



ANNUAL REPORT 2019



photo by Khalidin / SOCP



Coelogyne asperata

photo by Ronald Siagian / SOCP



Doc. YEL

YEL
ANNUAL REPORT 2019

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

Orangutans are natural farmers of the rainforest, as they travel such great distances across the landscape, consuming and dispersing many different seeds as they go. In the process they end up helping to maintain and grow the diversity of trees in the forest, a hugely important role, especially for such a large flagship species like orangutans, that are so well known and beloved around the world. For this reason, orangutans are also one of the most important benchmarks we measure to assess the health of an ecosystem – meaning they are also considered an umbrella species, because if there a forest has orangutans it also means the same area is home to many, many other species of fauna and flora!

Since it was founded in 2000, and with our strong basis in science, I am very proud to say that YEL's work has resulted tangible impacts for orangutan conservation and their rainforest homes. We continue to run our Field Monitoring Stations and provide the most current and complete information on conditions in the field, including orangutan behavior and also checking on threats to the rainforest, so that the best possible action plans can be put into place for conservation. We're also all very pleased with the growth of the two new populations of reintroduced orangutans at Jantho and Jambi.

Over nearly two decades we have formed many partnerships with various government offices, communities, and other nonprofits like us, and together produced some very important results for conservation throughout Indonesia. Just some of which are detailed in this report, and we can't wait for you to get to learn more about. First though I'd like to give our thanks, as without the continued support of people like you none of what we have achieved would be possible, so on behalf of the YEL family and all our partners, THANK YOU!

Sustainable Ecosystem Foundation
Dr. Sofyan Tan
Founder

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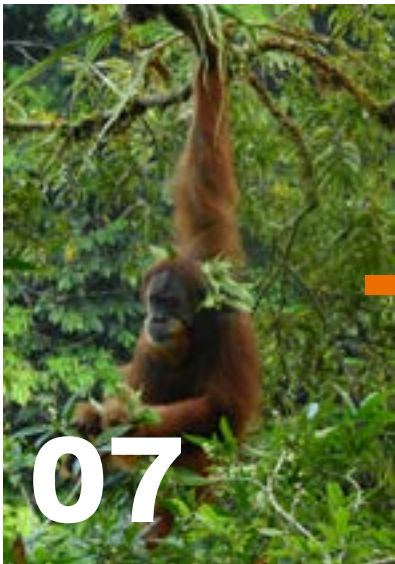
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As they'll all soon enough have new homes on the Orangutan Islands, we'd like to share some brief profiles of the Haven's first residents!



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One orangutan, Rundeng, was estimated to be just a week old when she arrived just at the end of December, with her umbilical cord still attached.

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ORANGUTAN HAVEN

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ORANGUTAN ISLANDS RESIDENTS

As they'll all soon enough have new homes on the Orangutan Islands, we'd like to share some brief profiles of the Haven's first residents!

We have been fully focused on completing the construction of the nine islands of the Orangutan Haven.

Although we wish it was just as simple as digging out some dirt and adding water, there are many contributing factors that must be considered for the mental and physical health and well-being of the orangutan island residents. These include terrain design, vegetative cover, surrounding hydrology, full-time access to privacy structures for the orangutans, and all of the accompanying conservation messaging and exhibits to be placed throughout the site so as to provide the best possible educational experience to visitors.

Through 2019, we are happy to report that the first of nine islands has been prepared and is now suitable for occupancy! As they'll all soon enough have new homes on the Orangutan Islands, we'd like to share some brief profiles of the Haven's first residents!

1. Dina (female) estimated age: 4 years

Dina will be the youngest orangutan at the Haven. Dina was confiscated from the illegal pet trade and sadly was found to be stricken with encephalitis (infection of the lining of the brain) which resulted in partial paralysis and blindness. However, Dina's spirit is incredibly strong, and she has recovered much from an initially very terrifying state, so she is now quite able to explore and climb on her own – but she still just needs a bit of help!

