

Community-led approaches to tackling illegal wildlife trade

Case studies from South-East Asia



About the project

For more information about this report, or the People not Poaching project, visit [www.https://www.iied.org/learning-action-for-community-engagement-against-wildlife-crime](https://www.iied.org/learning-action-for-community-engagement-against-wildlife-crime), or contact:

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Acronyms

ASRI	Alam Sehat Lestari
CCCP	Cambodian Crocodile Conservation Project
CC	Conservation Cooperatives
CRU	Conservation Response Units
FFI	Fauna & Flora International
GPNP	Gunung Palung National Park
HA	Health Ambassadors
HWC	Human-Wildlife Conflict
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IUCN SULI	International Union for Conservation of Nature Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group
IWT	Illegal Wildlife Trade
MCF	Monks Community Forest
NEPL	Nam Et-Phou Louey
NPA	National Protected Area
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Product
PCLN	Prey Lang Community Network
RRI	Rights and Resources Initiative
SWD	Sabah Wildlife Department
SRM	Strategic Response Mechanism
TWR	Tidong Wildlife Reserve
TCR	Tuke Rainforest Conservancy
VSSPCA	Veun Sai-Siem Pang Conservation Area
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society

Introduction

Illegal wildlife trade (IWT) is a global conservation issue causing declines of many species of fauna and flora and threatening the livelihoods of people who depend on wildlife. A common approach to tackling IWT is to increase law enforcement efforts. The sheer scale of IWT points to the need for these 'militarised' styles of conservation, however top-down anti-poaching efforts often ignore, or alienate, local communities who can be the 'first line of defence' against IWT.

Community-based anti-poaching initiatives can include a variety of approaches, including:

- Establishing community ranger or game guard programme
- Generating community benefits from tourism or trophy hunting
- Mitigating human-wildlife conflict (HWC)
- Supporting enterprise development
- Educating communities and raising awareness on conservation

There is no best practice approach to engaging communities in anti-poaching activities, with initiatives based on local contexts, taking time to implement. This is part of the reason they are overlooked – poaching is often seen as a crisis requiring an immediate response.

This compilation of case studies seeks to address this problem, by showcasing a wide range of initiatives that have engaged communities in tackling IWT using a variety of approaches in south-east Asia.

The case studies are drawn from a broader, global database called People not Poaching, hosted by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (IUCN-SULi). For more information, visit www.peoplenotpoaching.org

Cambodian Crocodile Conservation Project

Summary

The Cambodian Crocodile Conservation Project (CCCP) is a multi-award-winning partnership between Fauna & Flora International (FFI), local communities and the government of Cambodia. It was established following an FFI-led expedition to the Cardamom Mountains in 2000, where the Siamese crocodile, thought to be effectively extinct, was rediscovered. The project aims to restore the Siamese crocodile population and use this charismatic reptile as a flagship species for conserving threatened rivers and wetlands across Cambodia.

Country	Cambodia
Location	Focal areas include Veal Veng Marsh and the Areng River, both in the Cardamom Mountains, which hold the largest wild populations of Siamese crocodile
Species affected	Siamese Crocodile

The poaching problem

Over the last century, the Siamese crocodile has been driven to the point of extinction by commercial hunting, mainly for the international skin trade and the collection of live animals to stock crocodile farms. Illegal capture and trade continue to be a threat to Siamese crocodiles, although a combination of lower demand in recent years, extreme rarity in the wild and abundance in commercial farms, as well as ongoing protection and community engagement efforts, mean this is no longer the main threat to the species, which is now particularly threatened by ongoing habitat degradation.

The approach

FFI is working with the indigenous Khmer Dauem to improve their food security, their business acumen and their capacity to conserve their cultural heritage, including the reptiles that they revere. This initiative was developed through discussions with the communities on their issues, needs and wants, and focuses on three main strategies and outcomes:

1. Improve food security and find alternative sources of protein (away from fish, which depletes food resources for crocodiles and risks net-entanglement) by providing technical training on rice and chicken farming using a sustainable community participation methodology.
2. Boost incomes by improving business acumen alongside strengthening market systems for these isolated communities.
3. Build the communities' capacity to monitor and protect their environment.

