

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Sebastian C. Quiniones, Jr.
Chairman
On Behalf of the Board of Trustees

**“THE YEAR 2023 HAS
BEEN MARKED BY
ACHIEVEMENTS AND
PROGRESS ACROSS ALL
PROGRAMS AT MBCFI.”**

I am pleased to present the Chairman's Report for the Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation, Inc. (MBCFI) Annual Report for the year 2023. This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of our organization's achievements, challenges, and ongoing initiatives. Throughout the year, we have made significant strides in our commitment to biodiversity conservation, community engagement, and research. Here are the key highlights from each program.

Our RESEARCH program has been actively involved in various projects, including the Annual Waterbird Census, Ilin Cloudbrunner Purposive Search, Tamaraw Dietary Analysis, and biophysical profiling for Mt. Gimparay. These projects demonstrate our dedication to understanding and preserving Mindoro's unique ecosystems. We have also made progress in budget realignment discussions with Forest Foundation Philippines and submitted final reports for project funders.

For the MISSION program, we have signed conservation agreements, conducted regular monthly meetings, and performed quarterly foot patrolling in Mt. Halcon. The successful formulation of a one-year action plan for KAWARAS Gabay Akyat Halcon sa Bayanan, along with the awarding of patrolling gears for Wildlife Enforcement Officers, reflects our commitment to community-driven conservation efforts.



Our CARE program has been actively engaged in various activities, including the release of newsletters, public exhibits, and the celebration of MBCFI's 15th Anniversary. Notable events include simultaneous tree planting, awarding ceremonies, and the provision of seedling prizes. The efforts made in updating our website, conducting fundraising strategy meetings, and drafting proposals showcase our commitment to effective communication and resource mobilization.

MBCFI actively participated in the 31st Philippine Biodiversity Annual Symposium, organizing institutional exhibits, facilitating the Mindoro Research Agenda Workshop, and serving as a guest speaker at the D'Aboville Foundation's workshop. These engagements highlight our commitment to advancing scientific knowledge and fostering collaboration in biodiversity conservation.

Our coordination and preparation for the International Coastal Cleanup activity in Puerto Galera underscore our dedication to marine conservation. Additionally, our involvement in the Oceans Decade Campaign emphasizes our commitment at global initiatives aimed promoting ocean conservation.

The Tamaraw Month activities highlighted our commitment to raising awareness about the endangered Tamaraw species. Events such as the Mindoro Wildlife Quiz Contest, Puerto Galera Trail Run for Tamaraws, and live streams on various platforms demonstrate our multifaceted approach to conservation outreach.

Our involvement in various public engagements, partnerships, and presentations at conferences and schools demonstrates our steadfast commitment to education and advocacy. Notable events include serving as a resource speaker during the 2023 International Conference on Biosphere and Sustainability and participating in regional and local council meetings.

The Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Center (MBCC) has made significant progress in operational matters, including drafting of operational manuals, securing an Occupancy Permit, and signing a Memorandum of Agreement with the National Museum. The tripartite Memorandum of Agreement with ORMECO, MBCFI, and Enertech, as well as the regularization of two Indigenous People staff members represent strides toward sustainable and inclusive operations.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

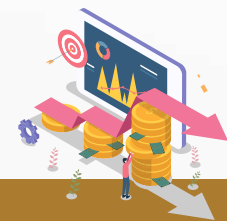
Accreditations



MBCFI has received reaccreditation from various government agencies and non-government institutions, both locally and internationally.

- Department of Science and Technology - valid until February 16, 2023 to February 16, 2026
- Department of Environment and Natural Resources - valid until March 25, 2024 to March 25, 2025
- Provincial Government of Oriental Mindoro - validity September 6, 2022 to June 30, 2025
- Provincial Government of Occidental Mindoro - validity September 6, 2022 to June 30, 2025
- Local Government of Calapan City - validity September 14, 2022 to June 30, 2025
- Association of Foundations - valid since February 28, 2020
- Philippine Council for NGO Certification - validity December 7, 2022 to December 6, 2027
- International Union for Conservation of Nature - member since June 13, 2017
- MIMAROPA Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development Consortium (MAARRDEC) - member since November 2020
- DOLE Certificate of Registration - since February 22, 2021 (lifetime validity)

Financial Report



In 2023, MBCFI achieved significant financial improvement, driven by a notable increase in donations. This positive financial turnaround resulted in a healthy surplus, marking a substantial recovery from the previous year's deficit. Additionally, the foundation maintained strong management of its assets and liabilities, reflecting overall robust financial health.



Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation, Inc.
(A non-stock, non-profit organization)

Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Fund Balance
As at December 31, 2023 and 2022
(All amounts in Philippine Peso)

| | Notes | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|-------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Assets | | | |
| Current assets | | | |
| Cash | 2 | 5,998,775 | 1,225,868 |
| Prepayments and other current assets | 3 | 475,898 | 243,067 |
| Total current assets | | 6,474,673 | 1,468,935 |
| Non-current asset | | | |
| Property and equipment, net | 4 | 33,216,140 | 32,981,200 |
| Total assets | | 39,690,813 | 34,450,135 |
| Liabilities and Fund Balance | | | |
| Current liabilities | | | |
| Advances from donors | 5 | 2,102,151 | 1,997,603 |
| Accounts payable and other current liabilities | 6 | 482,739 | 560,054 |
| Total current liabilities | | 2,584,890 | 2,557,657 |
| Fund balance | | | |
| Prior period accumulated excess of receipts over expenses | | 31,892,478 | 35,688,812 |
| Excess (deficiency) of receipts over expenses during the year | | 5,213,445 | (3,796,334) |
| Total fund balance | | 37,105,923 | 31,892,478 |
| Total liabilities and fund balance | | 39,690,813 | 34,450,135 |

