




Forest Science News



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The Nature Conservancy - Tropical Forest Initiative



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Keeping you informed on forest science issues

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The Nature
Conservancy 
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™



Photo on front page: Kids in Lesan Dayak, East Kalimantan. Photo by Agustina Tandi Bunna (Ebe).

This newsletter informs about the latest findings, results, and plans from TNC Indonesia's Tropical Forest Initiative. On a monthly basis, we provide updates about exciting discoveries, progress in our monitoring and measures work, our training programs, scientific collaboration with the private sector, and surveys and explorations. Science is often considered to be the realm of grey-haired, thick-glassed oddballs in white lab coats. Here we show you how exciting and important our work is and how we contribute to the overall goal of preserving the last great places on earth.

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I hope you find this information useful and inspiring.

Erik Meijaard, Editor-in-Chief

For back issues of Forest Science News check the following website: <http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/fsn/documents>

2008, in review

Erik Meijaard. Email: emeijaard@tnc.org

What a year it's been! Conservation is crazy enough as it is, but 2008 has been particularly hectic here in Indonesia. Not only did we have to deal with the normal issues of continuous threats to species and their habitats, but we were asked to do that within the global framework of a highly ambitious conservation goal for the year 2015, an economic crisis that apparently only bears comparison to what happened in the 1930s, and a complete change-over at the senior management level. But we somehow muddled through, to coin a term I recently encountered in a paper about conservation in Indonesia. Even more so, I think we muddled through with flying colours.

Our work is progressing very well. We have established a coherent conservation program that puts all our different projects, strategies and activities into clear perspective (see figure to the right, which Russell came up with in a bright and insightful, post-Wehea moment). In our place-based projects we develop model approaches to conservation in a range of different settings. The lessons learned from these approaches are scaled up through the regional projects such as our Responsible Asian Forest and Trade (RAFT) program and the Orangutan Conservation Services Program (OCSP). These two programs alone allow us to work in nearly 4 million ha in Kalimantan. Our Berau REDD program aims to put these approaches into a political framework that clearly identifies and balances economic needs and opportunities with environmental and social considerations, under the larger umbrella of reducing carbon emissions from forest degradation and deforestation. I think the whole thing makes sense.



The economic crisis somewhat changes the dynamics of this game. At the moment, everything has slowed down. Both legal and illegal loggers are having a tough time, because timber prices are very low. Oil palm investment is at its lowest in several years because of low palm oil prices. Even coal, which was black gold, until not so long ago, is rethinking its strategies. We should be smart about this. Maybe this is providing conservation with a badly needed breathing space and opportunities to get through to the major decision makers here in Indonesia. The present crisis emphasizes that, indeed, economic development is good, but entails risks and can come at a price. And badly designed and implemented development causes even more problems. Maybe this is time TNC should actually expand its activities rather than scale back, and explore some of the present opportunities.

On a personal, things have been pretty hectic too. Last year, I combined two full-time positions: my OCSP Kalimantan coordinator function as well as the TNC senior scientist job. But just to make sure that I wouldn't get bored, I added another job during the second half of 2008: program manager for the Indonesian forest program. It surely was hard work, but the reward was some good progress in conservation and, for me personally, the Shelford Award for Conservation Science. Still, I am very pleased with the arrival of our new forest director, Dicky Simorangkir, who is just the right person to get our program management back on track and give me some time to get back into what I was hired for, science.

So, indeed, it has been a crazy time. But we had fun as well and despite set-backs here and there some good successes too. Wehea is a great example of how conservation can work in Indonesia. OCSP is starting to have that conservation impact that Paul Hartman and I envisaged a few years back. And RAFT is getting through the message that sustainable forest management is not really a choice, but something that has to happen if Indonesia wants to maintain some degree of forest cover.





We will have our work cut out in 2009, but I think we are ready for it. The conservation concepts and plans are there and the funding is available to implement them. Our new management team is there to guide the whole process. And most importantly, there is a highly competent and committed group of people who are willing to stick their necks out and get on with the work. These are the women and men that make TNC tick. These are also the people who make it such fun to work here.

I have said enough for this year. It is time to hang up my writing implements and retire to the happy highlands of Scotland for a few days of relaxation, good food and drink and friends and family. I will leave you, as I traditionally do in each last issue of the year, with a photographic impression of the work of TNC's Indonesia's forest program. This time I would like to give some space to all the 82 staff that make up the forest team. I asked Terry, our in-house photographers, to take photos of everyone who joined our retreat in Menado, in October this year. I hope you enjoy it.

