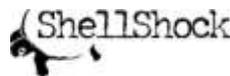


# KATALA INSTITUTE FOR ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION (KIEBC)

## Annual Report 2011



By



SABINE SCHOPPE

Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines

March 2012

**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)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor JMV Building, National Highway, Santa Monica, Puerto Princesa  
City 5300 Palawan, Philippines  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 390, Puerto Princesa 5300  
Phone: Tel. / Fax: +63 048 434 7693

**Environmental Compliance Certificate:** ECC-4B-042-PA-5012-2007

**SEP Clearances:** 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 quarterly self-monitoring-reports (SMR) were submitted every 15th of the quarter (April, July, October, and January).
- In June, the KIEBC annual report 2010 was submitted with delay due death in the family.
- The 2010 annual progress report of the PFTCP was equally delayed due to death in the family.

### **Landscaping**

- Development funds for 2011 from the Municipality of Narra were used for landscaping and fencing initiatives.
- Canals were set up, and Parina – a cockatoo food providing tree was planted along side.
- Frequently muddy and flooded areas were backfilled with sand, gravel and boulders.
- As of March, twelve span of concrete walling were completed using the funds from the municipality. Priority was given to the front side where most of grazing cattle enter. Drainage - almost 50 cm from the natural ground - was also set along the fence.
- We replaced the damaged roof of our information hut with coconut shingles. We also re-arranged the interior and set up some of the “Seeds of life” tarpaulins.
- In June, planting around KIEBC was made possible with help from volunteers during the Katala Festival.
- A pond near the future parking area was established and dikes were set up through backfill from pond excavation. Another pond which will become a semi-natural habitat of the Southeast Asian Box Turtle was established along the future educational trail.
- An inventory of all trees planted between 2007 and 2011 showed that a total of 1421 were well established as of December 2011. Bangkal, Binungal and Tabangaw are the dominant species planted. Most trees were planted in one of five areas (quarantine and breeding, around nursery, along fence, in or around porcupine enclosure, and in and around aviary) where they are providing considerable shade.
- Newly planted trees/plants were added to the registered trees under DENR-CENRO.
- During the last quarter, the bathroom of the keeper’s house was renovated.



**Figure 1: Information hut and surroundings after storm in February 2011 (left). This will become a turtle-viewing pond along the future education trail (right).**



**Figure 2: Access road and KIEBC area with the only tree in the background as of 2006 (left). In 2007, KIEBC is still barren (right).**



**Figure 3: In 2008, many trees were already high enough to shade the trails (left). In 2009, the quarantine and breeding area looked like a forested island within the barren grassland (right).**



**Figure 4:** In 2010, there was hardly any area in KIEBC without trees (left). As of December 2011, 1421 trees providing shade and shelter characterized the formerly barren area (right).

### **Nursery**

- After the strong downpour and strong winds which caused flooding in January, we had to rebuild the nursery hut and its grounds. The seedling preparation and sowing areas were restored. Restoration was completed during the first quarter of 2011.
- A total of 2627 seeds/seedlings were potted in polyethylene seedlings bags in 2011.
- Some 465 assorted seedlings were planted along the feeder road going to KIEBC during the Katala Festival in June.
- In 2011, we dispatched a total of 2292 seedlings for the following planting activities: April 29 – PNP, June 10 – Youth Public Servants Philippines Inc., June 22 – Katala Festival Narra, July 15 – Narra West Elementary School, October 22 - Palay Festival related plantings in Antipuluan, Panacan Uno, Panacan Dos and PSU, November 18 – PNP and December 3 – National Irrigation Administration compound.
- As of December 31, 2011, a total of 2304 seedlings were left in the nursery.



**Figure 5.** The nursery was hit by the January storm and flooding (left). Some 2627 seedlings have been potted in polyethylene bags in 2011.