Statements of Income
For the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022
(All amounts in Philippine Peso)

| | Notes | 2023 | 2022 |
|--|-------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Receipts | | | |
| Donations | 8 | 18,019,972 | 6,113,906 |
| Unrealized foreign currency exchange gains | 2 | - | 74,998 |
| Interest income | 2 | 1,819 | 2,797 |
| Total receipts | | 18,021,791 | 6,191,701 |
| Expenses | | | |
| Program expenses | 9 | (11,626,092) | (8,771,620) |
| Operating expenses | 10 | (1,171,306) | (1,216,415) |
| Unrealized foreign currency exchange losses | 2 | (10,948) | - |
| Total expenses | | (12,808,346) | (9,988,035) |
| Excess (deficiency) of receipts over expenses | | 5,213,445 | (3,796,334) |

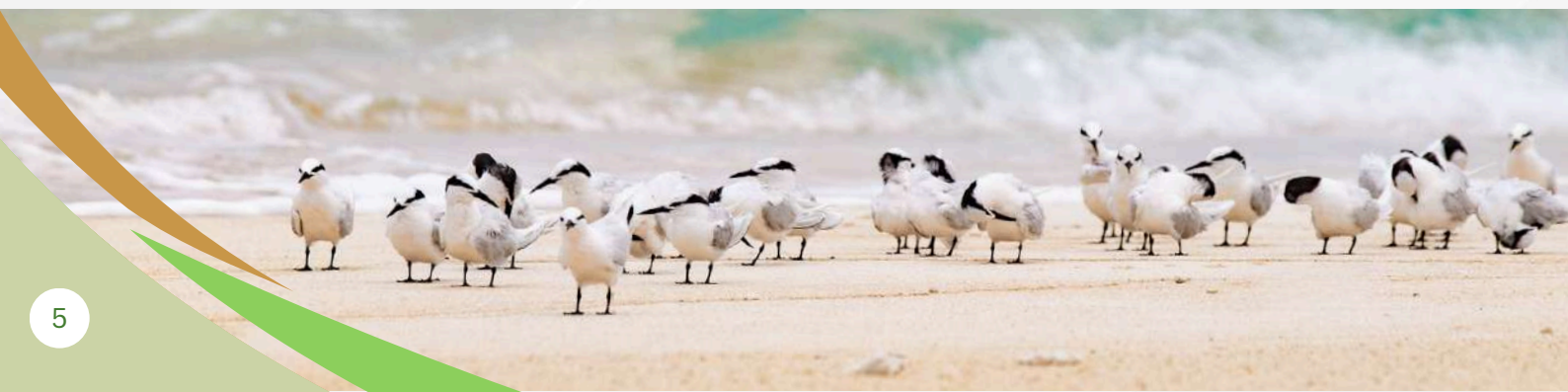
In conclusion, the year 2023 has been marked by remarkable achievements and substantial progress across all MBCFI programs. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated staff, esteemed partners, and invaluable stakeholders for their unwavering support. Together, united in purpose, we will continue our journey towards forging a more sustainable and biodiverse Mindoro.

Sebastian C. Quiniones, Jr.
Chairman

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

RESEARCH

- **Provided technical assistance in the Annual Waterbird Census in Apo Reef Natural Park and Naujan Lake National Park**
- **Participated in the Annual Tamaraw Count 2023**
 - Provided technical assistance on the conduct of BAMS in MIBNP
- **Tamaraw Dietary Analysis:**
 - Successfully completed field surveys during the dry season in both Mt. Gimparay and MIBNP
 - Transported samples to UPLB and UPD for laboratory analysis
 - Submitted the final Report to the project funder, Forest Foundation Philippines (FFP)
 - Prepared the final report for project funder, Chester Zoo
 - Submitted a request to prioritize the the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) Application of CADC 086 from Alangan (Oriental Mindoro) to RDC MIMAROPA
- **Biophysical Site Profiling Survey:**
 - Conducted reconnaissance activities and biophysical site profiling in Mt. Gimparay
 - Coordinated with consultants, Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP), and CENRO Socorro for the field survey preparations in Mt. Gimparay, including the rituals for the local community
 - Gimparay survey data analysis and survey report prepared
- **Ilin Cloudrunner Purposive Survey:**
 - Prepared the Ilin Cloudrunner Report for the Magsaysay 2022 survey, with 2023 survey results incorporated
 - Trained rangers on camera trap installation and installed camera trap units in Stations 2 & 3
 - Conducted the survey proper in MIBNP and retrieved camera trap units after three months
 - Reviewed photos from the camera traps
 - Submitted project updates to Re:wild
 - Conducted an orientation of camera trapping surveys and installation for UPLB OJTs
- **Apo Reef Natural Park Waterbird Monitoring Survey:**
 - Survey conducted on August 7 to 11, 2023
 - Processed data and photos from the survey
 - Turned over cage traps to PAMO to reduce invasive rodents in the island
 - Prepared the survey report with ARNP PAMO and submitted it to DENR MIMAROPA
- **Biodiversity Citizen Science:**
 - Held Bat Count Training and Orientation for 73 students in Puerto Galera, in partnership with Stairway Foundation Inc.