I wish you all a great christmas and new year break. Take it easy.

All the faces to all those names—TNC Indonesia's forest team

Erik Meijaard. Email: emeijaard@tnc.org



Achmad Faisal Kairupan
Social Officer - Berau
He hates pineapple & jack-fruit



Abdul Rahman
Driver - Berau
He likes to wear his army outfit in the field. The tattoo on his arm says "Anak Bugis"



Achmad Rizal
TFI Protected Area Manager - Palu
He is a VW lover and great painter



Adi Supriadi-Partnership Officer - Berau
Strength in stillness



Agus Heriyanto
Forest Coordinator - Balikpapan
Best Garuda frequent flyer



Agustina Tandhi Bunna
Conservation Campaign Officer - Berau
A.k.a. Ebe. She likes to sing



Alfian Subekti-REDD Field Manager-Balikpapan
Known as the funniest man in the office



Aji Wihardandi-Communication Coordinator-Balikpapan
His most preferred food is fish





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Ali Sasmirul
Survey Officer - Berau
His nickname is Max. He is a specialist of the Sambal Huru-Hara recipe. Don't ask.



Alie Syopyan
GIS Assistant - Berau
Stays up at night. Not a morning person



Aminuddin
Administrative Assistant - Palu
"Harianto is cool and likes to fish", he says



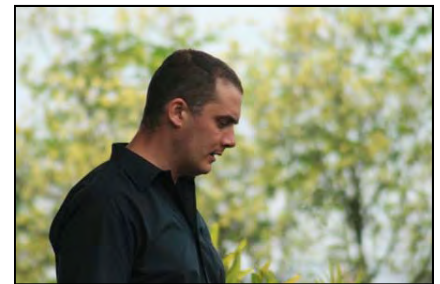
Anton Nurcahyo
Orangutan Action Plan Coordinator - Balikpapan
His favorite food is sashimi



Christian W. Djoka
Community Organizer, Kutim - Wehea
Hates air-conditioning. Too cold. Sleeps non-stop in car. Much prefers motorbikes.



Christoforus Terry
TFI Finance Coordinator - Balikpapan
He dreams to visit all TNC sites in the world but knows he has a long way to go.



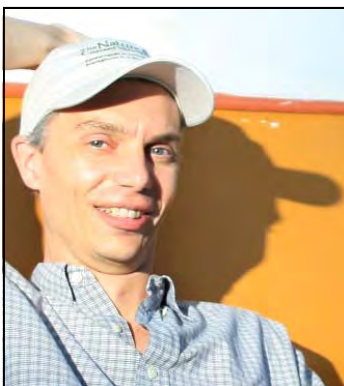
Ben Jarvis
RAFT Manager - Jakarta
He is longing for something sweet like ice, chocolates etc



Dicky Simorangkir
Forest Director Indonesia - Jakarta.
The new boss. Marlboro Man. Very hard worker.



Daniel Sarapung
Security - Palu
Flower collector. Hates dirty motorbikes. Bikes need to shine



Cole Genge
Bangkok
Cole is cool



Christophorus Paulus
Merung
Community Officer - Palu
His nickname is Cito. Loves play station. Would faint if he won the lottery (but who wouldn't?)



Dahliana Mansyah-Administration Coordinator-Samarinda.
Her motto: shop till u drop





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Edy Soediyono
Kalimantan Protected Area Manager - Balikpapan
He cooks a great *Ayam Jahe* (Ginger Chicken); it's on TNC's special jungle menu



Hari Moelyono
Logistic Officer - Berau
He likes photography



Erik Meijaard
Senior Scientist-Balikpapan
He eats krupuk and water melon at the same time.



