

MITHI

MANGROVE-BASED INITIATIVES FOR THRIVING HABITATS AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

IMPACT REPORT 2025

OCEANUS CONSERVATION

SECURITY BANK

COMMUNITIES & NATURE



"Talabong"
CHINESE EGRET
Egretta eulophotes
Vulnerable (IUCN Red List)

Photo by Sharlene Mercado | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental



Photo by Sharlene Mercado | Oceanus Conservation
Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental

A message from Security Bank



As this year comes to a close, I find myself returning to a simple belief that has guided Project MITHI from the beginning. Our actions, when rooted in care and commitment, create ripples that travel far beyond what we can see.

We are living in a time of immense challenge. Climate change is no longer a distant threat. It is present in our coastlines, our storms, and our communities. Yet this year has also reminded me that solutions do not always begin on a global stage. Often, they begin locally, with people choosing to protect what they love and to stand for the places they call home.

Project MITHI was born from this understanding. It is an invitation to regenerate the Earth while strengthening the communities who live closest to it. At the heart of this work are mangroves. Quiet, resilient, and often overlooked, mangroves are among nature's most powerful protectors. They shelter coastlines from storms, store vast amounts of carbon, and sustain rich ecosystems that countless species depend on.

In the Philippines, more than half of our mangrove forests have been lost since the early 1900s, largely due to land conversion and unsustainable human activity. This loss has consequences. Mangrove depletion increases vulnerability to natural disasters, a reality made clear by the damage caused by tropical cyclones in recent years. These forests are not just trees. They are lifelines.

Throughout this year, our work has focused on regeneration and protection. Together with our partners, Oceanus Conservation and Communities for Nature, we have planted and safeguarded mangroves as a foundation for climate adaptation and mitigation, while restoring ecosystems and strengthening natural defenses for coastal communities. We have worked alongside local partners to share knowledge, build skills, and support community-led stewardship through education and workshops. We have also taken steps toward promoting sustainable livelihoods, so that conservation can support dignity, stability, and long-term resilience.

At its core, Project MITHI is about partnership. It is a growing movement shaped by collaboration between communities, organizations, and institutions. Most importantly, it centers the leadership of those who are most affected by climate change, and who often contribute the least to its causes.

This work is deeply tied to climate justice. It recognizes that solutions must honor local wisdom, protect vulnerable communities, and restore balance between people and the natural world.

As we look to the year ahead, our intention is to move more slowly and more deeply. We are committed to strengthening our relationships with partner communities, listening with care, and building systems of stewardship that are rooted in trust. Our aim is to cultivate something that can endure, supporting both people and ecosystems for generations to come.

Mangroves teach us this lesson well. Their strength lies not in a single tree, but in an interconnected network of roots that hold one another steady. In the same way, the impact of Project MITHI is made possible through collective effort, shared responsibility, and long-term commitment.

Thank you for being part of this journey. May we continue planting seeds of hope, one mangrove, one community, and one meaningful action at a time.

Nikki Lizares
VP, Sustainability Head
Security Bank

BANTIGI
Pemphis acidula
Least Concern (IUCN Red List)

Photo by Sharlene Mercado | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental

A message from Oceanus Conservation



Roots of Resilience, Seeds of Tomorrow

To our partners, friends, and advocates,

It is with immense gratitude that I reflect on the foundational year of Project MITHI. This vision—to restore vital mangrove ecosystems while empowering the communities that depend on them—took root thanks to the catalytic partnership of Security Bank of the Philippines. Your belief provided the fertile ground for this ambitious work to begin. A special thanks to Communities for Nature for their crucial role as our bridge and partner, expertly facilitating the collaboration that made this project possible.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the true heart of this project: the inspiring coastal communities and local government offices of Bais City, Negros Oriental, and Aringay, La Union. Your leadership, knowledge, and unwavering commitment are the bedrock of our progress. To every volunteer, supporter, and the dedicated Oceanus Conservation on-ground team who contributed time, expertise, and passion—you have helped cultivate a collective spirit that makes MITHI far more than a conservation initiative.

