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Bats of the Philippine Islands –a review of research directions and relevance to national-level priorities and targets

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Abstract

Effective science-based conservation priorities and policies are crucially important to effectively maintain biodiversity into the future. For many threatened species and systems insufficient information exists to generate priorities, or the mechanisms needed to effectively conserve species into the future, and this is especially important in megadiversity countries like the Philippines, threatened by rapid rates of development and with few overarching strategies to maintain their biodiversity. Here, using a bibliographic approach to indicate research strengths and priorities, we summarised scientific information on Philippine bats from 2000-2017. We examine relationships between thematic areas and effort allocated for each species bat guild, and conservation status. We found that an average of 7.9 studies was published annually with the majority focused on diversity and community surveys. However, research effort is not even between taxonomic groups, thematic areas or species, with disproportionate effort focusing on ‘taxonomy and systematics’ and ‘ecology’. Species effort allocation between threatened and less threatened species does not show a significant difference, though this may be because generalist species are found in many studies, whereas rarer species have single

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