Community wardens are tasked with (1) raising awareness of the crocodiles and the local regulations to protect them, (2) gathering information about the crocodiles, threats and local attitudes, and (3) reporting serious illegal activities to the government authorities. In total 31 crocodile community wardens patrol five crocodile sanctuaries of the Cardamom Mountains. Based on recent estimates, these five sanctuary sites hold approximately 150 crocodiles, around 60% of Cambodia's wild population. Wardens are using SMART patrols system within their sites to help us monitor, evaluate and respond to threats in each site more effectively.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Paid in money community scouts
- Performance-based payments/incentives for patrolling or guarding
- Raising community awareness about wildlife crime penalties and sanctions
- Strengthening and supporting traditional norms and sanctions against IWT

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

- (Non-wildlife-based) enterprise development/support
- Provision of community-level benefits

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

Support to local crocodile wardens in community-managed sanctuaries (established to conserve three of the best remaining breeding colonies in the wild) continues to deliver ongoing protection to crocodile sanctuaries in our target areas. With this ongoing presence zero incidences of poaching have occurred in the last decade (since 2011). The protection and ecological restoration of the crocodile sanctuary sites will have a lasting impact on aquatic diversity, including endangered otters, fish, and turtle species. However, human activities especially fishing is having an increasing impact upon these areas. FFI is supporting community wardens to better coordinate with park rangers to address this threat.

Feedback from local communities shows that they have a strong awareness and appreciation of the wardens and their work and monitoring data shows that populations are stable or increasing across the target sites, with evidence of reproduction. This is exemplified by wild hatchlings sighted at various sites in 2020, and a female released in 2018 found nesting in the wild in 2020.

Following community consultation, three crocodile sanctuary management plans have been drafted. In early 2016 all of the project's focal crocodile areas became nationally protected under the Ministry of Environment, although the project is waiting for them to begin the process of developing management plans for the new protected areas.

Factors for success

- Long-term donor support that is flexible, adaptive and/or based on realistic time goals
- Supportive, multi-stakeholder partnerships with a shared vision
- Sufficient time investment in building relationships and trust between the initiative and local communities

Challenges

Cambodia has made progress in reducing poaching and other dangers by forming groups of trained local wardens to monitor and patrol crocodile areas, providing appropriate livelihoods assistance to local communities so they can avoid damaging wetlands, and developing community regulations to avoid using the more high-risk types of fishing gear at crocodile breeding sites. Given that the current population of crocodiles is very small and fragmented, such site-based intervention is critical. However, local management needs to be underpinned with higher level government protection and support to ensure people involved in the illegal capture and trade of wild crocodiles are caught, penalised and held

up as warnings to others, and to safeguard the most essential waterways and their watersheds from incompatible developments.

If Siamese crocodiles are to repopulate wetlands from which they have been extirpated, it is vital to gain the cooperation of local people and decision-makers. People living in areas that no longer have crocodiles are often significantly more afraid of crocodiles than people who are still accustomed to living alongside them. There is, therefore, a need for further outreach using a range of media to raise awareness of Siamese crocodiles, their protected status and importance to Cambodia, and to demonstrate that people and Siamese crocodiles can coexist harmoniously. Villagers in the Cardamom Mountains who protect their local crocodiles could potentially be ambassadors for teaching and reassuring others that Siamese crocodiles are an asset and pose no danger when treated with respect.

Wardens must be able to count on the support of police, rangers or other enforcement officers, especially where they are vulnerable to intimidation by more powerful individuals or groups involved in illegal activities.

Factors limiting success

- Lack of supportive national policy/legislation for sustainable use of natural resources
- Lack of coordinated and coherent sectoral policies/legislation
- Ineffective and unaccountable community-based natural resources management institutions

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/cambodian-crocodile-conservation-project>

Livelihoods and Conservation: Protecting species by supporting local communities

Summary

Working with local communities, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and other stakeholders have implemented strategies that have reduced poaching and improved the lives of local people in the northern plains of Cambodia. Having rights to live on and use the land sustainably has encouraged farmers to think longer-term. These initiatives are about empowering local people to commit to preserving their environment whilst earning a living.

Country	Cambodia
Location	Northern Plains: Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary and Chhep Wildlife Sanctuary in Preah Vihear Province
Species affected	Banteng, Gaur, Giant Ibis, Lesser Adjutant, Masked Finfoot, Oriental Darter, Sambar, Sarus Crane, Vultures, White-shouldered Ibis, White-winged Duck, Woolly-necked Stork

The poaching problem

Live animals, including the Sarus Crane and vultures, are poached to supply the local, regional and international pet trade (via Thailand) and the meat and body parts of ungulates and carnivores are traded locally and internationally (to Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos). Local people are motivated to poach because there are few alternative livelihood opportunities.