2. Deknong (female) estimated age: 20 years

Deknong was confiscated from the illegal pet trade back in 2007, and after being housed and rehabilitated at our Station she was later released at Bukit Tigapuluh National Park in Jambi, one of our two Orangutan Reintroduction Centers in Sumatra. However, post-release monitoring



Dina

photo by Castri / SOCP

Deknong

photo by Ariesta / SOCP

staff later encountered Deknong stricken on the ground in a partially paralyzed condition, with growths on some of her joints which caused her left wrist to be sharply bent. This was later found to be a chronic arthritic condition, meaning amongst other factors she could never fully straighten her left arm and thus her climbing ability will always be greatly decreased. She is otherwise healthy and simply needs a place to comfortably live out the rest of her days in peace.

photo by Ariesta / SOCP

3. Hope (female) estimated age: 30 years

Hope was evacuated in very critical condition from some community farmlands after she was beaten and shot with an air rifle, including in her eyes, presumably because of human-wildlife conflict (crop raiding). Adding even more heartbreak to the tale, although Hope was found with a child, sadly her baby did not survive as she was already too far gone by the time of the rescue. Even through all this, Hope has done remarkably well considering her initial condition. She is a tough individual, and now likes to snatch food and drinks from the caretaker staff as they pass by her enclosure, even though she is no longer able to see.

**4. Lewis (male)
estimated age: 26 years)**

Lewis came to us at the SOCP Quarantine and Rehabilitation Station in 2016, full of wounds and dozens of air rifle pellets, including in both eyes. Even though suffering from permanent blindness, after intensive care, Lewis's health condition has greatly improved and he has grown into a handsome, capable adult male orangutan. True to his wild upbringing, he has not become very accustomed to being around his human caretakers. Lewis's story is indeed a lesson that people need to hear and learn from.

**5. Krismon (male)
estimated age: 23 years**

Before arriving at the SOCP Quarantine and Rehabilitation Station, Krismon had spent the previous 20 years of his life in illegal captivity within a 1.5m x 1.5m cage at the back of a person's house. In order to free Krismon from this cage it was required to dismantle it first, meaning that he had grown from a small orangutan into an adult male, all within this tiny, restricted space. As a result, Krismon was permanently traumatized, and to this day still has trembles and finds it difficult to straighten his limbs, including for standing and walking. Under our care though his condition has improved, and we are looking forward to giving him his new permanent home on the islands at the Haven.


A close-up photograph of an orangutan with thick, reddish-brown fur. The orangutan is looking directly at the camera while holding a piece of white, fleshy fruit in its mouth. The background is a solid green color.

photo by Suryadi / SOCP

6. Fahzren (male, estimated age: 17 years)

Fahzren was illegally taken out of Sumatra and grew up in captivity in Malaysia, and was finally repatriated to Indonesia in 2013. He arrived at the YEL-SOCP Quarantine and Rehabilitation Station as a fully matured flanged male. He is fit and healthy and many would say an extremely handsome orangutan, and growing stronger each day. Because he spent all his life in captivity though, he is considered to be a high risk to be released to the forest, as he would likely not be able to take care of himself, and he might also choose to seek out people and human settlements. As such his is one more sad case of an orangutan that is not able to live out a deserved life in the wild, but through the Orangutan Haven he and the others can still have a peaceful and enjoyable life, whilst at the same time teaching others about the conservation threats to the species and many others like them face.

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A photograph of an orangutan with reddish-brown fur looking through a metal wire fence. The orangutan's face is partially obscured by the fence, and its eyes are visible. The background shows some green foliage and a building structure.

photo by Ariesta / SOCP

7. Leuser (male, estimated age: 23 years)

Leuser was confiscated from the illegal pet trade in 2004, when he was estimated to be about just a few years of age. Like Deknong, Leuser was soon reintroduced to the wild in Bukit Tigapuluh National Park, but in 2006 he was found seriously injured with air rifle pellets shot through his body. X-rays taken at our Station revealed he had been hit at least 62 times, and after surgery to remove as many as safely possible, 48 still remain in his body. Unfortunately, he was hit in both eyes, permanently blinding him. Despite these awful injuries, Leuser has always been otherwise healthy and is considered one of the more relaxed, easygoing and friendly orangutans under our care.

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JANTHO REINTRODUCTION STATION

THE FORESTS ARE GETTING GREENER IN JANTHO!

photo by Rafika / SOCP

The new Sumatran orangutan population at Jantho is steadily growing, making it a key location for the species, completely separate from the main forest block of the Leuser Ecosystem

Since starting operations at Jantho in 2011 we have reintroduced 107 orangutans that have either been successfully rehabilitated at our Quarantine and Rehabilitation Centre, or rescued and translocated from the wild. We're also as proud as ever of our dedicated post-release monitoring team, who are out in the wild forests of Jantho every day, checking up on the health and well-being of the new and growing population of this Critically Endangered species.