MISSION



Two (2) conservation agreements signed by the POs (KAWARAS Gabay Akyat Halcon sa Bayanan and SARIG Agunaker sa Bulod Sialdang)

Conducted regular monthly meetings of POs (KAWARAS Gabay Akyat Halcon sa Bayanan and SARIG Agunaker sa Bulod Sialdang)

Four (4) quarterly foot patrolling were conducted in Mt. Halcon

Conducted monthly maintenance activities at the MBCC demonstration site and vermicast beds

Conducted monthly maintenance activities of nursery sites in Mt. Halcon

A total of 24 sacks of vermicompost harvested in Q1 and Q2

A wildlings inventory was conducted in Mt. Malasimbo and Mt. Halcon

The one-year action plan of KAWARAS Gabay Akyat Halcon sa Bayanan was formulated

Awarded the 1st batch of patrolling gears for Wildlife Enforcement Officers

Promoted and helped sell the nito products handmade by female members of KAWARAS

Conducted maintenance and repair work at the nursery site, including the repair of the fence in front of bahay pulungan in Bayanan, Baco

Conducted maintenance and repair work on the nursery site in Lantuyang, Baco

MISSION

- Successfully re-established the food shed, initially procuring 50 heads of chicken in Mt. Malasimbo, 49 of chickens were later sold
- Planted vegetables (eggplant, radish, string beans and sponge gourd)
- Welcomed different partners throughout the year in Bayanan, Baco, to showcas the PO's initiatives and accomplishments (Prime Infra, Prime Energy and MFI (April), DOST (May))
- Successfully sold 1,300 pieces of native tree seedlings from the KAWARAS nursery to the Municipality of Baco-MENRO
- Conducted the “Paskuhan sa Pamayanan” activity with KAWARAS and SARIG on December 10, 2023





CARE



- Prepared and released quarterly newsletters
- Conducted quarterly radio guest appearances
- Presented “Mindoro Biodiversity” and conducted a public photo exhibit in Victoria as part of the World Wetlands Day event, organized by CENRO Socorro and Naujan Lake National Park
- Re-submitted a draft proposed ordinance to declare May as Mindoro Biodiversity Month to Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Oriental Mindoro
- Held fundraising strategy meetings with Ms. Mayan Quebral
- Updated website sections and developed a user-friendly donation page
- Organized a Biodiversity and Environmental Youth Camp in Puerto Galera as part of Biodiversity Month
- Celebrated Environment Month with “Green Gathering for Community Champions” in Barangay Dulangan, fostering local community engagement and environmental awareness
- Drafted a proposal for the formation of a Provincial Environment Council (PEC) in Occidental Mindoro
- Organized the presentation of different NGOs in Mindoro as part of the Science and Technology Foundation Unit of DOST’s visit

CARE

Participation in the 31st Philippine Biodiversity Annual Symposium:

- Successfully organized the setup for an Institutional Exhibit
- Facilitated the Mindoro Research Agenda Workshop as part of the symposium activities
- Served as a guest speaker at the D'Aboville Foundation's workshop focusing on Mindoro's large mammals

Tamaraw Month Activities:

- Presented on Mindoro Biodiversity as part of Dalaw Turo at the Regional Science High School in Bansud, Oriental Mindoro on October 20, 2023
- Co-organized the Puerto Galera Trail Run for Tamaraws on October 22, 2023, with 106 participants
- Launched the Trail Run and Shirt for A Cause, raising over Php 20,000 as proceeds for the Tamaraw Conservation Program
- Featured in Tamaraw Vision Network (TVNet) & the PIA Oriental Mindoro's live stream (October 18) and SpiritFM Calapan's radio schedule (October 21) as part of their special feature for Tamaraw Month
- Simultaneously conducted the Mindoro Wildlife Quiz Contest for Oriental and Occidental Mindoro on October 28, 2023, with a total of 101 participating schools

International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) Activity:

- Participated in the "Shore It Up" event in Puerto Galera on September 16, 2023, with over 300 community members from Dulangan
- Conducted the Oceans Decade Campaign on September 16, 2023, in partnership with UNACOM, involving participants from Brgy. Dulangan and members of the EACY Alliance from Stairway Foundation





CARE



Public Engagements and Partnerships:

- Presented on Mindoro Biodiversity in Pola as part of the “Krus Para sa Kalikasan” Earth Day 2023 event organized by Mindoro Adventours
- Served as a Resource Speaker during the 2023 International Conference on Biosphere and Sustainability, held in Puerto Princesa, Palawan from November 3 to 7, 2023
- Provided logistical assistance to the Mindoro delegates for their participation in the National Wildlife Quiz Contest
- Served as a Guest Speaker during the Launch of the Environmental Awareness for Children and Youth (EACY) Alliance of Stairway Foundation held on September 16, 2023
- Presented as a guest speaker for the Annual Science Week Celebration at the City College of Calapan held on December 11, 2023, with more than 300 student attendees

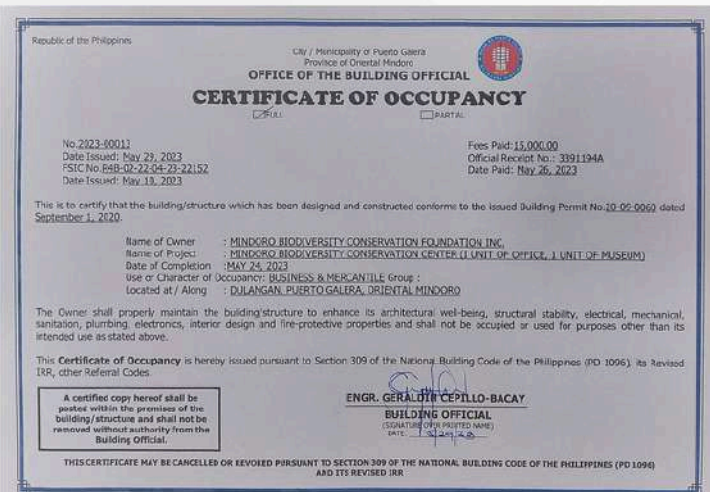
MBCC

- Conducted a courtesy visit and project discussion with Mayor Rocky Ilagan
- Visited the University of Santo Tomas Laboratory with Dr. Nikki Dagamac of iCollab for research laboratory setup consultation
- Drafted MBCC Operation Manuals
- Prepared documentary requirements for securing the Occupancy Permit
- Created a plan for the office and staff house
- Held a meeting with Dr. Emelina Mandia to discuss the donation of herbarium specimens and consultation on recommended plants for MBCC
- Received the EDGE Advanced Certificate from the Philippine Green Building Initiative
- Successfully signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the National Museum of the Philippines
- Conducted a Road Staking Activity with Puerto Galera assessors
- Entered into a Tripartite Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with ORMECO-MBCFI-Enertech, with initial signatures secured from MBCFI and Enertech
- Executed a Materials Transfer Agreement with DENR Region 2 and the Mabuwaya Foundation, and received valuable crocodile specimens





