



DAF Newsletter 2021

DAF Founder and President's message

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2021 was once again a very challenging year for humanity.

Measures taken to tackle the covid19 pandemic have created many divides between people, either sanitary or through ideological cleavage, up to the heart of families themselves.

More generally, the past two years have deeply reshaped the world in our ways to behave, move and consume. In such gruelling and complex time, it is important to unify around common causes. Building a better environment for us, our

dear ones, humans and all forms of life is the fight that is worth struggling for.

Closer to us, it is with great sadness that I must inform about the passing of our Trustee, board member Efren Velasco, who had been in our board since the very beginning in 2004, and who was my most trusted and loyal personal assistant for 37 years.

In the field, DAF remains focused on its vision and mission, concentrating its efforts and attention on its main program,

the "Mangyan – Tamaraw Driven Landscape Program" until the situation enables us to develop other projects and thematics in Mindoro.

To all our partners and loved-ones, we wish for 2022 to be a blessed year, full of hope, productivity, and experiment.

Hubert d'Aboville

Progress of the Mangyan Tamaraw Driven Landscape Program by Emmanuel Schutz, Program director

2021 has been an interesting year with many activities being initiated, requiring to explore new and various fields of expertise and to extend the scope of knowledge of the team.

Our actions and energy remain focused towards assisting our local partners from the DENR TCP and PAMO MIBNP to achieve the goals of the TCMAP and Management Plan. Because of the impossibility of our intentional partners to travel to the Philippines, work plans were realigned and some important objectives remain on hold.

This is the case of the Feasibility Study to assess relevance of ex-situ intervention and the Wildlife Crime Prevention science approach.

Instead, focus was given to the research work on population monitoring across Mindoro and training of local partners to different techniques.

Most of all, 2021 was the start of the three years **DARWIN Initiative** funded sub project "creating a sustainable landscape for the Taobuids and the tamaraw" that will enable us to more seriously address the landscape level inside Mts Iglit-

Baco Natural Park, integrating local communities, their living space and the tamaraw.

We are very grateful to all our partners and donors for their trust to the Program and its vision and to enable us to continue our work on site despite these chaotic times.



Research work on species and habitat

Tamaraw population monitoring in Mts Iglit-Baco Natural Park using alternative census method

In 2021, we continued the cycle of experimentation and development of alternative census method for tamaraws inside the count zone.

In May, we conducted a second tamaraw point count operation, two weeks after the annual count, but using the double observer method. Instead of a single team of spotter / recorder on each vantage point, the method implies two sub-teams who are positioned in order to scan the same area simultaneously and record independently all the animals they can detect. The method aims to tackle the problem of imperfect detection of animals in a heterogeneous environment by estimating the detection rate of the team and by

correcting problems of double counts.

The results are currently being analysed, but the protocol proved to be tedious to use for many participants. This experience will help us to elaborate a stronger and much simpler protocol to use then to conduct a proper training session prior to reiterate the operation in April 2022.

In June we conducted the third iteration of the distance sampling over the count zone. The operation is combined with the dependent double observer

method, aiming to estimate the detection rate of dungs recorded by a team walking along transects; in this case, a back team records the dungs missed by a front team.

The method sounds promising in becoming an alternative manner to monitor the tamaraw population across the count zone while the annual point count will lose its relevancy after the total phase-out of the grassland burning regime currently used.

The final goal of this cycle of field work is to render, once for all, a robust estimate of the number of animals present in the count zone in MIBNP, before phase-out of the grassland burning and shift to a monitoring method based on indirect signs of presence.



Building baseline data on the Tamaraw population and other wildlife in the Aruyan-Malati region using camera trap technology

The Aruyan-Malati area in the Municipality of Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro is an historical area of presence of the tamaraw and one of the priority sites for action and intervention of the Tamaraw Conservation and Management Action Plan (TCMAP). Since 2020, DAF, in collaboration with the TCP, is building baseline data on the situation of the species and other wildlife in the area.

In May we completed our initial camera trap study using an occupancy survey design. 15 devices were deployed over a period of 5 months in order to cover a total of 60 positions over an area of 700ha. The protocol associated a rapid

habitat assessment and required collaboration with residing Mangyan communities. Results confirm that the species is still present in the area with at least three different animals and active reproduction (presence of a juvenile).

Results were presented at the 29th symposium of the Biodiversity Conservation Society of the Philippines, under poster category in December 2021. Data collected also helped TCP to complete the needed documents that must be compiled for the application of the area as Critical Habitat.

This initial survey suggests that the tamaraw could be present in adjacent areas. Therefore,

another cycle of camera trap survey was started last December 2021, using 20 devices and will complete 80 positions. Outputs will help to define how to enhance protection measures and to strategize a species recovery plan on the long term.