The approach

The initiative - comprised of three programme utilising different strategies - are community-based and aim to tackle poaching and IWT, human encroachment/habitat loss within the park, and to reduce the use of pesticides.

1. Ibis Rice

WCS has worked with communities in national parks for 20 years to develop livelihood incentive programmes that link conservation results to cash benefits to local people. Rice farmers in those remote areas are far from markets and have limited economic opportunities. Their practices, including forest clearing for rice paddies, can threaten local wildlife such as the Giant Ibis.

In 2009, WCS founded a local social enterprise, Sansom Mlup Prey to enable farmers to achieve a premium price for their rice in exchange for complying with conservation-friendly practices. These practices include the maintenance of land-use boundaries, a zero-wildlife hunting policy and organic farming. Each participating household signs a conservation agreement. Farmer compliance is verified by US and EU organic certification as well as by WCS in collaboration with the national park, the use of satellite data and self-reporting village-level entities.

2. Bird Nest Protection Programme

This is a payments scheme designed to combat the threat of egg and chick collection. Under the scheme, local people are offered conditional payments if they successfully locate, monitor and protect nests until fledging, and receive double the daily protection payment if the nest fledges successfully.

The average payment per nest guardian is \$USD 80-150, which is significant in the local context where average annual incomes are less than \$USD 500.

3. Tmatboey ecotourism (inside Kulen Promtemp Wildlife Sanctuary)

Rare bird species, such as the Giant Ibis, attract specialist bird tourists, and so in 2003, WCS and partners have helped local communities develop the capacity to host tourists. The initiative provides local villagers with education, income and a concrete incentive to protect the ibis.

Site-based tourism services are managed by an elected Community Protected Area Committee trained by WCS and its partners. Tourists contribute directly to the local economy through payments to villagers for services such as accommodation, guiding, cooking, transportation and Village Development Funds.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Paid in money community scouts
- Performance-based payments/incentives for patrolling or guarding

Increased incentives for wildlife stewardship

- Tourism

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

The programme have been successful in reducing poaching - though not completely.

Ibis Rice

The programme has protected 500,000 hectares of forest and wetlands that is contributing to the conservation of more than 50 endangered animal species. The incomes of 1,000 rice-farming families has been increased and around 4,500 people are now benefiting from the programme, with payments of over \$600,000 per year at premiums of up to 100% over market prices. Ibis Rice is certified as organic and “Wildlife Friendly” and is now exported to Europe. There are lower rates of deforestation around villages participating in Ibis Rice than similar non-participant villages.

Bird Nest Protection Programme

Since 2002, over 3,800 nests of 11 globally threatened bird species have been protected. The number of villages participating has grown from 21 to 48; the proportion paid directly to local people has remained at around 70%. Average annual payments per protector of \$140, remain significant in comparison with other forms of local cash income in rural areas.

The success of the programme has been closely linked to research into the ecology of key bird species and strong working relationships with local communities. When communities have the opportunity to obtain socio-economic benefits from their wildlife assets, they are more motivated to protect them.

Ecotourism

The programme has increased populations of endangered wildlife, particularly endemic birds: for example, the number of successfully fledged white-shouldered ibis chicks has rose from 4 in 2008 to 55 in 2016. Tourism revenue has contributed to improving community facilities and the project is recognised by the government as an example of best practice.

In particular, the development of high levels of trust with communities and park authorities has been key to the success of this project. This has been best achieved by initially focusing on issues of shared concern, and also ensuring all activities are completely integrated into park management.

Project proponents must spend significant time in communities and move at their pace and using their social institutions, where possible. When developing eco-tourism or other conservation enterprises, ensure a direct link between the income and the conservation – for example, tourists only paying when they see selected species. To strengthen social institutions, and social pressure on compliance, payment schemes should include a community payment that is discretionary spending for the managing social institution.

Factors for success

- Supportive national policy/legislation for devolved governance of natural resources
- Long-term donor support that is flexible, adaptive and/or based on realistic time goals
- Sufficient time investment in building relationships and trust between the initiative and local communities
- Transparent and accountable distribution of benefits to local communities
- Clear and tangible benefits to local communities from wildlife

Challenges

Ecotourism and conservation enterprises are not well suited to the donor cycles and require a long-term commitment to the park and enterprise. Enterprise should have professionally developed business plans that show a path not only to profitability but also to generating sufficient income for people to change their behaviour. Monitoring of results and compliance need to be well designed to show impacts and enable adjustments to, or even abandonment of, the scheme if the desired conservation outcomes are not being realised.