MBCC



- Finalized the Operations Manual and the Post-Earthquake and Typhoon Assessment Checklist
- Regularized two Indigenous Peoples (IP) staff members
- Secured an Occupancy Permit from the Puerto Galera LGU
- Visited the University of Santo Tomas to explore potential partnerships for the establishment of a research laboratory
- Successfully held a meeting with the Puerto Galera LGU and the Legal Officer of the Provincial Government of Oriental Mindoro to discuss the construction of an access road and pathway



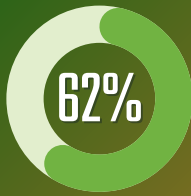
OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Participated in the Seabird Field Training Program at Bolinao, Pangasinan
- Attended the Stakeholders Workshop for the Development of Habitat Restoration Plan
- Coordinated and conducted celebratory events as part of MBCFI's 15th Anniversary
 - Held simultaneous "Tree Planting and Supplementing the Gulayan sa Paaralan" activity, in partnership with the DA MIMAROPA and the DepEd Calapan City and Oriental Mindoro SDOs
 - Provided seedling prizes for the Recognition of Most Eco-friendly Barangay as part of Calapan City's Kalap Festival
 - Participated in the launching of the total ban on six types of plastics in Calapan City
 - Radio guesting with SpiritFM Calapan
- Supervised and facilitated internship activities
 - MBCC Tree Inventory and Mapping
 - Digitization of References for Digital Library
 - Inventory of Research Equipment
 - Updating of Nursery Inventory
 - Processing of data from Post-perception Surveys
 - Assistance during the flying fox count in Puerto Galera
 - Identification of CEPA strategies for MBCC and MBCFI
 - Assistance in the conduct of Q2 foot patrolling in Mt. Halcon
 - Retrieval of camera traps for Ilin Clouddrunner Purposive Search
- Participated in quarterly PAMB meetings
- Regional and Local Council Meetings, including the Launching of the Corridor Alliance Advisory Committee (CAAC) of the BD Corridor Project in Mindoro and Planning Session for the Convergence Forum on the Island Ecosystems Approach in Mindoro





YEAR IN REVIEW



Increase
in FB page
reach*

98

Schools joined the
Mindoro Wildlife Quiz
Contest in celebration
of Tamaraw Month

19,595 FB page
visits

16,000+

Flying fox individuals
counted in Muelle Bay,
Puerto Galera

30

Deputized
WEOs from
KAWARAS and
SARIG

112

Bird species recorded
in Apo Reef Natural
Park during August
waterbird survey



1,300

Native tree
seedlings sold by
members of
KAWARAS

216

Narra seedlings
planted along
MBCC fenceline

1,193

Audience reached from
various environmental events



*Data in comparison to previous year



In line with the mission of Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc. in leading scientific research in Mindoro, the RESEARCH Program takes the lead in conducting various studies - including biophysical and socio-economic surveys, as well as species-specific researches, among others. This program is also responsible for providing technical assistance to different agencies and offices in Mindoro, in terms of biodiversity monitoring and management planning. Here are the highlights of activities of RESEARCH Program for the year 2023.



Waterbirds Survey in Apo Reef Natural Park (ARNP)

Apo Reef Natural Park (ARNP) spans 15,799.23 hectares and lies approximately 33 km off the coast of Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro, serving as a Marine Protected Area (MPA). It encompasses two atolls and a fringing reef, contributing to its significance as one of the 228 Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and 117 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in the Philippines. With 112 recorded bird species, ranging from island specialists to seabirds, the park stands out for its rich avian diversity.



The ARNP-PAMO and Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc. (MBCFI) collaborate in monitoring the bird populations within the park. Beginning with a rapid site assessment in 2014, their efforts evolved into regular bird surveys, particularly during breeding and non-breeding seasons. These surveys, including the Asian Waterbird Census conducted annually in January, aim to gauge waterbird and non-waterbird populations, assess wetland status, and document new species records within the MPA.

During the 2023 survey, a total of 21 bird species were identified, including seven waterbird species, three of which are nationally threatened. Despite low counts, the importance of continued participation in the census is emphasized. Efforts to enhance the park rangers' capacity, such as providing better birding equipment and training in bird identification, signify progress. Further training, particularly in bird photography, is recommended to empower rangers to conduct the census more independently, thereby reducing logistical expenses.



The annual presence of two seabird species, the Black-naped Tern (BNT) and Bridled Tern (BT), within the Marine Protected Area (MPA) begins as early as March, gradually increasing until peaking in July, according to experienced management staff. These species commonly nest on the limestone islands within the Apo Reef Natural Park (ARNP), with photographic evidence from Tinangkapan in 2018 and 2021 confirming their breeding presence. Prior to regular surveys, staff and tourists had photographed tern eggs, but these were not officially identified until 2022, when the highest counts of both species were recorded within the MPA Strict Protection Zone, accompanied by sightings of copulation, eggs, and juveniles.



The fifth breeding season survey, completed in July, aimed to monitor bird populations, standardize nest monitoring methodologies, and identify and address threats. During the August surveys, a total of 112 species were recorded, with BT outnumbering BNT in both surveys compared to the previous year, despite the impact of typhoons Dodong, Egay, and Falcon in July and August 2023, which likely affected migratory species' ecology.

Recommendations for ongoing monitoring include addressing anthropogenic threats such as human visitation to nesting areas within the Strict Protection Zone (SPZ) and predation by invasive rats. Suggestions include strictly enforcing PA regulations, considering seasonal trail closures to tourists, and deploying traps to reduce rat populations, especially during the breeding season. Additionally, capacity-building activities for management staff are encouraged to ensure effective conservation efforts in the ARNP.