The forest school facilities we constructed at Jantho in 2018 are working out just as we planned to help aid the orangutan release process. With this we are able to conduct 'soft releases' of orangutans that are not quite ready to be fully released, and just need a bit more time in a natural forest setting where they can still be supervised while they pick up some final skills before becoming independent. This has really helped us fill a gap in the long and fairly

arduous rehabilitation process, and best ensure long-term success for each and every orangutan that we care for.

The new Sumatran orangutan population at Jantho is steadily growing, making it a key location for the species, completely separate from the main forest block of the Leuser Ecosystem, home to the great majority of individuals of the species. With this new population, we are creating a safety net for the species, which is very important given the conservation challenges faced by these and many other types of Endangered flora and fauna. Which, just to name a few in Jantho alone, there are healthy populations of wild Sumatran elephants, Sumatran tigers, Lar gibbons, Siamangs, Silvery lutung, and many more!

To better maintain the integrity of the forest here, in addition to routine biodiversity surveys by our post-release monitoring staff, in 2019 together with the local government we have also strengthened site security through constructing and operating guard posts throughout the region. Already we have seen a marked decrease in the rate of illegal poaching and forest fires here compared to the previous year – so we plan on doing more of the same, and ramping up our efforts to keep things on the right track!

Masen with its mother Marconi, the first known orangutan to be born in Jantho Forest

photo by Khalidin / SOCP



Julang emas / Wreathed Hornbill
(*Aceros undulatus*)

photo by Jantho Staff / SOCP

Orangutan named Bulan learn how to make a nest
in Jantho Forest School
photo by Khalidin / SOCP



One of the two species of Otter found in Jantho
photo by Khalidin / SOCP



Ular-punai sumatera / Sumatran Pit Viper
(*Trimeresurus sumatranus*)

photo by Khalidin / SOCP



QUARANTINE AND REHABILITATION STATION

NEW ARRIVALS AT OUR ORANGUTAN QUARANTINE AND REHABILITATION CENTRE, CONCERN BEYOND JUST THE CUTENESS!

All of this care requires a great deal of resources to quarantine and rehabilitate these younger individuals. They will have to be with us for longer as they grow and learn to become more independent, to the point of being able to be reintroduced to their natural forest habitat. In the wild all orangutans would spend 7-8 years around their mothers, soaking in all that she has come to know about to live and thrive in the forest.

In 2019, 27 orangutans were taken in at the SOCP Orangutan Quarantine and Rehabilitation Centre, located just outside the North Sumatra provincial capital city of Medan. At the end of the year 62 orangutans were with us, all at various stages of the rehabilitation process. Although we are always ready, 24/7, to care for as many orangutans as we can, we are more happy to report on the number of orangutans that we have rehabilitated and can leave our Centre to be reintroduced back to the wild at the Jantho Orangutan Reintroduction Station in Aceh province and also the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park in Jambi province. So far we have released 107 ex-captive

orangutans at Jantho and more than 170 at Bukit Tigapuluh!

Twenty-one of the orangutans still with us at our Centre are under three years of age. This means that they are very young and require around the clock care from our dedicated team of human caregivers. One orangutan, Rundeng, was estimated to be just a week old when she arrived just at the end of December, with her umbilical cord still attached. All of these orangutans were illegally displaced from their rainforest homes, and all are victims of human-wildlife conflict, mainly due to land use change and the illegal pet trade.

Animal keeper Yanti holding orangutan babies Indy, Digo and Brenda to go to forest school to stimulate their movement and building confidence

photo by Castri / SOCP



OU Rundeng

photo by Castri / SOCP



OU Unip while on second medical check with Yanti and drh. Meuthya

photo by Castri / SOCP



OU Pandi during the first medical check with drh. Meuthya

photo by Castri / SOCP



OU Indy and OU Unip while playing on baby playground in Quarantine center

photo by Castri / SOCP

All of this care requires a great deal of resources to quarantine and rehabilitate these younger individuals. They will have to be with us for longer as they grow and learn to become more independent, to the point of being able to be reintroduced to their natural forest habitat. In the wild all orangutans would spend 7-8 years around their mothers, soaking in all that she has come to know about to live and thrive in the forest. Sadly, this otherwise inalienable right has been unjustly taken from each orphaned orangutan under our care, but as we have been rehabilitating orangutans since 2001 we have also learned a thing or two about the process, so we do our best to help each and every orangutan a best we can.