Factors limiting success

- Lack of supportive national policy/legislation on sustainable use of natural resources
- Lack of coordinated and coherent sectoral policies/legislation

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/livelihoods-and-conservation-protecting-species-supporting-local-communities-cambodia>

The Prey Lang Community Network

Summary

The Prey Lang Community Network (PLCN) is a self-organised group of local community members who monitor the forests in the central plains of Cambodia. PLCN was developed in response to deforestation, with the purpose to patrol and protect Prey Lang Wildlife Sanctuary from illegal logging and industrial agriculture. Members of PLCN act independently, with information brought to the attention of national policy makers as well as the general public via reports and social media. Members receive no external incentives for their efforts and have no formal enforcement power, but they do believe that they are successful in limiting illegal activities in the forest.

Country	Cambodia
Location	Prey Lang forest covers roughly 5000 km ² in the central plains of Cambodia, west of the Mekong river.
Species affected	Siamese Rosewood

The poaching problem

Cambodia has one of the world's highest deforestation rates, driven by illegal logging and large-scale acquisitions of land for agro-industrial purposes. The latter is usually in the form of economic land and mining concessions, where large areas of forest are cleared to make way for plantations. Extensive logging also occurs outside of officially granted concession areas and illegal loggers are often poor community members. High value species, such as Siamese Rosewood, are particularly susceptible to illegal logging, much of which is illegally exported to Vietnam.

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, members of PLCN were unable to enter the forest since. From February 2020, the network noticed an increase in illegal loggers entering Prey Lang leaving with trucks transporting timber.

The approach

As threats to the forest increased, with illegal timber laundered and natural resources destroyed, conflict arose between the local groups wanting to protect the forest and those deriving income from timber extraction. For example, village headmen and local authorities often have a vested economic interest in the logging industry, threatening attempts to stop illegal activities.

Inhabitants of Prey Lang have traditionally patrolled the forest to protect its resources, and in 2001 they organised into a forest monitoring group. PLCN advocates for forest protection and conservation by collecting and communicating information on illegal activities in the forest. The main activity of PLCN is to undertake peaceful patrols, with groups entering the forest several times a month for 3-4 days at a time.

Sometimes PLCN patrols encounter abandoned equipment and timber, which is then confiscated or left behind and burned. Patrol groups vary in size and cover different sections of Prey Lang, with reports from the field and confiscated equipment sent to the authorities. If members encounter loggers during patrols, they firstly initiate a peaceful dialogue, before checking whether they have logging permits. If they do not, members inform them about the destructive effects of logging on the forest and communities. The illegal loggers are then made to sign a contract stating that they will not continue to take part in such activities, with their names and faces held in a database.

PLCN also began collecting data on an app in 2015 and now has 35 smartphones operating in the forest. The Prey Lang app collects data on illegal logging activities and climate change, as well as the impact this has on biodiversity and local livelihoods. Data analysis is output in reports and communicated to policy makers and the general public.

A representative from each of the four provinces that Prey Lang covers form a Steering Committee and there is also an elected core group of 28 network members, as well as 400 active members across the four provinces.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Un-paid (voluntary) community scouts
- Strengthening and supporting traditional norms and sanctions against IWT

Build and/or support a sense of community ownership or stewardship

What has worked and why?

A survey revealed that active members of PLCN think they are successful in stopping illegal activities they encounter. However, PLCN continue to report rises in illegal activities within the sanctuary. Between June 2018 and 2019, over 5,000 entries were submitted to the Prey Lang database, which when validated responded to 89 illegal activities reported per month.

In general, since the introduction of the app in 2015, PLCN's efficiency has increased, with continued training of members and improved app versions resulting in more and better quality data. Patrols by PLCN have resulted in an extensive source of data on illegal logging activities in Prey Lang, which is highly valuable for national decision and policy-makers, as well as researchers within the field and the general Cambodian public.

Challenges

Local authorities and others in power often have vested interest in illegal logging activities and have tried to dissuade members from patrolling the forest. Members are often told they do not have the right to carry out patrols or confiscate equipment or timber. Furthermore, since 2017 the government's new requirement that the Ministry of Environment and local authorities are informed of PLCN patrols 3 days before commencement has hindered the ability of the network to undertake patrols and it is thought that illegal loggers are now being tipped off, making the patrols less effective.