Tamaraw Dietary Analysis Project

In 2023, the Tamaraw Dietary Analysis Project achieved significant milestones in its mission to understand the dietary habits of the endangered Tamaraw species. One notable accomplishment was the successful completion of the Gimparay Dry Season Survey, with collected samples meticulously transported to UPLB and UPD for further analysis. This survey not only provided valuable data on Tamaraw habitats but also allowed for the identification of various flora species, enriching our understanding of the ecosystem.



Additionally, the project team conducted the MIBNP Dry Season Survey, with laboratory analysis currently underway. Collaborative efforts were made with the Forest Foundation Philippines (FFP) to realign the program budget, ensuring the smooth progress of laboratory analyses. The submission of the Final Report to FFP marked a crucial step in documenting the project's findings and achievements, reflecting a commitment to transparency and accountability in conservation efforts.

Looking ahead, preparations for submitting the Final Report to project funder Chester Zoo are underway, further solidifying partnerships crucial for the project's sustainability. Furthermore, recognizing the importance of community involvement, a request was made to prioritize the CADT Application of CADC 086 from Alangan (Oriental Mindoro), highlighting the project's dedication to fostering local engagement and conservation initiatives in the region.



Purposive Survey for the Ilin Cloudbrunner

The Purposive Survey for the Ilin Cloudbrunner Project in 2023 built upon the groundwork laid in the previous year, leveraging insights from the 2022 report while incorporating fresh data from the latest survey. With a focus on conservation efforts, rangers underwent rigorous training in camera trap installation techniques, ensuring proficiency before deploying units in Stations 2 and 3 within Mts. Iglit-Baco Natural Park (MIBNP). This strategic placement aimed to capture vital information on the elusive Ilin Cloudbrunner population.

The survey itself was executed meticulously within MIBNP, utilizing the installed camera traps to gather valuable data on wildlife activity, particularly targeting the habitat of the endangered Ilin Cloudbrunner. Regular updates and collaboration meetings with Re:wild facilitated seamless coordination and alignment of efforts, fostering a cohesive approach towards conservation goals



Notably, six camera trap units were successfully retrieved after a three-month deployment, providing a wealth of visual data for analysis. Furthermore, the project extended its impact by engaging with UPLB OJTs, offering an orientation on camera trapping surveys and installation techniques. This initiative not only contributed to capacity building but also fostered a culture of environmental stewardship among the next generation of conservationists.



Biophysical Profiling of Mt. Gimparay

Mount Gimparay, a towering peak at 1,631 meters, stands majestically in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro. Despite its prominence, comprehensive studies on its biodiversity have been lacking, with the exception of a Tamaraw verification survey in June 2018. Recognizing the need for thorough examination, a biophysical profiling initiative was launched to compile species lists and biodiversity data, crucial for conservation efforts and establishing a baseline for future monitoring.



Preceding the survey, a reconnaissance activity spanning from March 4 to 10, 2023, was undertaken. Rangers from the Tamaraw Conservation Program and local Indigenous Peoples (IPs) joined forces for this dual-purpose mission, which aimed to scout potential survey sites and gather samples for a Tamaraw dietary analysis study. Through meticulous exploration, the team assessed terrain, vegetation, and accessibility, pinpointing sites representative of Mount Gimparay's diverse forest types.

The subsequent biophysical survey, conducted from March 18 to 31, 2023, led by RESEARCH Program Officer Elyza Tan, assembled a team of specialists, rangers, and guides. Delving deep into the flora and fauna of selected sites, the survey uncovered a treasure trove of endemic and endangered species, reaffirming Mount Gimparay's ecological significance. With forest types ranging from mossy and lower montane to dipterocarp, the area emerged as a vital habitat, especially for the Tamaraw subpopulation thriving within its bounds.



Annual Tamaraw Count 2023

In 2023, the Annual Tamaraw Population Survey in Mt. Iglit Ranges enlisted various stakeholders and refined methodologies, yet the total estimated tamaraw count dropped to 325, a significant decrease from the previous year. Factors such as methodological changes, habitat loss, hunting, and adverse weather conditions may underlie this decline, highlighting the urgency for conservation efforts to protect the tamaraw population and its habitat.

The findings of the 2023 survey underscore the pressing need for comprehensive conservation strategies in light of declining tamaraw numbers. Enhanced methodologies and stakeholder engagement are essential in addressing factors like habitat loss and hunting, ensuring the survival of this endangered species in Mt. Iglit Ranges.



Biodiversity Citizen Science



In Puerto Galera on October 22, an event at Muelle Bay introduced young minds to Citizen Science Bat Counting, aiming to foster environmental stewardship. Organized in collaboration with the Stairway Foundation Inc. and Kabataan Para sa Kalikasan (KAPAKA) - Puerto Galera, students learned about bat observation and counting in their natural habitat. Through hands-on training, participants contributed valuable data for research, empowering them to become environmental stewards and deepen their appreciation for biodiversity.



MISSION

Mindoro Island Symbolic Species Icons of Nature

MBCFI continuously provides assistance to communities in its priority sites, including capacity building activities, livelihood enhancement, habitat restoration, and woodlot establishment and maintenance. Through its MISSION Program, the organization strengthens partnerships with Peoples Organizations (POs) through conservation agreements. MBCFI enhanced the capacity of PO leaders and members in managing their organizations. MBCFI also assisted these POs in improving their livelihoods and helped maintain their restoration and woodland sites.