This first year has been one of learning and adaptive action. From pioneering mound-building techniques in Aringay's challenging substrates to strengthening local guardianship in the Tañon Strait, we have laid a strong, science-based foundation. Each planted propagule and every community training session represents a seed—of knowledge, resilience, and sustainable livelihood—beginning to sprout.
Looking ahead, our five-year journey calls us to nurture these beginnings into a flourishing, self-sustaining forest of resilience. The path forward leads to stronger community enterprises, robust ecotourism, and a proven model of integrated development.

We therefore extend an open invitation. To Security Bank and our founding partners: let us continue this vital journey together. To new potential allies: join us in scaling this proven model. By investing in MITHI, you invest in a legacy where thriving habitats and inclusive communities grow, side by side, for generations to come.

Together for our planet,
Camille Rivera
Executive Director
Oceanus Conservation

COMMON KINGFISHER
Alcedo atthis
Least Concern (IUCN Red List)

Photo by Sharlene Mercado | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental

A Letter from Communities for Nature



Project MITHI has always been about people working together — communities, partners on the ground, Oceanus Conservation, Security Bank, and Communities for Nature — united by a shared belief that lasting environmental change is built through trust, collaboration, and shared commitment. What we have achieved in this first year is a testament to what becomes possible when local leadership, scientific expertise, and purposeful partnership align.

We are already seeing tangible impact across our partner communities, particularly through the restoration and protection of vital mangrove ecosystems that support biodiversity, livelihoods, and coastal resilience. Just as importantly, this year has been about teams working hand in hand on the ground — community leaders, local organisations, local government partners, and delivery teams — building capability, confidence, and shared ownership for the future.

Security Bank's leadership in this partnership has been truly trailblazing. Their decision to invest in a multi-year partnership, to listen deeply, and to act as a genuine partner sets a powerful example for how corporates can engage responsibly and meaningfully with communities and nature. Alongside this, Oceanus Conservation brings scientific depth and delivery excellence, ensuring that our work is both rigorous and grounded in real-world impact.

At Communities for Nature, we are guided by a belief in stewardship — that whatever resources, influence, or opportunity we hold are never really ours to keep, but to return to where they can create the greatest good. Project MITHI reflects this principle in action.

As we look ahead to Year Two, I am immensely proud of what we have achieved together in this first year, and excited by what lies ahead. There is still much more to build, strengthen, and protect. We warmly welcome individuals, organisations, and partners who share this vision to join us in shaping — and supporting — the next chapter of this journey.

Rhoda Avanzado Phillips
Chair and Founder,
Communities for Nature



PHILIPPINE DUCKS
Anas luzonica
Vulnerable (IUCN Red List)

Photo by Sharlene Mercado | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental



MITHI: Where Vision Takes Root

The Challenge: A Disappearing Frontier

The Philippines is losing its mangroves at an alarming rate. These coastal forests—our natural shields against storms, nurseries for fish, and silent warriors against climate change—have been cleared for decades for short-term gain. This loss creates a dangerous ripple effect: exposed coastlines, collapsing fisheries, and communities trapped in cycles of vulnerability and poverty.

In Brgy. Dulao, Aringay, La Union, the challenge was one of rehabilitation. Years of aquaculture had left behind altered landscapes—ponds of fluid mud where mangroves could no longer naturally take hold. The land was waiting for a chance to heal.

In Bais City, Negros Oriental, the challenge was one of protection. The Talabong Island Mangrove Forest, a jewel within the Tañon Strait Protected Seascape, holds immense ecological wealth. Yet, without current scientific data and strengthened local stewardship, its future—and the livelihoods it supports—remained at risk.



The Response: An Integrated Vision

Project MITHI (Mangrove-based Initiatives for Thriving Habitats and Inclusive Communities) was born from a fundamental belief: we cannot protect ecosystems without strengthening the people who depend on them, and we cannot sustain communities without healing the environment that sustains them.

Initiated in 2025, this five-year program was designed to break the old cycles. Funded by Security Bank of the Philippines and implemented by Oceanus Conservation, with Communities for Nature facilitating the partnership, MITHI was conceived as a dual-action model:

- **Ecosystem Restoration:** Contribute to biodiversity recovery and long-term carbon sequestration, with benefits to 1,200+ coastal households. Continue ecosystem regeneration and monitoring in Aringay to sustain and safeguard restoration and conservation efforts.
- **Community Leadership and Development**: Strengthen our partner community with leadership, governance, and community-building skills such as Finance and Enterprise Management. Foster higher engagement and stronger relationships.







- **Sustainable Livelihoods:** Support community-led initiatives that align income generation with conservation such as birdwatching tour operations and livelihood enterprise setup and finance and enterprise administration

- **Science & Education**: Build capacity for ecotourism linking conservation knowledge with practical, community-led tourism initiatives that complement the city's tourism management plan and promote biodiversity awareness.





Why It Matters: The Ripple Effect of Resilience

MITHI is more than a planting project. It is an investment in a virtuous cycle:

- Healthy Mangroves → provide coastal protection, sequester carbon, and boost fish stocks.
- Boosted Fish Stocks & Ecotourism → create sustainable livelihood opportunities for communities.
- Strengthened Communities → become the most passionate and effective long-term guardians of the forest.





This project was initiated to prove a powerful idea: that climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and human development are not separate goals, but interconnected roots of the same solution. By starting with the mangrove—the root of coastal life—we aim to grow lasting change that benefits over 30,000 households, protects irreplaceable wildlife, and creates a replicable blueprint for the nation.

This is the story of that first year of growth.



The MITHI Model: Interconnected Roots

Core Philosophy:

- No Separation: Community well-being and ecosystem health are inseparable.
- Science-Led: Every action is guided by baseline data and adaptive research.
- Partnership-Driven: From corporate funders to local governments, collaboration is key.

Year 1 Strategic Sites:

- Aringay, La Union: Innovative Rehabilitation
  - Focus: Engineering with nature (e.g., mounding) to heal altered landscapes.
- Bais City, Negros Oriental: Science-Based Protection
  - Focus: Wildlife research & bolstering local enforcement (bantay dagat) in the Tañon Strait Protected Seascape.

The Ultimate Goal:

To foster self-sustaining communities who are the proud economic beneficiaries and committed ecological stewards of their restored mangrove forests.

This is where our story begins—not with a single tree, but with a new way of growing together.

MITHI IN NUMBERS

Planted
10,000
endemic and native mangrove seedlings in Aringay, La Union

82.68%
overall mangrove seedling survival as of December 2025

2.6 hectares
under rehabilitation in Aringay, La Union

123 tons
of CO_2 sequestration potential*

2
unique ecosystems rehabilitated and conserved: Aringay & Bais City

Potentially sequester
26
car's CO_2 emissions (per year)

15
macroinvertebrate species identified in Dulao, Aringay site

Baseline assessment of
5 taxa
in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City

*Estimates are based on average per-tree CO_2 uptake values and assume 100% survival; actual sequestration will vary depending on species, age, site conditions, and mortality.

32,000+
households benefiting (Aringay and Bais)

22
Bais youth informed on CEPA day (18 female & 4 male)

Knowledge shared with
42
primary stakeholders on One day forum

At least
24 birds
species assessed in Dulao, Aringay site

116
primary stakeholders involved (Aringay and Bais)

14+
Communication, Education, and Public Awareness materials distributed

279+
Security Bank employees/ volunteers engaged

Ecosystem Rehabilitation
Sustainable Livelihoods
Community Leadership & Development
Science & Education



LITTLE EGRETS
Egretta garzetta
Least Concerned (IUCN Red List)

Photo by Sharlene Mercado | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental

Charting a New Course: Security Bank's Pioneering Investment in Conservation

In the landscape of Philippine corporate social responsibility, a new frontier is being mapped—one where financial stability and ecological resilience are recognized as interconnected pillars of national progress. At the forefront of this shift is Security Bank of the Philippines, whose pioneering partnership with Project MITHI represents more than just funding; it signifies a strategic evolution in how a financial institution can contribute to the nation's future.

For Security Bank, this project marks a deliberate and significant expansion of its community engagement. *"In the past, the bank has really been involved in the community through our foundation which has been focused on education. Something like this really is of larger scope and I think it's the first time that the bank is doing it,"* explains Nikki Lizares, VP, Sustainability Head of Security Bank. *"I think it's also the first time that any financial institution in the Philippines might be doing something of this scale."*

This scale is defined not just by the hectares of mangroves, but by the holistic, integrated model of MITHI—one that combines cutting-edge ecosystem rehabilitation with deep community empowerment to build long-term climate resilience. It is a direct investment in the natural infrastructure that protects the coasts and the communities that are the backbone of the local economy.

"And what we really hope to exemplify is really that there's a chance for financial institutions like ourselves to be involved in conservation projects, in projects that really enable and empower the community to build resilience especially now in the face of climate change," Lizares continues.









The vision, however, extends beyond the immediate project outcomes. Security Bank sees this as a catalytic first step, a demonstration with the potential to inspire a broader movement within the Philippine business sector. *"We hope that it will be a proactive first step and eventually that we can be perhaps, maybe, a role model that others can follow,"* Nikki states, highlighting the aspirational ripple effect at the heart of their involvement. *"So that we can create a ripple effect and make a bigger and lasting impact."*

This statement of intent frames Security Bank not merely as a donor, but as a strategic partner and pioneer. Their support in Year 1 has provided the essential capital to capacitate and reinforce local efforts in mangrove rehabilitation activities, to generate the first comprehensive wildlife data for Talabong, and to begin the process of turning community members into certified stewards.

By choosing MITHI, Security Bank is helping to write a new playbook for impact—one where financial institutions leverage their unique position to fund solutions at the critical intersection of environmental health, community prosperity, and climate adaptation. As the mangroves they helped enable begin to stabilize the shoreline, so too does this partnership help stabilize a more sustainable and resilient future for the Philippines.



TOCKAY GECKO
Gecko gecko

Photo by Sharlene Mercado | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental

Science as the Compass: Research Guiding Restoration & Conservation

True conservation is not guesswork. At the heart of Project MITHI is a commitment to science-led action, ensuring every intervention is informed, strategic, and respectful of existing ecosystems. This principle—and the critical support of our partners—guided our innovative work in two distinct landscapes: the pristine Talabong Mangrove Reserve and the challenging rehabilitation site in Aringay, La Union.

In the Talabong Mangrove Reserve, part of the nationally significant Tañon Strait Protected Seascape (TSPS), we conducted the first comprehensive wildlife baseline study in the reserve. Our team meticulously documented five major taxa: Birds, Flora, Amphibians, Reptiles, and Mammals. We have identified threatened species such as the Philippine Duck, Chinese Egret, and Eurasian Curlew. This research is more than a species list; it is a vital health report for the ecosystem, providing a crucial benchmark to measure conservation success and identify key species and habitats that require focused protection. This scientific contribution, eagerly welcomed by the Bais City LGU, will directly strengthen local conservation and ecotourism plans, creating a tangible link between a protected mangrove and sustainable community livelihoods.

Meanwhile, in Aringay, La Union, science dictated a precautionary approach. Before any rehabilitation began in the former fishponds, our team conducted thorough biodiversity assessments, focusing on birds and macro-invertebrate species. The goal was clear: to ensure our active restoration—building mounds and planting mangroves—would not encroach on the natural habitats, particularly the critical foraging grounds for migratory birds. This pre-emptive research ensured our solution to one ecological challenge did not become a problem for another.

The proof of this science-led methodology is in our results. Through careful species selection, site adaptation, and continuous monitoring, MITHI has planted 10,000 endemic and native mangrove seedlings and achieved an overall 82.68% mangrove seedling survival rate in its first year—a figure that stands significantly higher than the national average for restoration projects. This exceptional success rate validates our innovative techniques and demonstrates that with precise, research-backed intervention, degraded ecosystems can not only recover but thrive.

From the deep baseline study in Bais to the pre-construction assessment in Aringay, MITHI demonstrates that effective conservation is built on a foundation of rigorous science and enabled by forward-thinking partnership. Understanding what is already there allows us to make smarter decisions, ensuring that both people and biodiversity thrive together.











PHILIPPINE NIGHTJAR
Caprimulgus manillensis
Least Concern (IUCN Red List)

Photo by Sharlene Mercado | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental

Growing Knowledge, Inspiring Guardians: The Heartbeat of MITHI

Project MITHI believes that lasting conservation is fueled by two engines: rigorous science and inspired communities. Our "Science & Education" pillar is dedicated to turning data into understanding, and understanding into committed action—engaging everyone from corporate partners to local students as vital stakeholders in the mangrove ecosystem.

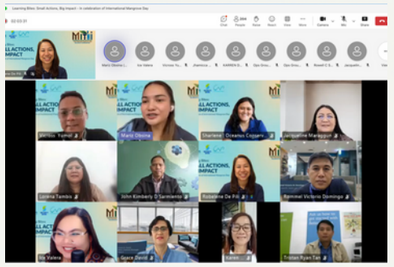
Igniting Corporate Engagement

True partnership transcends a transaction—it creates transformation. Our collaboration with Security Bank exemplifies this, moving from digital awareness to direct action in the mangroves. We began by planting seeds of knowledge, hosting a virtual "Lunch & Learn" session that connected with over 200 employees from branches nationwide. This foundational session illuminated the critical role of mangroves in climate resilience and community stability, sparking immediate interest. Participants shared strong support for the project's vision, with many expressing eagerness to join future volunteer opportunities, proving that understanding fuels commitment.















That commitment took tangible root when thirty-nine Security Bank volunteers traveled to the Aringay rehabilitation site. The day began not with shovels, but with a short field lecture from our Oceanus team. Armed with this knowledge, the volunteers transitioned from learners to active restorers. In a powerful display of partnership, they successfully planted over 400 mangrove propagules; their effort, combined with the community's work, culminated in 1,000 endemic and native mangrove species being planted that day.

The experience transformed corporate engagement into a profound, personal connection. As one volunteer reflected, "...napakalaking tulong *ng mangroves sa community and sa akin as well, kasi pwede ko ng impart yung natutunan ko dito doon sa amin [sa tamang pagtatanim ng mangroves]...*" ("Mangroves are a huge help to the community and to me as well, because I can now impart what I learned here back in my own area [on the proper way of planting mangroves]..."). This sentiment captures the essence of the day: a corporate activity evolved into a shared mission, creating not just ecological impact but a network of informed ambassadors who carry the lessons of MITHI far beyond the site.



Corporate Pathway:

- Lunch & Learn: >200 Security Bank employees educated on mangrove value.
- Volunteer Planting: 39 employees apply learning hands-on, guided by Oceanus Conservation.
- Result: Deeper partner investment and ambassador-building within a major corporation.



JAVA SPARROW
Padda oryzivora
Endangered (IUCN Red List)

Photo by Jim Gasta | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental

Cultivating the Next Generation of Stewards

In Bais City, our educational strategy was inspired by a powerful insight from the local bantay dagat. They observed that while adults sometimes ignored environmental warnings, children became powerful messengers of change. After a lecture, one child boldly corrected their parents' harmful practices. This revealed a new path: if the community's present guardians could not always be heard, they would help cultivate its future guardians. Sir Lito Torres, head of the Talabong Mangrove Reserve Bantay Dagat, explained the philosophy: "Our advocacy, with the help of NGOs like Oceanus, Project MITHI, and Security Bank, is to partner with the academe... We aim to inform and teach the children, as young as they are now, how important these resources are for their future. And so, when they return home... they will spread these lessons to their families and hopefully remind their fathers 'pa, that's illegal!'. These advocacies must never stop."















Guided by this wisdom, we designed our Communication, Education, and Public Awareness (CEPA) Day for Grade 5 students of Cipriano Alcala Memorial Integrated School. The day transformed the classroom into an ecosystem of discovery. We conducted a storytelling session in the local language using our own book, "Ocean Adventures with Cory," and students dove into interactive booths exploring mangroves, migratory birds, and the impacts of trash. To ensure the lessons rippled outward, we equipped the school and the bantay dagat with lasting resources—posters, stickers, storybooks, winner badges, and large educational tarpaulins to fortify community-wide conservation messaging.

The impact was immediate and profound. Youth participants eagerly shared that they "learned and enjoyed a lot" and vowed to "protect and help the mangroves, birds, seagrass, and corals thrive," already embodying the stewardship we hoped to inspire. Their final wish—"to have more interactive activities like this"—confirms the success of this approach. By empowering children as agents of change within their own families, we are not just teaching a lesson; we are helping the bantay dagat plant a seed of advocacy that will grow for generations, turning today's students into tomorrow's unwavering guardians of the coast.

Community & Youth Pathway:

- CEPA Day: Interactive learning for Grade 5 (18 female, 4 male) students using local-language stories and booths.
- Resource Provision: Equipping schools and bantay dagat with educational materials (storybooks, posters, stickers, winner badges, and tarpaulins).
- Result: Instilling conservation values early and strengthening local enforcement identity.



COMMON SUN SKINK
Eutropis multifasciata
Least Concerned (IUCN Red List)

Photo by Jim Gasta | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental



Bridging Science & Policy for Collaborative Action

The true measure of scientific research is not just in its discovery, but in its application. This belief was brought to life during a momentous One-Day Forum in Bais City, which convened 42 key stakeholders—including the Local Government Office of Bais City through the City Agriculture's Office (led by Ma'am Daisy Gesim), the Bantay Dagat, the Bais City Tourism Office, Security Bank, Foundation University, Barangay Capiñahan, and DepEd. This gathering was the critical pivot point where raw data was transformed into a shared blueprint for the future.

The forum was dedicated to unveiling the initial results of our landmark wildlife research within the Talabong Mangrove Reserve. As the findings were presented, a palpable sense of revelation filled the room. Stakeholders were genuinely moved to learn that their local mangroves harbored such rich biodiversity: twelve (12) mangrove species, two (2) mangrove associates, ten (10) species of herpetofauna, seven (7) mammal species, and forty (40) species of birds. The identification of globally threatened species like the Chinese Egret and the Philippine Duck was a particular point of awe and pride, igniting a renewed drive and motivation to protect this ecological treasure.

The discussion quickly became transformative. City officials recognized this data as the foundational, scientific tool they had long needed but previously lacked—a comprehensive "ecological inventory" that moved conservation planning from assumption to evidence. The dialogue dynamically shifted from presentation to collaborative application. Immediate plans were forged to integrate the findings into Bais City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, ensuring that future development respects critical habitats. Furthermore, the Tourism Office and community leaders began formulating a science-based ecotourism framework, using the documented species—especially the charismatic and threatened birds—as pillars for community-led tours and educational programs that directly link habitat protection to sustainable livelihood.

This forum did more than share data; it activated a coalition. By bridging the gap between ecological science and local governance, Project MITHI provided the evidence that transforms political will into precise, impactful policy and community enterprise, ensuring the Talabong Mangrove Reserve is valued, protected, and nurtured as the irreplaceable asset it truly is.







Science-to-Policy Pathway:

- Stakeholder Forum: 42 leaders convened to review wildlife research data.
- Collaborative Planning: Data directly pledged for the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Ecotourism Framework.
- Result: Science translated into actionable government strategy and community-led livelihood plans.

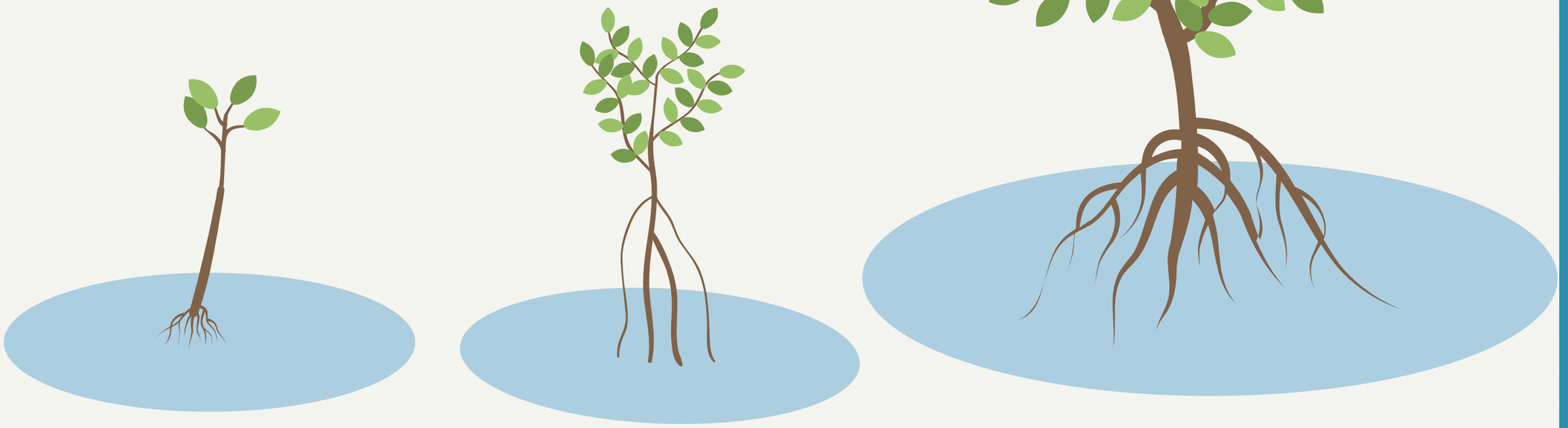


GREY TAILED TATTLER
Tringa brevipes
Least Concern (IUCN Red List)

Photo by Jim Gasta | Oceanus Conservation
Spotted during Wildlife Research in Talabong Mangrove Reserve, Bais City, Negros Oriental

Building a Legacy: From Foundation to Flourishing Future

Project MITHI was conceived with an ambitious but clear vision: to create self-sustaining, climate-resilient coastal communities thriving in harmony with restored mangrove ecosystems. This five-year journey is a deliberate, phased blueprint to turn that vision into reality—not just for our immediate partner communities, but as a scalable model for the nation. Through this integrated approach, our work will directly and indirectly benefit more than 30,000 households through enhanced coastal protection, food security, and economic opportunity, ultimately achieving our core mission of thriving habitats and inclusive communities.



Years 1-2 (2025-2026): Laying the Rooted Foundation

The initial phase is dedicated to establishing the essential pillars of science, stewardship, and governance upon which everything else will stand. We begin by grounding our work in rigorous science—completing the first comprehensive wildlife baseline in Talabong and initiating the careful rehabilitation of 17,500 mangroves in Aringay. Simultaneously, we empower the communities as the primary guardians of these resources: equipping and training the Bantay Dagat in Bais City and engaging local members in restoration monitoring in La Union. This period also involves critical stakeholder alignment, integrating our findings into local government plans, and conducting livelihood assessments to chart a sustainable economic path forward. We are building more than projects; we are building the trust, knowledge, and institutional frameworks for a resilient future.

Years 3-4 (2027-2028): Building Livelihoods & Scaling the Model

With a solid foundation in place, we shift focus to translating ecological health into community wealth and expanding the model's reach. This phase sees the launch of tangible, conservation-linked enterprises. In Bais, ecotourism comes to life with training in birdwatching, professional tour guiding, and souvenir production, while in La Union, the mangrove boardwalk ecotourism is enhanced. Communities begin producing and marketing pilot products, from processed seafood to handicrafts. Crucially, we invest in the next generation of leaders through youth experiential learning programs and start to replicate our success by assessing and developing livelihood opportunities in neighboring areas like Bauang. This is the stage where protection becomes prosperity.