Of course, with each young orangutan intake to our Centre, this also means there is one less wild orangutan mother out there in the wild – as it is well known that none would ever give up their babies. Therefore in addition to our working to care for and rehabilitate those under our care, we also devote a great amount of time and energy to conserving orangutans and their wild habitat, so as to prevent the loss of their natural homes to begin with.

It is a big job, but we and all our staff are passionate and completely devoted to the mission. We always try our best for each and every individual orangutan, so that they can be released back to nature, and contribute to the long-term preservation of the species.



YEL continues to manage a small fleet of monitoring and research stations across all habitat types for orangutans in Sumatra. These include peat swamp forest at Suaq Balimbing in Aceh province, rich primary forest at our orangutan reintroduction station at Jantho, Aceh province, lowland secondary (formerly logged) forest at Sikundur in North Sumatra province,

Because maintaining stations also means having a constant presence of staff in the field, which with all of the relationships we build with the local people can also assist a great deal in reducing threats like logging or poaching, and thus better securing the forest.

and highland forest at Batang Toru in North Sumatra. At each of these stations we collect long-term behavioral data orangutans and other species, as well as climate and phenology data of the rainforest. It's also often not just our staff, but students from universities throughout Indonesia and the rest of the world, who come to Sumatra to study the incredible biodiversity all across the island.

In addition to these stations providing key information that is then used by government offices, universities, communities, and NGOs to develop management and action plans to conserve endangered species and their habitat, these stations also provide another major benefit. Because maintaining stations also means having a constant presence of staff in the field, which with all of the relationships we build with the local people (we also of course hire many to become our staff at each) can also assist a great deal in reducing threats like logging or poaching, and thus better securing the forest. All of which can be quantified and seen from above, via freely available satellite imagery that is nowadays quite accessible to anyone, just by visiting a site like www.globalforestwatch.org – have a look for yourself, it's really very interesting!

At the end of 2019, we are developing plans to conduct the next distribution-wide survey of orangutans in Sumatra. This was last done approximately 10 years ago, so it is important to assess their current condition and density, to determine their conservation status and how it may have changed during this time. As the saying goes, the more we know, the better!





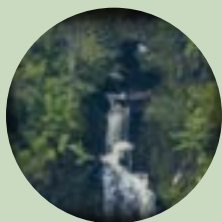
photo by SOCP



Students collecting data in Sikundur
photo by SOCP



photo by SOCP



BATANG TORU ECOSYSTEM

TAPANULI ORANGUTAN HABITAT MANAGEMENT

YEL continues to work tirelessly towards creating a sustainable long-term conservation management plan to protect the Batang Toru Ecosystem, the last and only home of the recently identified and rarest of Great Apes, the Tapanuli orangutan (*Pongo tapanuliensis*)

During 2019, YEL was more active than ever before in working with multiple stakeholders in the area, including regular environmental education and socialization visits to schools, communities, and churches, providing sustainable development opportunities to local communities, and engaging private sector companies to mitigate their impacts and restore any impacted areas of the region. This strengthening of cross-stakeholder and sectoral policies is thought to be a key factor going forward.

Aside from continuing to carry out such partnership and outreach activities, in 2019 the YEL field team in the Batang Toru Ecosystem also collected data on the distribution of communities throughout the area and mapped forest cover in this ecosystem. The results of subsequent analyses relate that there are forest fragments with great potential and value for wildlife, were connectivity to larger forest blocks to be restored.

In combination with the long-term Tapanuli orangutan behavioral data that continues to be collected by our dedicated field staff that stationed deep in the highland forests of Batang Toru, together this information can be used to formulate the best possible plan for the future of this Critically Endangered species and the highly unique and rich forest that is Batang Toru.

There is still much to be done, but we are excited to keep the momentum going and accomplish more for conservation in the region!