MBCFI has been working with the locals of different Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) in Mindoro. The following are the organizations supported by MBCFI:





Foot Patrolling and Biodiversity Monitoring

Mt. Halcon, known locally as "Sialdang" or "high above the clouds," is among the most challenging mountains to climb in the Philippines, holding cultural significance for the indigenous Mangyan people of Mindoro. Foot patrolling, led by the members of Nagkakaisang Mamamayan na Mangangalaga sa Halcon (NagMaMaHal), plays a crucial role in preserving the mountain's biodiversity. Deputized as Wildlife Enforcement Officers (WEO) by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), members of Kawaras Gabay Akyat Halcon sa Bayanan (KAWARAS) and Sarig Agunaker sa Bulod Sialdang (SARIG) face various risks, including landslides and inclement weather, in their commitment to protect Mt. Halcon.



Quarterly monitoring and patrolling activities provide crucial insights into trail conditions and ecosystem health. In the first quarter of 2023, 12 individuals, including members from KAWARAS and student interns from Mindoro State University, patrolled in Barangay Bayanan, Baco, Oriental Mindoro, while SARIG members, with interns from the University of the Philippines Los Baños, conducted patrols in Barangay Lantuyang in the second quarter. Findings from the latter quarter revealed discrepancies in patrolling routes and trail maintenance, highlighting the need to address these challenges to ensure the long-term conservation of Mt. Halcon's natural treasures.

Despite these challenges, the dedication of WEOs remains steadfast, driven by a deep sense of responsibility encapsulated in their motto, "Para protektahan ang ating kabundukan" (To protect our mountain). Their efforts have been commended for their effectiveness in safeguarding Mt. Halcon's ecosystems.

Nurseries and Woodlot Sites

Throughout the year, the dedicated members of KAWARAS in Bayanan, Baco, poured their efforts into the meticulous care of more than 2,000 indigenous wildlings, nurturing them to vibrant health. Simultaneously, the environmentally-conscious SARIG members undertook the crucial task of outplanting numerous seedlings at their designated woodlot restoration site, contributing to the ongoing efforts of ecological preservation. In September 2023, the fruitful endeavors of KAWARAS bore significant results as they successfully sold 1,300 native tree seedlings to the Municipality of Baco-MENRO, further bolstering local initiatives for sustainable forestry. Moreover, their commitment extended beyond sales, as they diligently conducted monthly maintenance activities at Nursery Sites nestled within the serene expanse of Mt. Halcon, ensuring the continued vitality of these precious saplings.



Other Livelihood Projects



Nito, a native vine from the Philippines, is skillfully woven into various household items by the talented women of KAWARAS. Amidst the world of mass production, the craftsmanship of handmade nito products offers a serene alternative. Each piece, blending traditional techniques with modern design, carries a narrative of heritage and artistry. Moreover, these products champion sustainability, supporting both the livelihood of the Mangyan community and the preservation of their cultural legacy. Through selling over a hundred pieces of nito products, totaling PHP18,285.00, the women of KAWARAS not only showcase their abilities but also bolster the local economy and celebrate their vibrant heritage.



Through a multifaceted approach, MBCFI conducted awareness-raising activities including workshops, seminars, and special events aimed at engaging diverse stakeholders. Leveraging various media platforms, from traditional to digital, MBCFI disseminated crucial conservation messages, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for Mindoro's ecological treasures. By empowering communities and fostering collective action, MBCFI demonstrated its unwavering commitment to preserving the natural heritage of Mindoro for future generations.

World Wetlands Day 2023

For World Wetlands Day 2023, CENRO Socorro and Naujan Lake National Park organized a public photo exhibit in Victoria, spotlighting Mindoro's biodiversity. Through captivating images, attendees gained insight into the region's rich natural heritage and the critical role of wetlands in sustaining life. The event served as a call to action for conservation efforts, highlighting the importance of preserving these ecosystems for future generations, while fostering a deeper appreciation for the wonders of nature.



Biodiversity Day Youth Camp



Led by MBCFI in collaboration with the Blue Alliance, a transformative Biodiversity and Environmental Youth Camp took place in Puerto Galera during Biodiversity Month. Through workshops, hands-on experiences, and discussions, participants were inspired to become stewards of the environment, emphasizing the power of collective action in conservation efforts. This partnership exemplified the strength of collaboration in advancing environmental goals, highlighting the importance of uniting efforts across sectors to protect our planet's biodiversity.

Environment Month

MBCFI's "Green Gatherings for Conservation Champions" in Barangay Dulangan celebrated Environment Month, uniting community members and youth volunteers to protect Mindoro's biodiversity. Through speeches and activities, attendees were inspired to champion environmental stewardship and raise awareness for conservation efforts.





BCSP Symposium

The 31st Annual Philippine Biodiversity Symposium celebrated MBCFI's dedication to safeguarding Mindoro's unique ecosystems under the theme "Priority Conservation Actions to Sustain Philippine Biodiversity." Co-hosted by BCSP, EDC, and Sorsogon State University, the event showcased MBCFI's institutional exhibit and workshops, highlighting the rich biodiversity of Mindoro. Notable was the workshop focusing on collaboration to enhance conservation efforts, emphasizing MBCFI's commitment to transparency and education.

Elyza Hazel Tan, MBCFI's Research Program Officer, contributed as a Guest Speaker, further underlining the organization's role as a catalyst for change in the conservation landscape.



International Coastal Cleanup



In Puerto Galera, a collaborative effort was made for the International Coastal Cleanup to combat ocean pollution and preserve marine ecosystems. With UNACOM, the local government, and Barangay Dulangan involved, volunteers worked together to clean the coastal areas and promote environmental stewardship.

Campaign materials for the Decade of the Ocean and ICC initiatives were meticulously crafted to educate the public and encourage action for ocean conservation. These materials, including posters and social media graphics, aimed to inspire widespread participation and deepen understanding of human impact on oceans.

Tamaraw Month 2023

In October 2023, Tamaraw Month was celebrated with fervor in Oriental Mindoro, highlighted by various events aimed at raising awareness and support for the conservation of the endangered Tamaraw species. One notable activity was the presentation of Mindoro Biodiversity as part of Dalaw Turo at Regional Science High School in Bansud, emphasizing the importance of preserving the unique ecosystem that the Tamaraws inhabit and educating the younger generation about their significance.