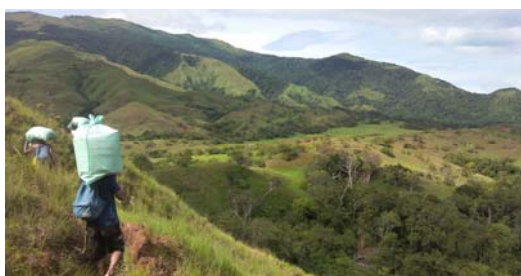
Providing technical expertise to the MATAPAT project in Mt. Calavite Wildlife Sanctuary

The Multidisciplinary Approaches for Tamaraw Protection Against Threats Project (MATAPAT) was proposed by the University Santo Tomas (UST) following meeting with DAF to discuss gaps in tamaraw work in Mindoro.

The project was rewarded by the DOST PCAARD funds and started in April 2021. DAF is providing technical expertise to help design the protocol, coordinate with local stakeholders, join fieldwork and analyse data. Our field team joined the pilot survey in June

and the first round of the camera trap study in December.

The project shall collect important data on the wildlife of this Protected Area that suffers from a lack of attention in terms of research and monitoring efforts.



Tamaraw, deers and birds: Mts Iglit-Baco Natural Park unveils some of its richness during the annual population count

Our DARWIN Project Coordinator, Ronet Santos, was able to immortalize moments of life of various species showing the diversity of life that can be found in this Protected Area and the importance to maintain and restore a mosaic of habitats.





Bio-cultural landscape approach and working with local indigenous communities

How to engage with indigenous communities that are neither eager to interact, nor to reveal insights of their lifestyle and don't see a problem where you believe there is, while state made policies will definitely impact them whatsoever. This is the challenge we are facing in working with upland taobuid

communities living around the core zone of the monitoring where all the tamaraws can be found inside Mts Iglit-Baco Natural Park

Thanks to the three years **UK fund of DARWIN Initiative**, we have eventually time and resources to think and plan strategies of intervention that are relevant and meaningful to

the communities. Our plan of action is threefold:

Support the taobuid tribe in collating and processing documents for its application for the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT).

Build the skills of a local team to conduct documentation on the lifestyle and traditional

practices of upland communities in order to feed a socio-agro-ecosystem analysis. Initiate innovative food production and habitat restoration examples in areas of control to attract attention of the communities without disturbing their practices or involving them directly.



Capacitation of a local team to conduct further community-based research and documentation

One of the main objectives of the Mangyan-Tamaraw Driven Landscape Program of DAF is to support the Taobuid tribe in formulating a "Community Conservation Plan" for the section of their Ancestral Domain that shares boundaries with Mts Iglit-Baco Natural Park (MIBNP). This plan and the MIBNP Protected Area Management Plan need to be aligned with each other with regards to the management and conservation of natural resources and cultural preservation.

To achieve the above objective, it is essential to better understand the lifeways of the concerned Taobuid

communities, their traditional practices so as to build common ground between the Taobuid's customary rights and state policies. This process requires patient field work and specific expertise to collect data and conduct relevant documentation.

The Taobuid are secretive and distrustful of outsiders, making it challenging to conduct documentation. In addition, the situation created by the pandemic has reshuffled the ways to involve specialists on site. Therefore, our response has been to build and train a local team composed of DAF people and PAMO staff including Taobuids themselves.

A customized online program has been designed in collaboration with specialists on local communities and indigenous concerns from the University of the Philippines Baguio, led by Professor Leah Abayao (College of Social Sciences). After three modules

we are glad to measure the progress of our local team and the interest created both from them and from our partners. The themes covered in the modules revolve around how to conceptualize an IP-focused and sensitive research design by formulating objectives and



research questions, data collection methods, analysis, actual writing and the different uses of the final product. The training approach employed is interactive and hands-on; after the first introduction module, the participants were asked to choose a topic and conduct research and documentation using the knowledge and skills they learned from the training. Their drafts were then commented on by the trainers and revised by the participants. Topics chosen included the history and importance of rice among the Taobuids, the different fishing methods used by the communities, activities

related to the planting of rice among the Taobuids, what the Taobuids in highly assimilated settlements still consider as sacred, the evolution of the alternative educational system in highly assimilated settlements, and initial assessment of production and consumption of rice and other food sources in more remote settlements. The aim is to enable the team to conduct more thorough documentation of upland communities sharing their living space with the tamaraw. More modules will be conducted.

Through this approach, we aim

to support the Protected Area Management Office to achieve some of their targets under the guidance of the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018 that recognizes ancestral domain of indigenous peoples sharing boundaries with protected areas.



Permaculture based system for food production and habitat restoration in Mts Iglit-Baco Natural Park

The station 2 ranger's base camp is located four hours hike from the Park entrance, at the foot hill of Mt Iglit and adjoins the 2016 No Hunting Agreement Zone where most tamaraws can be found today. It lies within territories of "category 2" IP settlements that are concerned by tamaraw protection measures and policies. Nearly 12 rangers use the station on a daily basis. For these reasons, the station 2 location was selected in exploring the use of

permaculture to produce local food resource as well as to experiment habitat restoration to be further extrapolated in the tamaraw range.