Evan Palungkun
TFI Administration Coordinator - Balikpapan
She wishes there is a staff retreat every year



Erson Roby Tungka
PAM Coordinator, Lore Lindu - Palu
Can't get enough of his laptop



Fajarmansyah
Community Organizer, Lesan - Lesan
He likes to listen to Keroncong music



Fakhrizal Nashr
Berau Program Leader - Berau
He dreams that one day TNC will have an office in a Mediterranean Country like Greece or Cyprus, where he can sit under olive trees, and eat olives & bread



Guan Lim
Community Organizer, Segah - TNC's most skillful hunter



Fernny Siska Wungkana
Finance Officer - Berau
She can eat any sour fruits



Harianto
PAM Coordinator, Morowali - Palu
Can talk non-stop for 24 hours



Gunawan Wicaksono
Policy Manager RAFT - Jakarta
The brain behind many things TNC



Gusti Indira Santi
Database Officer - Samarinda
She likes to eat salty fish / *ikan asin*





Harijani
Social Officer, Segah - Berau
The first country she likes to visit is India



Hasiah
Cook - Berau
Her sambal recipe is drop dead delicious



Herastuti Haryogyo
RAFT Communications Manager - Jakarta
Her favorite person in TNC is Cole



Ignatius Sandiwan Dharmaputra
Finance/Admin. Coordinator, Berau Office -Berau
Heavy smoker. He loves fishing, but does not eat fish



Ira Yusnita
Administrative Assistant - Balikpapan
The most handsome man in TNC in her opinion is Pak Nawa



Ismet Khaeruddin
Sulawesi Protected Area Manager - Palu
He is a Bon Jovi and Toyota Hardtop fan



In'am Fathoni Burhanuddi
Conservation Campaign Officer - Palu
Games, coffee, cigarettes, and music



John Patrik Ajang
Social Officer - Kelay
He is like a juke box



Iyan Yana Suryana
HCVF Manager - Jakarta
His motto: My motto ; Eat, Sleep, JEEP



Indah Astuti
Social Officer, Kelay- Berau
Toughest woman in TNC, yet she cannot ride a motor cycle



Jadiono
Security - Samarinda
He is a very good electrician



Jasari
Survey Officer - Berau
Jas is from Lombok, a beautiful island next to Bali



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Joko Susatmoko
Driver - Berau
He likes to practice his English conversation skills



Nawa Irianto
IFM Manager- Balikpapan
He is a coffee lover, and the most handsome man in TNC; well, according to some.



Lenny Christy - GIS Coordinator-Balikpapan
Bakso is her favorite food



Joko Saleh
Security - Palu
Always smiling. Loves to sing



Linda Biki
Finance/Admin. Coordinator - Palu
She is very good at Modero dancing (typical dance in Palu)



Lukas Bith
Boat Driver - Segah
His nickname is Yok. He is a maestro at spear fishing in Kalimantan's rivers

Lex Hovani
REDD manager - Jakarta
Works on REDD, but dreams of being a scuba instructor



Mardianto
Security - Berau
Known as the most modest person in the office, if not all of TNC



Matias Ruben
Boat Driver - Kelay
He is a skillful boat motorist



Muhadir
Security - Samarinda
His hobby is to speech



Nardiyono- Survey Coordinator-Balikpapan
If 500,000,000 rupiah will fall from the sky, he will buy a car for his loved one



Mahfudz Ipay Bayhaqi
Administrative Assistant - Samarinda
Kurt Cobain lover





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Nela Mariana
Finance Officer - Balikpapan
Her favorite food is chicken noodle. Her hobby is shopping



Niel Makinuddin
Kalimantan Manager for Orangutan Program - Balikpapan
His most impressive moment is when he got stuck in the mud for 6 hours on the way to Labanan in a TNC car.



Noval
GIS & Data Management Officer - Palu
Always immaculately dressed, whether in the office or the forest

Ratna Yulia Hadi
Terrestrial Communications Coordinator - Jakarta
She is a Karaoke queen



Nikmah Utami Dewi
Conservation Campaign Officer - Palu
a.k.a. Tami. Loves to shout. Favorite colour green



Odang Darmanayah
Community Relation Officer - Berau
He is very good at playing music instruments



Oman Aliman
Survey Officer - Berau
He likes to eat Jengkol



Oven Robeny
Social Officer, Segah
One of our best fishermen

Purnomo
Survey Officer - Berau
He has a lot of stories about Abu Nawas (the tricky character from Arabian folklore)



Sopilena
TFI Policy & Partnership Manager - Balikpapan
She is looking for a boy friend



Robinson Oraile
Security - Berau
He is a Taekwondo athlete



Sahroni
Driver - Samarinda
Can-do-anything-man in TNC





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Sulastri
Administrative Officer - Palu
Loves to eat fish eyes



