

Strengthening conservation of Mount Siburan IBA, Mindoro, Philippines

Title Mount Siburan IBA is the largest tract of lowland forest on Mindoro and home to several threatened species including the the Critically Endangered Mindoro Bleeding heart. Local communities to Mount Siburan are mostly subsistence farmers and rely on the nearby IBA for timber and non-timber forest products (e.g. Rattan, honey, wild yam, medicines) including drinking water. The Haribon Foundation (BirdLife in the Philippines) is working with these communities to support sustainable livelihoods in order to help reduce pressure on forest resources of Mount Siburan. Sustainable livelihood options implemented are: **Bio-intensive Gardening (BIG)** - BIG technology is a household/family approach to organic vegetable production. It provides the necessary protein, vitamins and mineral requirements needed by families as well as providing them with an opportunity to earn extra income. **Forest restoration using native tree species** - The use of native tree species in forest restoration or ?Rainforestation? has been widely used and promoted in the IBA since 2004. The work helps biodiversity conservation and support local community projects and livelihoods. **Buri Craft Production** - Twelve participants attended the enhancement training on buri *Corypha elata* craft production provided by the local office of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in September 2009. The outcome of the training is the return of Samahan ng mga Kababaihan ng Malisbong (SAKAMAI), a women?s organization in Barangay Malisbong village. Around 20 women are producing buri crafts, which include hats, mats, bags and place mats. The Ecotourism Office of Sablayan LGU has committed to support SAKAMAI in the marketing and promotion of their products while the DTI will continue to provide technical assistance aside from the marketing of the products. Based on the annual IBA monitoring, conducted by Haribon Foundation with local participation since 2007, the prospects for conservation of the Mindoro Bleeding-heart and its habitat at Mt. Siburan IBA have improved. Only minor threats to Mt. Siburan consisting of bamboo gathering by some local people and seasonal wildlife hunting of the Mangyan ethnic group were observed. Hunting and trapping of the Mindoro Bleeding-heart and other threatened endemic species have practically stopped. Moreover, distributional information of the Mindoro Bleeding-heart indicate that it is increasing its range within the forest. Blas Tabaranza, author of the project report concludes ***?With all these outcomes, we can say that the project has laid the foundations through which the conservation of Mt. Siburan IBA and the survival of the Mindoro Bleeding-heart and other endemic threatened species of Mindoro have improved. But we still need to sustain a number of conservation activities including plans that still need to be implemented or enforced?.*** **Biodiversity at Mount Siburan** Mindoro Bleeding heart *Gallicolumba platenae* is endemic to the island of Mindoro and, based on historical records, It

used to be widespread and abundant. Recent observations reveal that it has become increasingly rare and it is classified on the Red List as Critically Endangered. The protection of this IBA probably represents the best opportunity to prevent the extinction of the threatened Black-hooded Coucal and Mindoro Hornbill. **22 May 2010 - International Day for Biological Diversity** This year's International Day for Biological Diversity theme of 'Biodiversity for Development and Poverty Alleviation' is a reminder of the unique contribution of biodiversity to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This is one of a series of projects showcasing the BirdLife Partnerships work around the world to improve livelihoods while conserving biodiversity. This project is part of a small grant programme managed by the BirdLife Secretariat with generous support from the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation.