

Developing Protocols on Propagation and Nursery Management of Almaciga (*Agathis philippinensis* Warb.): A means of preserving the future of the Batak tribe in the forest of Cleopatra's Needle, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, the Philippines.

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ABSTRACT

Agathis philippinensis Warb. (Almaciga) is a coniferous tree—the largest and historically most dominant tree of Palawan's upland primary forests. In the Cleopatra's Needle forest, Almaciga resin collection serves as the main livelihood for the members of the Batak tribes and other indigenous peoples living in the proximities of the forest providing approximately 80% of their total income. Due to the influx of resin collectors from other areas, the remaining population of the species in the area is threatened and the collapse of this key tree species is inevitable if no action is taken. This means that the traditional livelihood and thus the future of the Batak tribe is very uncertain. This research was aimed at providing a standard protocol on propagation and nursery management of the species in the forest of Cleopatra's Needle in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. Expeditions were carried out for cone collections and eventually followed by propagation, nursery and monitoring activities. Three nursery sites were established in the area where 6000 seedlings were propagated, nursed and monitored. Information on seeds and seedlings collection, propagation and nursery management, identification and mitigations of pests and diseases, monitoring growth and survival are properly documented.

Keywords: *Agathis philippinensis* Warb., Almaciga nursery, Cleopatra's Needle, Batak, Puerto Princesa.