Pongo tapanuliensis
photo by SOCP



photo by SOCP

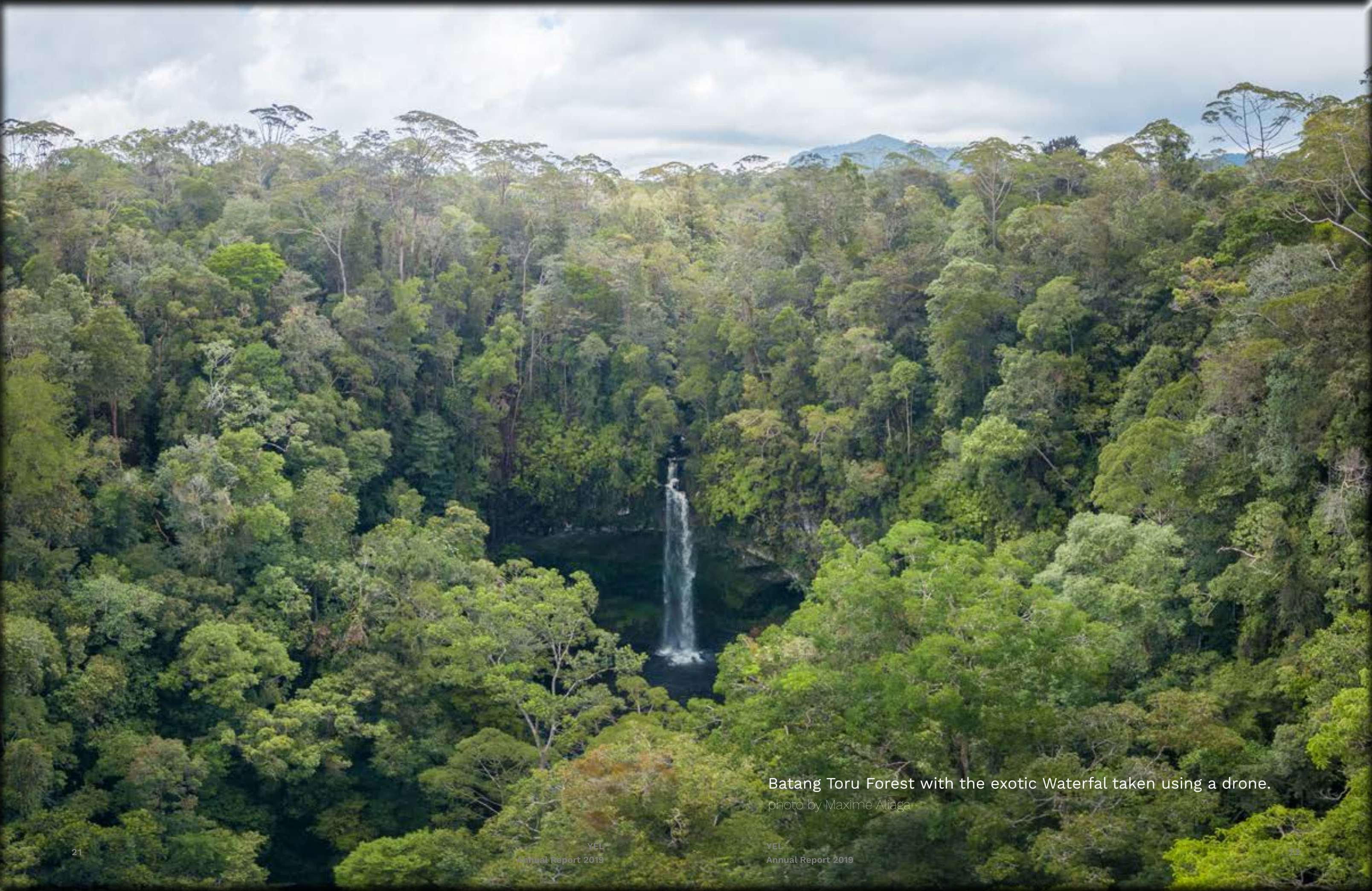


photo by SOCP



Baning coklat / Brown Giant Tortoise
(*Manouria emys*)

photo by Maxime Aliaga



Batang Toru Forest with the exotic Waterfal taken using a drone.
photo by Maxime Aliaga

TRIPA PEAT SWAMP

CONSISTENT SUPPORT FOR THE PROTECTION OF PEATLAND ECOSYSTEMS

YEL has been working hard to conserve peatland forest on the west coast of Aceh, Sumatra. Since 2008 much has been done to save these areas of key importance both for global climate change, with the huge amount of carbon stored both above and below ground in peatlands, but also for many species wildlife that thrive in this unique, rich ecosystem. In fact, the highest known densities of orangutan populations are found in peat swamp forest.