Although it appears there has been a general increase in government attention to tackling illegal logging and other forest crimes, there remain concerns about government corruption and collusion with timber traders.

Factors limiting success

- Lack of devolved decision-making power so local communities have a voice in creating or co-creating solutions
- Ineffective and unaccountable community-based natural resources management institutions

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/prey-lang-community-network>

Monks Community Forest

Summary

The Monks Community Forest (MCF) was created in response to deforestation from economic concessions, illegal logging, and land encroachment. Initiated by Buddhist monk Venerable Sun Baluthhe, the monks of the Samraong Pagoda acquired legal protection of the forest in 2001.

Country	Cambodia
Location	Monks Community Forest is 18,261 ha of primary forest that provides a dense evergreen and semi-evergreen canopy cover in the Oddar Meanchey Province, Cambodia, and is the country's largest community-managed forest conservation site.
Species affected	Timber

The approach

In 2001, in response to the unrelenting deforestation of Cambodia's forests, the Buddhist monk Venerable Bun Saluth initiated the protection of a forest in northwest Cambodia and quickly had volunteers from his pagoda and the local community help deliver his vision. These people organised themselves into patrols to monitor the forest to reduce illegal activity. Soon after, the monks of the pagoda acquired legal protection of the forest, established patrol teams, distinguished forest boundaries, developed co-management committees (which included local villagers), collaborated with government authorities and NGOs, attracted external funding, and raised awareness of the need for protection. The MCF became the country's largest community forest and forest crime abated.

Patrol teams are made up of community volunteers, who are unarmed and treat offenders without anger using a soft approach to enforcement. Furthermore, women are encouraged to alert the patrol teams of any suspicious activity while collecting non-timber forest products. Food may be given in exchange for patrolling services.

One of the main purposes of the project is to maintain access to forest resources that benefit community livelihoods. Although logging and hunting are prohibited within the protected area, villagers can fish using traditional methods, collect old timber for materials for their shelters, and harvest non-timber forest products such as bamboo, wild ginger, fruit and mushrooms. Villagers usually collect these for subsistence use and for traditional medicines but will also sell some products in local markets.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Un-paid (voluntary) community scouts
- Paid in-kind community scouts
- Strengthening and supporting traditional norms and sanctions against IWT

Increasing incentives for wildlife stewardship

- Subsistence resource access/use

Build and/or support sense of community ownership or stewardship

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

Over 3,700 people from six villages - the vast majority of which are poor farmers - participate and benefit from MCF activities. MCF provides resources, benefits and services such as shelter, subsistence crops, and commercial products. Furthermore, participants have been empowered to have a voice in the management of the forest through the committees and sub-committees in each village.

Both patrolling and awareness-raising activities have significantly reduced incidents of forest crime including logging, hunting and land clearing, and is helping to safeguard the area's biodiversity.

Having the monks instigate the initiative proved to be invaluable for gaining community support and together, the monks and local people are protecting the forest. Increasing environmental stewardship from the monastic community is actively channelling Buddhist principles to help society and monks have empowered communities to take protection of the natural resources they depend upon. This has cultivated a conservation ethic amongst communities living near the MCF and villagers now see forest protection as benefitting them both spiritually and materially

Factors for success

- Effective and trusted community leaders

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/monks-community-forest>

Indigenous people engage in the fight against wildlife crime in Cambodia's last, large intact forests

Summary

The Veun Sai-Siem Pang Conservation Area (VSSPCA) is located in north-east Cambodia and is the largest remaining area of intact forest in Asia. This extremely biodiverse forest is under threat from poaching and illegal logging. However, two local NGOs, NFTP and Poh Kao, are working with communities to protect the forest and its wildlife by increasing formal protection of the forest, including recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights to the forests by creating Community Protected Areas, and the development of a network of communities that can begin to challenge illegal large-scale logging and poaching in the area.

