Philippine Freshwater Turtle Conservation Program and Rainforest Trust (RT) signed a partnership and funding agreement for safeguarding key populations of the Critically Endangered Palawan Forest Turtle *Siebenrockiella leytensis* and its habitat.

The Palawan Forest Turtle is endemic to the Province of Palawan in the Philippines. Within the Province its range is limited to the north where it occurs in only five municipalities. The main threat to *S. leytensis* is collection for the illegal pet trade, traditional Chinese medicine and food trade followed by habitat destruction and alteration. Population trends are decreasing hence the urgency for immediate in-situ conservation measures.

It is estimated that the municipality of Roxas holds 60% of the wild population making the area a priority for conservation. Katala Foundation works on the management of the Palawan Forest Turtle in Roxas since 2007. Six years after, the first protected watershed area that equally benefits people, the Palawan Forest Turtle and other threatened wildlife had been established in Dumarao, Roxas. This triggered in 2015 conservation efforts in the neighboring village Mendoza, where the community is going to decide between the conservation a 770ha protected watershed area or its continuous overexploitation during the upcoming general assembly in July 2017.

When KFI sought assistance from Rainforest Trust in conserving a vital population of the Palawan Forest Turtle in Sandoval and therewith building a conservation corridor for the species in Roxas, RT immediately discussed the option of a partnership with KFI.

The U.S.-based **Rainforest Trust** assists local conservation partners in protecting vital habitat of threatened wildlife. Each and every day, rampant habitat destruction pushes wildlife ever closer to the edge of extinction. This process can be dramatically reduced by **Safeguarding Areas Vital to Endangered Species**.



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.
ENDS



Every year, more of the remaining swamp forest is burned and converted in Palawan



The swamp forest in Sandoval and turtles will from now one be safe.