

Interim Report

Community Based Biodiversity Conservation in Southern Cebu Philippines

By

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The island of Cebu is one of the world's highest conservation priority areas in terms of both numbers of threatened endemic taxa and degrees of threat. The forest cover of the island has been reduced to few tiny forest patches which support remnant populations of some of the world's most threatened wildlife. Siloy Project through the support of Rufford Small Grants for Nature Conservation has not only provided the funding support to conduct conservation activities but also enabled the much closer involvement of local communities, local governments and increased local awareness and understanding of the island's biodiversity.



Fig. 1 The male Cebu Black Shama. (Photo by: Godfrey Jakosalem)

The project has been running since 2004 and is focusing on the conservation of forest and threatened endemic wildlife of Cebu. The project team found two more new localities of the critically endangered Cebu Flowerpecker from only one known location. The team also revisited previously known areas of the Black Shama and updated the information as well confirmed additional distribution sites. Additional information on the status of the forest was also obtained and their importance as key sites for conservation was also evaluated.



Fig 2. A new island record, Least Pipistrell *Pipistrellus tenuis*, recorded in Obo and Babayongan Cave (Photo by: Godfrey Jakosalem)

The information gained from the project was shared with government departments, academic institutions, non-government units and organized local communities. Because of the information, one municipality came up with a Siloy 'Black Shama' Festival in order to raise conservation awareness on the Black Shama and to encourage tourism and birdwatching activities in the area. Using Rufford Small Grants as leverage funding, the project team got counterpart funding from Threatened Species Program of Haribon Foundation and from North of England Zoological Society – Chester Zoo. This enabled the team to continue on working on the project and facilitated for the organization of community forest wardens to protect the remaining forest.



Fig 3 Bantay Lasang (forest wardens) identifying and counting Flying Foxes and they are now supported by the Municipality of Dalaguete in patrolling and monitoring the forest. (Photo by: Pol Carino)

The project was also successful in gaining the support of the local governments in allocating funds for forest protection and biodiversity conservation activities. The project team also facilitated for the creation of the

Biodiversity Conservation Management Council in one of the key conservation site. The council is now on its third year of operation and is responsible for the management of the biodiversity conservation project of the area. The counterpart funds from North of England Zoological Society - Chester Zoo enabled the team to continue supporting Duaw-Sangyaw Youth Volunteers in their local conservation awareness activities.



Fig. 4 The Dalaguete Biodiversity Conservation Management Council (DBCMC) the council is the one policy making body of the project (Photo by: Godfrey Jakosalem)

The project has now progressed beyond research and now on its way to strengthening into an integrated biodiversity conservation programme. It is the plan of the group to continue on supporting the initiatives of the project and to share the experiences and lessons learnt of the project.