## Philippine Cockatoo

- We observed in February that Silver and Brazil lost feathers around their eyes. We sought the help of Dr. Glenn Rebong of the Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center (PWRCC) who took some samples for fungal and bacterial examination. Results of the microscopic examination of feather and skin scrapings from all five cockatoos were negative for external parasites and fungal infection. Prophylactic/preventive dose of *Ivermectin* was administered to each bird.
- In April, Silver, the dominant male, aggressively attacked Brazil and severely damaged its beak. We immediately isolated Brazil and the bird was treated by Dr. Rebong. After nearly four weeks, Brazil recovered and was re-integrated to the big aviary. When Brazil was re-integrated, we decided to close the divider of the big aviary and to keep the birds in pairs in order to observe mating behaviors more closely. Silver was taken out of the small cage, wing-clipped and released with Blue in the breeding aviary while Pandanan, Brazil (now wing-clipped) and Violet were kept in the public viewing aviary.
- Apart from all these problems within the period, all birds ate well, occupied with all foliage and cuttlebone offered, offered and were seen digging on soil and feeding on ground inside the aviary.
- In September, Silver attacked and wounded Blue. The latter was caught, checked, wound treated with *Betadine* and released again. Silver was caught and wing-clipped after which the birds were closely observed.
- During the 1<sup>st</sup> week of October - in preparation for repainting of the aviaries - a temporary compartment was built in one of the aviaries (public aviary) which was then occupied by Blue and Pandanan, while Silver was left in the breeding aviary.
- During the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of October, Violet was precautionary wing-clipped.
- In November when painting was still ongoing, Silver was isolated in a cage in the breeding aviary while Brazil and Violet were transferred to the public aviary.
- Observations on bonding activities (preening, playing, beak to beak plays, etc) were noted yet so far no mating has had happened.
- Through our webpage ([www.philippinecockatoo.org](http://www.philippinecockatoo.org)) we are encouraging potential donors to "Adopt an animal". Since most donors are foreigners we arranged to channel donations through our project partner at the Zoological Society for the Conservation of Species and Populations (ZGAP) in Germany. In late 2010 and in 2011, two cockatoos (one for one year and one for two years) were adopted. In addition three *S. leytensis* were adopted (for details see turtle chapter).



**Figure 6: The aviaries are nicely vegetated and equipped with plenty furniture, nesting sites and feeding and drinking and bathing areas (left). Clipped wing of Silver, the dominant male (right).**



**Figure 7: Brazil in May after having recovered from attack by Silver (left). Regular bird health check, here conducted by Sabine and keeper Angel (right).**



Figure 8: Birds enjoying fresh Banana inside the aviary (left). The aviaries have been renovated and repainted before the onset of the next breeding season (right).

**Adopt an animal**  
and help in a wild way!

Animals need food and care. Help in looking after these animals both rescued and in the wild. Safeguard the future of a species. Adopt an animal and you'll help provide the care and protection each animal needs.

*Philippine cockatoo*  
*Casuarina henricus*

*Philippine pond turtle*  
*Phrynops lecontei*

Adopt an animal and make a difference to wildlife conservation!

[Click here to adopt an animal.](#)

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[www.philippinebirdlife.org](http://www.philippinebirdlife.org)

Katala Foundation

The Katala Foundation, Inc.  
awards this

**CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION**  
to

**Büro für faunistische Fachfragen**

for adopting one rescued Philippine cockatoo in the Katala Institute of Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation (KIEBC) Narra, Palawan, Philippines for two years.

15 August 2011

*Indira Widmann* Chief Operations Officer

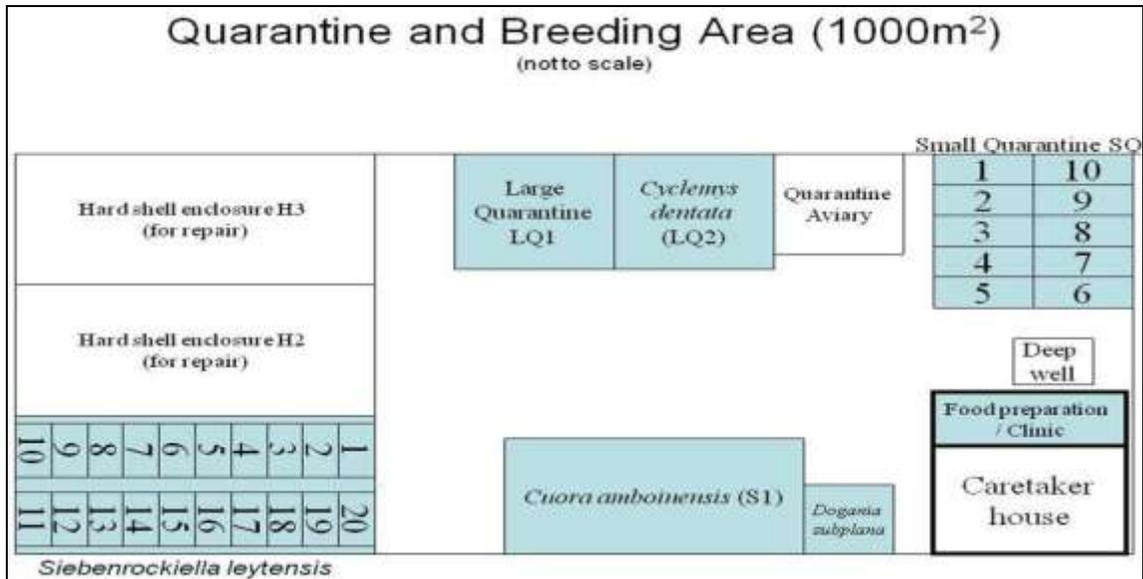
Logos: LORO PARQUE FUNDACION, ZGAP, CEPA, CHESTER ZOO, ZooPac, and others.