Year 5 & Beyond (2029+): Ensuring a Self-Sustaining Legacy

The culmination of our five-year partnership is designed not as an end, but as the beginning of a self-perpetuating cycle. Our flagship Sustainability Fellows Program will cultivate 10 local youth leaders through stipends and mentorship, ensuring knowledge and passion are passed on. Community enterprises will achieve market readiness with professional branding and equipment, ready to compete beyond their local areas. The final step is codifying the entire MITHI model into a replicable blueprint for community-led mangrove conservation. The ultimate legacy? Thriving, self-governing communities who are the proud economic beneficiaries and committed long-term guardians of their mangrove forests—a living, growing testament to what strategic partnership can achieve for people and planet.

From Roots to Canopy: A Strategic Timeline

PHASE 1: ROOTS (2025-2026) – Foundation

- Science & Restoration: Wildlife baseline completed; 17,500 mangroves planted.
- Guardian Empowerment: Bantay Dagat equipped & trained; Community monitors engaged.
- Governance & Planning: Data integrated into LGU plans; Livelihood pathways assessed.

PHASE 2: GROWTH (2027-2028) – Prosperity

- Enterprise Launch: Ecotourism operations (birdwatching, boardwalk tours) & pilot product lines launched.
- Skill Building: Training in tour guiding, souvenir-making, finance, and marketing.
- Youth & Expansion: Next-gen learning programs begin; Model expands to adjacent communities.

PHASE 3: LEGACY (2029 & BEYOND) – Sustainability

- Leadership Cultivation: 10 Sustainability Fellows mentored to become community champions.
- Market Transition: Enterprises receive final branding & equipment for commercial scale-up.
- Blueprint for Replication: The complete MITHI model is documented and shared for national adoption.

Join the Growing Forest

The first year of Project MITHI is a story of roots taking hold. We have proven that with science, partnership, and community at the heart, degraded landscapes can heal and protected areas can flourish. The **82.68% survival rate of our mangroves**, the **90+ species** documented in Talabong, and the eager faces of students and volunteers are not just metrics—they are promises kept.

But this is only the first chapter.

The vision for the next four years is clear: to nurture these promising beginnings into a self-sustaining legacy where conservation fuels livelihood, and resilience is woven into the fabric of the community. We are building a model designed to be replicated, a blueprint for how ecological restoration and human development can grow together.

This impact is a shared achievement.

Our deepest gratitude to **Security Bank**, our passionate donor, for your pioneering investment and trust in this vision. To **Communities for Nature**, our essential bridge and project facilitator, for ensuring seamless collaboration, progress oversight, and alignment between all partners. To **Oceanus Conservation**, our on-ground implementer and science expert, for turning vision into tangible impact through research, restoration, and community empowerment. And to the local governments of **Bais City and Aringay**, and most importantly, the community stewards, volunteers, and advocates—you are the true heart of this story.

Now, we look ahead and extend an invitation.

Be Part of the Next Chapter.

Whether you are a corporation inspired to invest in resilient futures, a donor passionate about scalable solutions, or an individual who believes in the power of community—your partnership can help this forest grow.

Together, we can ensure that the roots we've planted today become the flourishing, life-sustaining forests of tomorrow.

A Resilient Futures Initiative

MITHI
MANGROVE-BASED INITIATIVES FOR THRIVING HABITATS AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

A Partnership of:

OCEANUS CONSERVATION
SECURITY BANK
COMMUNITIES for NATURE

In collaboration with:
Local Government of Bais City, Negros Oriental | Local Government Unit of Aringay, La Union | Bantay Dagat Units | Department of Education | Fisherfolk Association of Capiñahan | Dulao Fishpond and Fishpen Producers Cooperative | Foundation University | And our dedicated partner communities.

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MANGROVE-BASED INITIATIVES FOR THRIVING HABITATS AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

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