Country	Cambodia
Location	Veun Sai-Siem Pang National Park is a large protected area complex that extends into Laos (Virachey National Park, Xe Pian National Park) and Vietnam (Chu Mom Ray National Park), and represents the largest area of intact forest in Asia.
Species affected	Afzelia xylocarpa, Asian Elephant, Binturong, Giant Ibis, Hairy-nosed Otter, Northern Buffed-cheeked Gibbon, Rosewood, Sarus Crane, Siamese Crocodile

The poaching problem

Illegal logging is a lucrative industry driven by large national and international demand: there is a low risk of prosecution from enforcement agencies, and there is lack of political will to tackle this issue, which is further compounded by corruption. Thus, illegal logging represents a high revenue generating activity without fear of legal consequences.

Hunting appears to be largely conducted by people from local communities for either local consumption or wildlife trade (and to a lesser degree for medicinal purposes). For some families, food insecurity is a major driver for hunting, however, a larger proportion of hunting is for the wildlife trade that is driven by external demand, which in turn provides food security and income generation for local people.

The approach

The overall objective was to improve the protection of Veun Sai Siem Pang forests through the development of forest tenure security and the development of a network of communities in the park and the surrounding landscape that will begin to challenge large-scale logging in the area. As part of this, the initiative aimed to obtain official gazetted protection of these forests including the establishment of community protected areas.

The initiative hoped to engage Indigenous people in forest resources management, reduce illegal forestry by fostering collaboration between local communities, and engage Indigenous people in on-ground protection activities (such as community patrols) to mitigate biodiversity loss.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Paid in money community scouts
- Un-paid (voluntary) community scouts
- Paid in-kind community scouts
- Raising community awareness about wildlife crime penalties and sanctions

Increasing incentives for wildlife stewardship

- Tourism

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

The initiative has some significant achievements including:

- The forests were gazetted and are now a national park, which should help to control/prevent large-scale exploitation
- Official recognition of community protection for VSSPCA was gained with the creation of two Community Protected Areas
- The initiative has successfully fostered a strong partnership between the Ministry of Environment and the Provincial Department of the Environment, and this cooperation has yielded positive results. Today, community wardens are recognised as key actors of conservation, and they are conducting joint patrols with government park rangers.
- Collaboration between local communities has contributed to reducing illegal timber harvesting and protecting the gibbon population in Veun Sai Siem Pang Forest
- Patrol efforts by community wardens and park rangers have seen poaching rates decrease
- Community awareness of the importance of protecting wildlife increased.

Having a long-term relationship with communities (since 2007), and monthly visits by project staff to work with community-based organisations and local authorities were key to the success of this initiative.

Despite the constant challenge to secure funding, engaging with communities who are dedicated to the protection of wildlife is yielding positive results. Job and income creation have been important for this, but they are also proud of their critical role in protecting the wildlife and the forest.

Land tenure rights are also very important as this 'ownership' reassures local people that the forest will not be given away to powerful people through economic land concessions.

Factors for success

- Sufficient time investment in building relationships and trust between the initiative and local communities
- Clearly defined tenure or resource use rights
- Clear and tangible benefits to local communities from wildlife

Challenges

Although another international NGO is working in the same area, and towards the same goals, they have been unwilling to establish a positive relationship, and appear disrespectful of the organisation and the local communities.

Factors limiting success

- Lack of long-term donor support that is flexible, adaptive and/or based on realistic time goals
- Lack of supportive, multi-stakeholder partnerships with a shared vision

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/indigenous-people-engage-fight-against-wildlife-crime-cambodias-last-large-intact-forests>

Reducing Illegal Wildlife Trafficking through a Community-based Conservation Approach in West Kalimantan

Summary

Planet Indonesia have built Conservation Cooperatives (CC) at two sites in West Kalimantan. Through this CC approach, they use a holistic strategy that integrates community-led monitoring and rule enforcement with access to community healthcare, poverty reduction initiatives through access to equitable financial capital, and livelihood development to empower communities to shift away from IWT and towards sustainable livelihood alternatives. The aim of this project is to improve wildlife densities for threatened wildlife species while improving well-being for 1,741 households and generating novel insights into community-led strategies to reduce IWT equitably.

Country	Indonesia
Location	This project is based in 2 sites in West Kalimantan, Indonesia. The first is in the Gunung Nyiut Penrisen Forest Complex that includes the Gunung Nyiut Nature Reserve plus 60,815 hectares of 'protection' forests. The other site is located in the Gunung Naning 'protection' forests nestled within the Arabella-Schwanner landscape.
Species affected	Sunda Bearded Pig, Helmeted Hornbill, Straw-headed Bulbul, Sunda Pangolin, Abbott's Gibbons, White-bearded Gibbons

The poaching problem

In both sites, poachers predominantly include local villagers who are hunters. Local hunters can either be opportunistic or professional and are coaxed by non-local intermediaries (traders). Such non-local intermediaries take advantage of the poverty and lack of livelihood opportunities to entice villagers who are hunters to poach in return for certain species for relatively high sums of money for villagers.