Figure 9: Call for adoption of an animal which is posted on our webpage (left). Certificate of adoption issued to donors (right).

## Freshwater turtles

- Since August 2007, KIEBC holds the only range country assurance colony of the critically endangered Philippine Forest Turtle *Siebenrockiella leytensis*. Furthermore, the facilities hold specimens of all other Palawan native freshwater turtle like the Southeast Asian Box Turtle *Cuora amboinensis*, the Asian Leaf Turtle *Cyclemys dentata* and the Malayan Softshell Turtle *Dogania subplana*.
- In 2011, a total of 15 hatchlings of *C. amboinensis*, 8 infertile eggs of *C. dentata*, and 5 infertile eggs of *S. leytensis* were produced. A total of 6 *C. amboinensis* had been turned over to KIEBC. During the course of the year we had a total of six fatalities due to harm or disease: 1 *C. amboinensis*, 1 *C. dentata* and 4 *S. leytensis*, leaving us with 27 *S. leytensis*, 51 *C. amboinensis*, 9 *C. dentata*, and 1 *D. subplana* as of Dec. 31, 2011.
- From the very turnover of specimens from PWRCC, the Philippine Forest Turtle turned out to be difficult to manage in captivity. They are stress-prone and show high intraspecific aggression. We addressed this through the construction of new enclosures and a water filter system in 2010. Turtle were no longer in groups but males and females were now paired resulting in continuous mating attempts of the males which stressed the females. Seemingly as a consequence of this, a female was drowned by its partner and the remainder of the females got sickly and was mostly affected by shell rot in 2011.
- We concluded that keeping *S. leytensis* individually is necessary and during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of October, all female *S. leytensis* were separated from male partners. Due to the lack of enclosures not all individuals could be kept separately and we had to keep nine females in groups of three. In December, these females showed an increasing number of cases with ulceration and dermatitis. Another two females had to be transported to Puerto Princesa for regular antibiotic injection.
- All of the above culminated into a meeting of KFI board members and zoo keepers resulting into the mutual understanding that we needed to build additional enclosures. It was briefly discussed whether those new enclosures should be in KIEBC or rather in Puerto Princesa City to allow proper veterinary care / regular injections for turtles with health problems. A decision was not made since this needed to be discussed with authorities first.
- We constructed and installed a self-made incubator for the *Cuora amboinensis* eggs.
- In July, we adjusted the food ratio of all turtles to 10% of body weight per week. Animal protein was fed on Tuesdays or Wednesdays before cleaning enclosures, vegetables on Fridays, and fruits on Sundays.
- The bamboo (sawali) shade-providing roof of the *S. leytensis* enclosures was removed and replaced by net. This will hopefully reduce the number of rats that stole food from the enclosures and kept them from eating in their hiding places on the roof.
- As stated earlier we are encouraging donors to “Adopt an animal” through our webpage at [www.philippinecockatoo.org](http://www.philippinecockatoo.org). In 2011, three *S. leytensis* were adopted (two for 2 years and one for one year).
- To reach a wider audience of potential donors, KFI enrolled the *S. leytensis* assurance colony project activities under the title “The lasts of their kind – Help now!” at the donation platform “Betterplace” ([www.betterplace.org](http://www.betterplace.org)) in August 2011. *Betterplace* uses the internet to bring potential donors and project managers

together. *Betterplace* assures that 100% of the donations go directly to the project, and the project management will keep donors and other interested internet users updated through regular blogs. *Betterplace* is German-based, hence most entries are in German, however, there is also an English version where entries can be made in English. Our project can be assessed at <http://www.betterplace.org/en/projects/7539-the-last-of-their-kind-help-now>. Donations generated through *Betterplace* are used for food, medical care, repair of enclosures, running maintenance costs and special needs as posted.



**Figure 10: Arrangement of enclosures in the quarantine and breeding area of turtles.**



**Figure 11: Repair of one of the *S. leytensis* enclosures (left). Diverlie who was trained in healthcare regularly checks on the turtles and keeper Angel assists (right).**



Figure 12: *S. leytensis* # 34 with severe shell rot received regular antibiotic injections and spent most of the time under a heat bulb in a facility in Puerto Princesa.



Figure 13: Fred, Angel and Sabine comparing morphological differences in male and female *C. dentata* (left). The only Malayan Softshell turtle held is in good health (right).



Figure 14: Sabine, Angel and visitor Thomas Dallabetta checking *Cuora* eggs before placing them in the new incubator (left); *S. leytensis* with newly laid egg (right).



Figure 15: Two students of the Western Philippines University conducted their theses on turtles in 2011. Lorie on population size of *C. amboinensis* (left) and Anne on *S. leytensis* behaviour in captivity (right).



