

What are our future plans?

Over the next year we plan to help farmers :

- Identify priority species for homeuse and market sale.
- Develop quality germplasm for priority species
- Develop tree management techniques that yield quality products that meet market specifications.
- Enhance market knowledge and linkages.
- Design livelihood enhancement and habitat conservation strategies.

We also plan to:

- Confirm the baseline orangutan population baseline.
- Identify critical threats to local orangutan.
- Develop a conservation strategy involving and supported by local stakeholders.
- Create a policy framework supporting the protection of existing forests and integration of conservation and livelihood considerations in spatial planning.



Photo by: Trudy O'Connor



Photo by: Meine van Noordwijk

Would you like to be involved or know more?

Please contact:

World Agroforestry Centre
ICRAF Southeast Asia Regional Office
Jl. CIFOR, Situ Gede Sindang Barang,
Bogor 16680 INDONESIA
Phone: +62 251 625415. Fax: +62 251 625416
Email: icraf-indonesia@cgiar.org
<http://www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/sea>



Sumatran Orangutan



Photo by: Alain Compost

Who is he?

He's smart
He's good looking
and he's critically endangered



Who is she?

She's his neighbour
She manages the landscape
She's one of us

He is...

a Sumatran Orangutan (*Pongo abelii*). They are highly intelligent, socialize when eating, build sleeping platforms and use tools. They are also critically endangered. Between 1992 and 2000 the wild population is thought to have declined by 50%, with no sign that this trend is abating. Less than 3500 individuals remain and the species is listed by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) as 'critically endangered'.



A close-up photograph of a female Sumatran orangutan with long, reddish-brown fur. She is looking directly at the camera with a calm expression. A young orangutan is clinging to her chest, partially visible behind her. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a forest environment.

Female Sumatran Orangutan



Female Sumatran Orangutan

Photo by: Alain Compost

Where are they?

In the past, Sumatran Orangutan (distinct from the Bornean Orangutan, *Pongo pygmeus*), occupied many of the lowland and swampy forests of Sumatra. Currently their range is restricted to a few locations in northern Sumatra. The most southerly viable population is in the region of Batang Toru. In contrast with populations in Gunung Leuser, to the north, these Batang Toru orangutan have been poorly recognized, studied and protected. A further complication is that these areas are also inhabited by the orangutan's cousins, us! The local communities farm and have a long history of using forest resources. These people must also support their needs from the local environment, of which they are stewards.



The Sumatran Orangutan populations are now restricted to a few locations in the north of Sumatra Island. Our focus population is the most southerly of these, found in the Batang Toru area. Study locations are indicated in red.

What are we doing to help?

In order to understand and reduce the critical threats facing this southern population, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) and Conservation International (CI) have begun a two year project. With funding from USAID, this multidisciplinary partnership is considering both the ecological needs of the species, and how these can be secured by working with the community. We have chosen five villages as study sites where we are working together with local people.

CI is assessing the local orangutan population size, identifying critical sites and threats and conducting environmental education programs. Meanwhile, ICRAF is working to clarify land tenure claims and the process by which land conversion occurs. We would like to better understand the dynamics affecting these systems, and the relationship between people, their gardens and orangutan. Our immediate aim is to strengthen and diversify local agroforestry system productivity (including rubber and cocoa gardens) to reduce the need to expand gardens further into the forest.

Following consultation with various stakeholders, we have conducted the first farmer workshops to confirm priority livelihood systems. This is a landscape that is shared by people and orangutan, but managed by people. Both of these need the landscape to be a healthy one. This collaborative venture is an exciting opportunity to secure the long term needs of an enigmatic species in co-operation with the humans who share their landscape.

Why are they threatened?

The main existing threats to the local orangutan population appear to be forest clearance for agriculture and hunting for food. However, the situation is a complex one, and other potential threats include gold mining operations and logging. The orangutan are particularly vulnerable due to their very slow rate of reproduction; individual females produce young only every eight years. Reasons for the persistence of the species in some more mountainous regions of northern Sumatra may include the relative inaccessibility of these areas and thus lower disturbance.