Adding to the month-long festivities was the co-organization of the Puerto Galera Trail Run for Tamaraws, which saw an impressive turnout of 106 participants. The event not only promoted physical fitness but also served as a platform to raise funds for the Tamaraw Conservation Program, demonstrating the community's dedication to conservation through active participation and support.

Moreover, the month was punctuated by media coverage, with Tamaraw conservation efforts prominently featured in various platforms. From live streams on Tamaraw Vision Network (TVNet) and PIA Oriental Mindoro to radio broadcasts on SpiritFM Calapan, the message of Tamaraw conservation resonated across the airwaves, amplifying awareness and rallying public support for the cause. Additionally, the simultaneous conduct of the Mindoro Wildlife Quiz Contest for Oriental and Occidental showcased the region's dedication to educating and engaging the youth in wildlife preservation efforts, fostering a sense of stewardship and responsibility among the next generation.

Tamaraw Month 2023 served as a testament to the collective resolve of Oriental Mindoro in safeguarding its natural heritage for generations to come.





Biosphere Reserve Day

We were honored to serve as a Resource Speaker during the 2023 International Conference on Biosphere and Sustainability, meticulously organized by UNACOM in Puerto Princesa, Palawan, from November 3 to 7, 2023. Throughout the event, Ms. Grace Diamante shared insights and experiences in Mindoro biodiversity conservation, contributing significantly to the global discourse on sustainable development and ecosystem preservation. Our participation underscored the importance of conservation in Mindoro, particularly Puerto Galera, coinciding with the International Day for Man and Biosphere, and reiterated the crucial need for collective action in safeguarding our planet's invaluable natural resources.



Other Presentations and Engagement



In 2023, MBCFI actively participated in public presentations and partnerships to raise awareness about environmental issues. We spoke at events like the Climate Reality and Plastic Crisis Talks and provided technical assistance for wildlife-related activities. Additionally, we collaborated with organizations like SEARCA to explore potential partnerships. Our team members served as guest speakers for various events and contributed to regional and local council meetings, supporting initiatives like the Corridor Alliance Advisory Committee and the Convergence Forum on the Island Ecosystems Approach in Mindoro.



MBCFI envisions the MBCC to promote Mindoro's natural beauty, the importance of its unique biodiversity, and its impact on society and climate change. The establishment of this iconic center will serve as a physical embodiment of sustainability, benefiting present and future generations by emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between people and natural resources. The MBCC is a one-story building with a gross floor area of 600 sqm. gross floor area including facilities such as museum, library, audio-visual room, conference and training rooms, among others. The center is located in Barangay Dulangan, Puerto Galera. Puerto Galera is declared a Man and Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO and is the gateway to the tourism cluster of Mindoro.



MBCC Construction Progress

During the first quarter of 2023, the Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Center (MBCC) diligently laid the groundwork for its operational phase, marking a crucial juncture in its journey towards the preservation and promotion of biodiversity. The design concept and plan for the office and staff house were meticulously prepared, prioritizing the creation of an environment conducive to productivity and efficiency.

Recognizing the importance of stability and risk mitigation, MBCC erected a robust slope protection barrier at the front of Building 2. This strategic move not only safeguards the infrastructure but also underscores MBCC's commitment to ensuring the safety and security of its premises.



Transitioning into the second quarter, MBCC continued its construction progress with strategic initiatives. A comprehensive topographic survey was conducted to assess the terrain, laying the foundation for future development plans. Collaborative efforts with local government units and legal officers advanced discussions regarding access roads and pathways, crucial for enhancing connectivity to the center.

Receiving the prestigious EDGE Advanced Certificate underscored MBCC's commitment to sustainable practices, bolstering its conservation efforts. Milestones in construction highlighted the center's unwavering dedication to environmental stewardship.



With every step, MBCC remained steadfast in its mission of biodiversity preservation, exemplifying harmony between humanity and nature. Progress in construction paved the way for the center's operational journey, bridging preservation and progress.

Operationalization Updates

The completion of the Operations Manual and the creation of a disaster assessment checklist highlight MBCC's commitment to operational efficiency and proactive disaster preparedness. These initiatives provide a solid framework for smooth operations and systematic responses to potential challenges. Concurrently, MBCC continues its sustainability efforts, including monitoring the Solar Power Hybrid Inverter and receiving solar lamp posts from the Malampaya Foundation Inc. Collaboration with Prime Infrastructure Capital, Inc. further emphasizes MBCC's dedication to environmental stewardship through activities like tree planting, positioning the organization as a leader in sustainable development in Mindoro.



MBCC Museum



MBCC, more than a conservation center, embodies a rich tapestry of knowledge and history. Collaborating with the National Museum of the Philippines, it integrates museum collections and educational services while actively designing an immersive visitor experience. Dr. Emelina Mandia's herbarium specimens, alongside partnerships like the Materials Transfer Agreement with DENR MIMAROPA, underscore MBCC's commitment to preserving Mindoro's biodiversity. With contributions from individuals like Ms. Susan Belen and the Tamaraw Conservation Program, the museum's collection thrives, symbolizing a collective effort towards biodiversity conservation. Ongoing coordination with EDC-Binhi further cements MBCC's role as a vital player in safeguarding the region's natural heritage.



OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MBCFI's 15th Anniversary

MBCFI commemorated its 15th anniversary in conservation on March 18, marking a significant milestone in its journey. Reflecting on accomplishments and milestones achieved over the years, the celebration provided an opportunity for the organization to express gratitude to its partners and stakeholders. In alignment with MBCFI's advocacy to promote native tree planting and support schools through the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program, a collaborative effort with the Department of Agriculture MIMAROPA distributed native tree seedlings, fruit-bearing trees, and vegetable seeds to select schools in Calapan City and Bongabong. These schools, in partnership with DepEd MIMAROPA and Schools Division Offices, participated in a simultaneous tree planting activity on March 19.



