

Journalists tour newest ASEAN Heritage Park

Report on the Media Tour to Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park 17 – 19 June 2010 Bukidnon, Philippines

- As part of the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity, journalists in the Philippines held an expedition to Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park in Mindanao island, the newest ASEAN Heritage Park.
- From 17 to 19 June, Filipino journalists encountered Kitanglad's unique ecological diversity. The expedition was organized by the Philippines' Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity. Journalists are from BusinessMirror, ABS-CBN television, and the Philippine News Agency.
- Mt. Kitanglad was declared the 28th ASEAN Heritage Park at the 11th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in October 2009. The Park's diverse and rich flora and fauna make it one of the last sanctuaries of the country's natural heritage. The Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park covers 47,270 hectares and is the major watershed that provides water for irrigation, power generation and domestic use for Bukidnon. It is likewise the ancestral domain of the Talaandig, Higaonon and Bukidnon ethnolinguistic groups that share common historical and cultural ties with Mt. Kitanglad.
- The ASEAN Heritage Parks are educational and inspirational sites of high conservation importance, preserving a complete spectrum of representative ecosystems of the ASEAN region. The parks embody the aspirations of the peoples of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam to conserve their natural treasures that represent the bounty and diversity of living organisms of their nations. The abundance of these diverse biological resources also ensures the continuous flow of goods and ecosystems services for the benefit of the present and future generations.
- "By exposing media practitioners to the ASEAN Heritage Parks and their rich biodiversity, we will have more allies in explaining key biodiversity issues to the general public," Mr. Rodrigo U. Fuentes, executive director of the European Union-funded ACB, said.
- The delegates trekked Mt. Kitanglad to see the nesting place of the Philippine eagle. The mountain is one of the few remaining rainforests in the Philippines, hosting one of the most important diverse species of rare and endemic wildlife, most especially the Philippine Eagle, the Philippines' national bird. The Philippine Eagle Foundation briefed the media participants about the rescue and rehabilitation of Philippine eagles. According to PEF, Mt. Kitanglad is the perfect release site of the endangered bird.

Photo of Participants