Figure 16: Sabine discussing husbandry issues with keepers and construction workers (left). The care taker house and surrounding are nicely shaded by trees (right).



Figure 17: Example certificate of adoption issued to donors who adopted a Philippine Forest Turtle through the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program Homepage in collaboration with ZGAP.

# The last of their kind – Help now!

An aid project by: Carpus e.V. (S. Schoppe)

Project Overview | News 69 | Donations and Opinions 36 | Administration




32 donors

78 % funded

€315 still needed

**Donate now**

Your donation is tax deductible in Germany

**Needs (3):**

You can donate for the project in general or for the realisation of one of the following specific needs. [More...](#)

**Administration:**

- [Manage needs](#)
- [New need](#)

Monatliche Unterhaltskosten  
1 x €40 – still needed: €25

37 % funded

[Donate for this need](#) [See details](#)

78 % funded

S. Schoppe (Project Manager)



Carpus e.V. supports the successful conservation projects of Katala Foundation Inc. in Palawan, Philippines for several years now. Katala Foundation, Inc. (KFI), a non-stock, non-governmental organization that has been active in protecting and conserving wildlife, particularly the Philippine cockatoo *Cacatua haematurus* and Philippine forest turtle.

[Read more](#)

Project carrier:  Carpus

32 donors:



Figure 18: Screen capture of the front page of the “The last of their kind” project posted at *Betterplace*.

## Palawan porcupine

- The porcupine enclosure is ready. We are hoping that we could loan a pair of porcupine from PWRCC or any other confiscated individual but until now no porcupine is available.
- During the reporting period we further landscaped the area and have planted 37 trees inside and 75 trees outside around the enclosure.



**Figure 19: The porcupine enclosure is ready and nicely vegetated but no porcupine is available.**

## Visitors

- In February, Narra Vice Mayor Bundal and six municipal councilors (SB members) visited the center and were pleased with its progress.
- Hans Peter Paulenz, former head of GTZ Manila accompanied by Dr. Sabine Schoppe had personal tour in March.
- Mid of March, we guided pupils aging 4-7 years old from the Malinao-Wesleyan Church elementary school for their educational trip to KIEBC. The kids came along with their parents and teachers. We prepared the tarpaulin at the information hut and took the 47 kids in batches to view the birds in the aviary and turtles in the dens.

Lectures were given. This was very well received by parents, teachers and pupils alike.

- In April, we had the Fire Department officials' tour around the premises.
- Dr. Roger Wilkinson also visited KIEBC in April.
- Rene Wüst from ZGAP and Thomas Dallabetta visited the facility in June and had positive impression about the general work of the PCCP and KIEBC.



**Figure 20: Hans Peter Paulenz visiting the aviary (left) and Rene Wüst Spokesperson for the board of the “Foundation for Threatened parrots” of ZGAP visiting the aviary that was co-funded by the Foundation.**

### **Staff/Training/Development**

- From September to December we had an assistant keeper to help Angel in the daily routine work.

### **Issues/Problems**

- There is strong current fluctuation in KIEBC. We brought the matter to the electric company and were advised to secure a transformer for our own use in KIEBC.
- Twice in January, KIEBC was completely flooded. The inside of the caretaker's house was covered by water as deep as 10cm. The water reached the elevated floor of the information hut where it reached a depth of 40 cm. Using the electric pump, we pumped the water out of the overflowing turtle enclosures. We had to elevate the refrigerator about 10cm with a cement stand to secure from future flooding.
- Male and female *S. leytensis* need to be separated to trigger mating but we only have 20 enclosures for the 27 individuals.

### **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 Executive Assistant 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 PWRCC.
- OIC Director Romeo Dorado PCSDS.
- The veterinarian Dr. Glenn G. Rebong of PWRCC.
- 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), Fonds für Bedrohte Papageien (FbP) and Strunden-Papageien-Stiftung, Conservation des Espèces et Des Populations Animales (CEPA), and ZooParc de Beuval, 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).
- Special thanks to all donors who donated through ZGAP or *Betterplace* and who helped us maintain the captive animals at KIEBC.
- Thanks to KFI, especially President Juan Miguel Zubiri, Vice President Peter Widmann, Construction In-charge Siegfred Diaz, and staff.
- Special thanks also to the assistant keeper Loreto (Doy) Alisto, temporary assistant JR Asuque and most especially to main keeper 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 Peter Widmann – Program Managers, PCCP

Dr. Sabine Schoppe – Director PFTCP

J-Kris Gaño – Administrative Officer, Education Officer

Siegfred H. Diaz – Field Operations Coordinator

Jewilyn C. Soquerata – Field Administrative Assistant Narra

Angeles Guion - Zookeeper

Diverlie Acosta - Pollution Control Officer, Turtle Health Care

SDENRO Loreto Alisto - Assistant Bird Caretaker

### Affiliated Scientists:

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