



PHILIPPINES

Strengthening Non-state Actor Involvement in Forest Governance

Photo by Kathleen Zambas / Haribon

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Compiled by

The Haribon Foundation



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Committee hearing on Libuao Lake in Sablayan Penal and Prison Farm at the Mt. Siburan Key Biodiversity Area, July 2020. Photo by Shalimar Ilejay / Haribon.

The Haribon Foundation continued its work with Bantay Gubat partners & communities at large on forest monitoring, and on the use of the new KaPatrol App. Business plans were drafted involving local products and resources generated by the communities themselves. As plans were underway for a KBA-wide Forest Governance Forum, COVID-19 lockdowns forced communities and Haribon staff to revisit plans, and initiate risk assessments and recovery plans based on government protocols and recommendations.

CAPACITY BUILDING



39 Bantay Gubat members were trained in business plan formation. 2 business plans were drafted by communities involving local resources and the use of native tree species. Risk assessments and updated plans were made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION



Communities continue to be involved in the process of developing the KaPatrol App, which will be used for forest monitoring activities. New updates to the app also include the capability to accept Google Earth KML files to show monitored boundaries.

SUSTAINABLE AND INFORMED NETWORKS



IP groups have expressed interest in joining the Forests for Life Movement, a network of organizations dedicated to bringing back forest. Planning for a KBA-wide Forest Governance Forum continued, but was delayed in the 2nd quarter due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

INFORMED AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION



Community partners in Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) Mount Hilong-Hilong and Siburan are assisted for their renewal of their deputation while volunteers in Mount Irid-Angelo are working towards their initial deputation.

Outcome 1: Capacity Building

- SANAMAGMA PO in Magsaysay, Infanta of Mt. Irid-Angelo underwent Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA). They realigned their goals, updated plans, and reviewed finances and bookkeeping.
- 39 Bantay Gubat members were trained in business plan formulation.
- 2 business plans were drafted involving coconut products and a reforestation farm.
- One group internalized importance of increasing income (capital vs. expenses) rather than just having money for food. “When we talk about livelihood, we only knew to compute capital vs expenses, now they can choose better livelihood that will give them clear income and helpful to the environment” -IP Chieftain (Kaksaan Herminio) of Bgy. Lumutan, after the Business Planning workshop.
- Risk assessments were made and work plans revised at the start of the COVID19 lockdowns in the Philippines. The development of Biodiversity-friendly enterprises (BDFEs) for FOGOP partner communities continued. Existing livelihood programs in partner Local Government Units and Civil Society Organizations were explored as more and more incomes were

affected by COVID19 lockdowns.

Outcome 2: Increased Transparency and Access to Information

- Comments and suggestions from communities were collected during KaPatrol App orientations in the Mt. Irid-Angelo site.
- The KaPatrol dashboard can now accept KML or Google Earth files to show boundaries to be monitored under the project.

Outcome 3: Sustainable and Informed Networks

- The Indigenous group Dumagat-Remontado Tribe of Antipolo will join the Forests for Life Movement, a network of organizations dedicated to bringing back forests in the country.
- Planning for a Forest Governance Forum continued; its goal is to establish a network of forest wardens in the 3 KBA sites. The forum also aims to encourage dialogue, and the drafting of a forest protection action plan in priority KBAs. On the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the forum was postponed until monitoring activities on the ground can safely proceed. A re-entry plan aligned with government protocols is now being followed.
- Haribon staff maintain membership in the Rain Forest Restoration Initiative or RFRI, a network of individuals working to promote the use of native tree species for forest restoration and other land use objectives.
- Staff has also tapped opportunities in joining the Zero Extreme Poverty PH 2030 Coalition or ZEP Coalition. This provided access to more stakeholders in Rizal province at the Mt. Irid-Angelo site.

Outcome 4: Informed and Effective Participation

- Community partners in 2 KBAs, Mt. Hilong-hilong and Siburan are currently assisted by the project for the renewal of their deputation, while volunteers in Mt. Irid-Angelo is currently working on accreditation requirements for their initial deputation.
- Haribon has engaged in six meetings to promote and support implementation of REDD+ commitments, including the Legislative Briefing for the FRB/SFM and other green bills at the House of Representatives, and the Public Hearing of the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives for the initial deliberation of House Bill No. 3460, entitled: "An Act Establishing A National Wetland Policy."
- The Covid-19 lockdown which was declared on 17 March 2020 limited the engagement activities and interventions in terms of access and deliberation

“ When we talk about livelihood, we only knew to compute capital vs expenses. Now they can choose a better livelihood that will give them a clear income and be helpful to the environment.”

IP Chieftain (Kaksaan) Herminio of Bgy. Lumutan, after the Business Planning workshop.



Comments and suggestions from communities were collected during KaPatrol App orientations. Photo by Kathleen Zambas / Haribon.



Visibility

- 4 of 4 PR published, both in nationally-syndicated publications, highlighting the KaPatrol App.
- 5 of 12 web stories published, covering topics such as the KaPatrol app, Bantay Gubat spotlights, and forest loss data.
- #LahatTayoAyBantayGubat or “We are all forest defenders” campaign was launched on social media. The campaign continues, including infographics and forest fire risk. So far it has reached 17,000 people in social media and garnered 1,000 engagements (shares, likes, and comments).
- 1 new set of project banners were updated to include actual community partners to instill further pride among the participating communities. Materials highlighting the vision and mission statements of the Bantay Gubat groups in the 3 sites have been designed. Printing and distribution will commence pending COVID19 restrictions.
- 2 literary pieces by Bantay Gubat communities were received and published on the Haribon Foundation website.
- Partnerships with local radio stations are now being explored.

Upcoming Events August to December 2020

- Jul-Aug: Improving Forest Governance training to additional Bantay Gubat
- Aug: CAME orientation and training
- Aug: Livelihood scoping and field validation (Siburan)
- August – November: Meeting with the Nature Resource Management Council of Local Government Unit (LGU) Lanuza as well as with the Forest Land Use Plans Steering Committee of LGUs of Gen. Nakar and Infanta on Mainstreaming of REDD+ and Nationally Determined Contributions to Forest Land Use Plans.



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