After an initial visit of members of the Philippines Permaculture Association in June 2021, and discussion with Taobuid leaders to agree on the exact extent of the demonstration area, an initial system design was drafted. In November, a mixt team composed of PAMO staff, DAF team, TCP

staff and including Taobuids, conducted a one week Basic Permaculture Design Course to gain the main principals of permaculture and finalize the



design of the system to be established inside the park. It was followed by a kick off on site to start building the different components of the system:

- Organic food production around the station 2 infrastructure
- Water and trash management system
- Natural fish pond 1ha food forest on the adjacent "landing area" a plateau where

the cattle rancher Korionoff used to land his small airplane

- 4ha habitat restoration on the landing area displaying several techniques
- A 100m long fire breaker at the limit of the system's site to protect the area from grassland fire set by taobuids during the dry season.

A two years work plan has been established to set up the entire system after which the

Park Office will be fully in charge.

The objective is to create a system that can provide sufficient food to the rangers on duty, while avoiding to import supply from outside and reducing the need for trash and inorganic material management. Ultimately, the goal is to create an example from the DENR of land and resource management to which the local communities could benefit by copying what

they consider relevant to them, following their moto: "to see is to believe".



DAF welcomes new board member and staff:

It is with great pleasure that DAF welcome **Mr. Ramon Moreno** as new trustee and member of the board of the foundation. Mon has been a family friend for over 15 years, working hard on many differ-

ent projects with Paris Manila Technology corp., the Philippine Coast Guards Auxiliary, and Together-Ensemble Foundation. Mon is a resourceful person dedicating his time and energy to help the poor the

people in needs. He will be a great asset to the foundation.

Meantime, DAF team has been steadily increasing in order to address all the objectives of the Program. Welcome to **Nina Saet** (community outreach

officer), **Diego Agman** (taobuid liaison officer), **Cleo Hechanova** and **Fransly Ignacio** (permaculture officers), **Clyde Managbanag** (conservation research assistant).

New partners and collaborations

DAF is proud to be a partner of the **University of Santo Tomas** in designing and implementing the MATAPAT project. Besides technical expertise for the field work, we are already exploring other topics of collaboration such as Mindoro tamaraw mapping and lectures to students.

The **Philippines Permacul-**

ture Association (PPA) will collaborate with us and the Park to develop and monitor the permaculture based system for food production and habitat restoration at station 2.

The tamaraw story was selected to join the **IUCN SSC Reverse the Red** movement as one of the encouraging case study of improvement in spe-

cies conservation. <https://www.reversethered.org/stories/tamaraw>

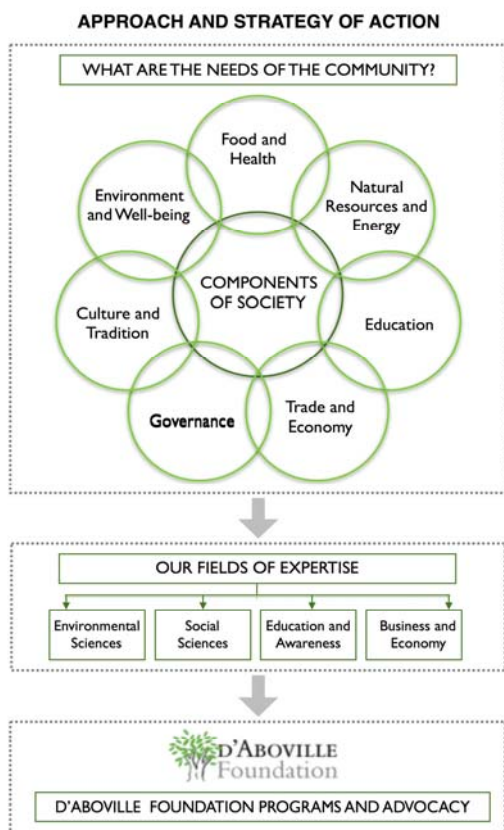


DAF has also initiated a partnership with the platform **UN-INGO** in Europe in order to facilitate donations from corporates and individuals (<https://www.uningo.eu>).

We also want to express our gratitude to Mr M. Montesano who has become the first contributor as individual donor.



How we work



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WHO WE ARE

The D'Aboville Foundation and Demo Farm, Inc. is a French-Filipino non-profit, non-government organization established in 2004 to work with the indigenous Mangyans, environment, and eco-cultural tourism in the Island of Mindoro in the Philippines.

The Foundation has four principal platforms of action:

- alleviation of poverty and the preservation of the cultural heritage of the Mangyan indigenous people
- the protection of the environment and biodiversity;
- development of sustainable agriculture and organic farming practices;
- uplifting of the community through responsible tourism and eco-friendly development.

OUR VISION

The unique natural and cultural heritage of the Island of Mindoro is preserved for future generations and the well being of its people is enhanced.

Board Members and Directors



Hubert d'Aboville
President - Executive Director



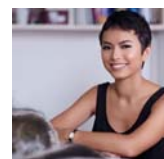
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Emmanuel Shultz
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Our Partners