Furthermore, MBCFI actively engaged in on-ground tree planting initiatives at Isidoro Suzara Memorial School (ISMS) in Puerto Galera and Bayanan Elementary School in Baco on March 20. Additionally, a ceremonial Signing of Permission to Enter and Occupy the Land, and road staking activity at MBCC, highlighted the collaborative partnership between MBCFI, Mr. Ed Suzara, and the local government of Puerto Galera in establishing access roads for conservation areas. Moreover, MBCFI recognized the dedication and commitment of Wildlife Enforcement Officers from KAWARAS and SARIG through an Awarding Ceremony, acknowledging their vital role in enforcing environmental conservation laws. Alongside CENRO Socorro, these officers were provided with training certificates and IDs to empower them in their enforcement duties.

The celebration also included awarding seedling prizes to eco-friendly barangays and participating in the Launching of Total Ban of Plastics in Calapan City. MBCFI looks forward to sustained efforts in promoting environmental sustainability and community development in the years ahead.





Internships at MBCFI

Comprehensive oversight was provided for Wildlife, Forestry, and Ecology interns throughout their internship tenure, facilitating a range of essential activities. These included overseeing the observation of roosting flying foxes in Muelle Bay, Puerto Galera, conducting onsite lectures on counting techniques, and offering hands-on guidance for camera trapping surveys at MIBNP.

Additionally, substantial contributions were made to the formulation of the Mindoro Research Agenda and collaborative efforts were engaged in for the development of Community Engagement and Public Awareness (CEPA) strategies pertinent to MBCFI's objectives.



Policies and Council Representations



In 2023, MBCFI continued its significant efforts to advance biodiversity and conservation initiatives in Mindoro. MBCFI's engagement has extended to maintaining memberships and active participation in various technical committees, including the Protected Areas Management Board overseeing four protected areas in Mindoro, the Provincial Environment Council, the MIMAROPA Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Research and Development Consortium, City Project Monitoring Committee, Philippine Statistics Council, Corridor Alliance Advisory Council, Citizen Participatory Audit-COA, and the Provincial Multiparty Environmental Impact Assessment Monitoring Team. These affiliations have empowered MBCFI to play a proactive role in shaping and implementing policies pertaining to biodiversity and conservation.

FEATURED PARTNERS IN 2023



UC38 LLC





FEATURED PARTNERS IN 2023



MEMBERS AND STAFF

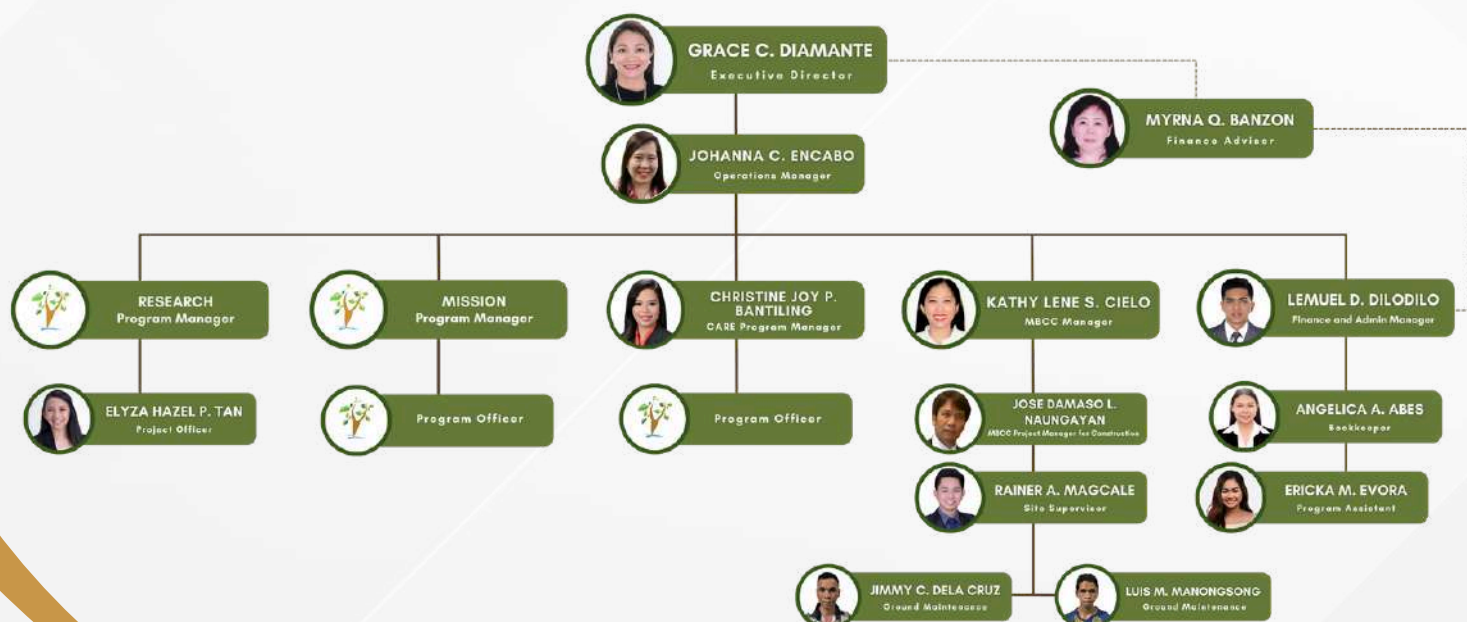
BOARD OF TRUSTEES



HONORARY MEMBERS



ORGANIGRAM





VISION AND MISSION

VISION

Sustained conservation of Mindoro's natural treasures for future generations.



MISSION

To lead scientific research and catalyze collaborative and participative conservation efforts in key biodiversity areas of Mindoro resulting in empowerment of Mindoreños through increased awareness and care.



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