Stanley Mathew
Rajagukguk
TFI Finance & Administration Manager - Balikpapan
He has the highest decibel laughter in the office



Sudiyanto
Survey Officer - Berau
He likes to cook *Ikan Kelok Melong*



Suimah
Partnership Officer - Samarinda
She used to be a pretty fast runner



Sutarman
Driver - Samarinda
He would like to own a plantation



Syaifuddin
Romli
Community Officer - Samarinda
He likes to cook *Ayam Bekap*



Umbar Sujoko
GIS Officer - Balikpapan
Known as a romantic poet, he likes to read kungfu books: *Wiro Sableng & Ko Ping Ho*



Suyanto
Community Officer - Palu
His nickname is Iben. He wants to be like Tom Hanks



Tita Novita Rini
Program Assistant RAFT - Jakarta
No one can beat her at eating crabs



Tomy Satriya Yulianto
Partnership & Monitoring Coordinator - Balikpapan
Rafting is the most unforgettable experience in TNC



Widodo Ramono
Acting Forest Director - Jakarta
Now back to his old love, the Asian rhinoceroses



Taufiq Hidayat
PAM Coordinator, Lesan & Wehea - Sengata
He likes fishing very much





Yudi Iskandarsyah
Deputy Manager RAFT - Jakarta
He likes traveling very much especially to places he has never been to



Yuyun Supriadi - Security - Berau
He is a very patient person

Anton Suebu - Papua coordinator - Sanur
He can't wait to get the forest team into Papua

Science activities planned for January 2009

- The Kalimantan-wide orangutan surveys will start this month. In December we organized West and Central Kalimantan workshops to introduce the interview-based program to local NGOs. These were then asked to develop proposals and budgets for these surveys. In total TNC will probably hire some 10 teams to cover all known and potential orangutan habitats in Kalimantan. This will be a major logistical challenge, with 10 teams interviewing some 7500 people. All this information needs to be effectively compiled, and Stu Sheppard is kindly giving us a hand developing appropriate database systems linked to a GIS. Anton Nurcahyo is the driving force from TNC's side, and we will work closely with the Indonesian primate association, APAPI, especially with Suci Utami who will coordinate the survey work from Jakarta. Exciting times....
- At the moment our survey team is still doing its survey in the Sangkulirang karst area. I talked to Nardi, the team leader over the satellite phone, and they had encountered significant numbers of orangutan nests in remote, forested parts of the karst region. Unfortunately, they also encountered illegal loggers and the fight is on again....
- In January, David Craven, a spatial planning specialist will join us for consultancy work on the Sangkulirang karst area. He will develop and guide the process that will lead to a new spatial plan for the karst area, supported by both the Berau and East Kutai district government. David brings with him many years of experience in Indonesia, as well as many other tropical countries, and we hope that this will bring some badly needed momentum to our karst work.
- Hans Smit joined us as a volunteer in December. He is sponsored by Unilever and is helping us in a project to study degraded lands and their suitability for oil palm. He will join surveys in areas around Lesan which include degraded as well as forested lands, assess soil conditions and remaining vegetation cover and provide recommendations to TNC and our partners in the oil palm industry about the suitability of these degraded lands for oil palm. Hans will be with us until March 2009.
- Connie Lintz and John Maginness will be visiting Indonesia during the early part of next year. They are retired and were looking for volunteer work while traveling. After some back and forth emails we agreed that they can join us as volunteers for a month or two. Their job will be to compile all bird records for Wehea and help develop a guide to the birds of Wehea. Such a guide will be very handy for our many visitors: where to see that elusive Argus Pheasant; and how to whistle the steam train call of the Garnet Pitta and call it out of its terrestrial scrub habitat. I think this will be a really fun assignment.

December 2008 publications (main publications and reports)

Marshall, A.J. and Meijaard, E. in press. Orangutan nest surveys: the devil is in the details. Oryx

Abstract: Nest surveys are widely employed to assess orangutan (*Pongo* spp.) population density and evaluate alternative management scenarios relevant to the protection of these threatened great apes, yet this method is less accurate and prone to much greater error than is generally acknowledged. Here we highlight the limitations of orangutan nest surveys, discuss the risks of ignoring these limitations, and note conditions under which standard nest survey methods are appropriate.

Pdf reprints of all publications can be requested from emeijaard@tnc.org