After a series of community development programs and surveys of peat areas and even peat depths, YEL supported the Government of Aceh in 2019, specifically the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, to compile an Aceh Peat Protection and Management Plan (RPPEG). The RPPEG is an important document as a basis for managing and protecting the peatlands all across the province. This process involved stakeholders at all levels, as it is very important to accommodate all inputs as well as concerns of all those that would be most affected. So, it is conservation as it should be and as we like it – inclusive, so that it can be most successful in being implemented!

Aerial view of Tripa Peat Swamp taken around September 2019 using a drone.

photo by Iwan Ikhtiara / SOCP

GREENER ECOFARM!

The Ecofarm will become increasingly important as a place of learning and training for sustainable development and organic farming, for people of all ages and from all around the world.

In 2019, our main focus at the Nature Conservation Education Centre Bohorok (PPLH Bohorok) was to revamp the Ecofarm! This involved developing information boards on many different types of plants and their practical uses, beyond just eating (!), as well as in improving agricultural practices including interspersing different species of vegetable and fruit crops between each to increase variety and output, and also increasing the production capacity of organic fertilizers. With these improvements the Ecofarm will become increasingly important as a place of learning and training for sustainable development and organic farming, for people of all ages and from all around the world.

In collaboration with local farmer partners, PPLH Bohorok offers organic produce under the brand name “Ojuma” (which means Organic Farming). This is sold locally in Bukit Lawang and the North Sumatra capital city of Medan, but we have also expanded to provide an **online shopping platform (instagram.com/ojuma.official)**, making it easier for everyone to order. By the end of 2019, Ojuma

had more than 50 permanent customers from around the region, and has also become a supplier of organic vegetables to restaurants and hotels in Bukit Lawang and Medan.

In addition to renovating facilities at the Ecofarm, we of course still continue assist farmer groups throughout the area, and socialize best-practice responsible farming techniques and conservation information to key stakeholders such as government offices, schools, NGOs, and communities, be they local or from afar.

Just as seeing is believing, experiencing the full flavor of responsibly grown organic produce is also key to helping expand the market and demand! All are welcome, so please come and see what we have to offer in 2020!

OJUMA promotional activities at the Environmental Exhibition

photo by PPLH / YEL





PPLH Bohorok partner farmer explaining organic farming process to students from Highfield Secondary School.

photo by Arif Hasbuan / PPLH / YEL



SUPPORTERS 2019

- Animal Friends Insurance Service
- Arcus Foundation
- Auckland Communities Foundation (Auckland Zoo)
- Ape Tag AZA Ape TAG Conservation Initiative
- Beauval Nature
- Columbus Zoological Park
- European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA)
- Europäische Tier-und Naturschutz-stiftung
- Fort Worth Zoological Association
- Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries
- Indianapolis Zoological Society
- Jason and Carry
- Jeffrey Katz
- JMG Foundation
- Kitabisa.com
- Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation
- Liechtenstein Foundation
- Lion's Share
- National Geographic Society
- New Mexico Biopark Society
- Oak Foundation
- Orang-Utans in Not e.V.
- Orangutan Coffee Project
- Orangutan Foundation Giving
- Orangutan Outreach
- Orangutan Veterinary AID (OVAID)
- Orangutan Veterinary Advisory Group (OVAG)
- Palm Oil Investigation Pty Ltd.
- PanEco Foundation
- Prince Benhard Nature Fund (PBNF)
- RAW Wildlife Encounters
- Sarulla Operation Ltd
- Scholl Foundation
- Seaworld Busch Gardens Conservation
- Segre Sumatran
- Sumatran Orangutan Society
- Statutarni Esto Ostrava
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- Wildlife Asia
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Cucak kelabu / Grey-bellied Bulbul
(*Pynonotus cyaniventris*)

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photo by Khalidin / SOCP

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