The approach

Working in Borneo since 2014, Planet Indonesia have gained a sound understanding of the provincial and island-wide effort to curb IWT. Their conservation model is based on a holistic strategy that includes multiple programme aimed at alleviating socio-economic inequalities that are often the root cause of why rural communities become engaged in IWT activities. These include establishing community-led deterrents to IWT by involving community members to monitor and enforce both national and village level (customary) rules related to forests and their wildlife. These community-led patrols use the SMART methodology and consist of one government park ranger, three/four villagers, and one Planet Indonesia field staff. During monthly patrols, SMART patrol members detect and disarm snares, record encounters of illegal activity and document wildlife.

As a regular component of each CC, Planet Indonesia support the development of a village-led savings and loans programme. As this programme grows, it provides access to equitable financial capital that strengthens community resilience. CC members can take annual loans and receive access to a suite of financial and technical services to strengthen their livelihoods.

Their technical livelihood support utilises a simple four-step approach, that includes:

- Identifying income-generating commodities and strategies
- Provide asset-based inputs to kick-start livelihoods
- Provide access to a savings/loans programme to build resilience
- Provide leadership and financial literacy training to support long-term change

Non-financial incentives that reduce dependencies on IWT include access to basic healthcare services and information. Initial community engagements revealed that lack of access to healthcare, especially during emergencies, meant that community members needed to depend on poaching and illegal logging to pay for the high cost of accessing healthcare from distant locations. To reduce the burden of accessing healthcare, the Healthy Family programme engages and trains local women as Health Ambassadors (HA). Once trained, the HAs are able to extend access and distribute basic healthcare and family planning materials in their communities.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Paid in money community scouts
- Paid-in kind money community scouts
- Raising community awareness about wildlife crime penalties and sanctions
- Strengthening and supporting traditional norms and sanctions against IWT

Increasing incentives for wildlife stewardship

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

- (Non-wildlife-based) enterprise development/support

Build and/or support a sense of community ownership or stewardship

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

Planet Indonesia have been supporting Dayak communities in the Gunung Nyiut site since 2016. Analysis of SMART patrol data between 2018 and 2020 from this site reveals that there has been a steep drop in incidence of hunting (by 79%), encroachment (by 86%), and logging (by 93%) within the areas patrolled inside the protected area. Additionally, SMART patrols recorded increased wildlife encounter rates for several priority and endangered species such as the Helmeted Hornbill, Wreathed Hornbill, Red Langur, and Mueller Gibbons, with some species showing slight improvements in the surrounding forests of our working areas. This is also in line with increasing density estimates of wildlife derived using a social survey of local experts and resource collectors.

Furthermore, a 2-year impact evaluation showed that deforestation rates in primary rainforest dropped by 56% in the surrounding areas of the programme in comparison to years prior to the project implementation. By comparing before and after results between control and impact sites, over the past three years, 77% of the tree cover loss took place outside of partnership areas. This was a clear indication that the holistic approach to address deforestation and biodiversity loss was succeeding in its goal.

The programme results revealed that social and economic services are essential to removing barriers to community-led conservation. These services reduce hardships that are often limiting factors - inhibiting participation. Therefore, by focusing on barriers, and removing said barriers, the programme's intervention style results in systems change as it addresses the underlying drivers of a defunct system versus the symptoms of biodiversity loss.

Social and economic services can also be essential to reducing short-term costs, or opportunity costs, of conservation initiatives. These services can help build resiliency and provide a level of socio-economic manoeuvrability to community partners which is essential to overcoming short-term costs of conservation initiatives.

In order to build trust and create positive relationships, it is important to listen and remain adaptive to new opportunities and challenges that communities face. For example, in 2020 Planet Indonesia provided additional covid-19 support for community partners, leveraging their health teams to improve

surveillance, and even administering a large conditional cash transfer to families impacted by the pandemic.

Most of their success has been underpinned by creating trust with local community partners. In certain areas, where the presence of poaching risked programme compliance factors, community members pressured non-participants to stop poaching and join the programme to ensure that programme services continued. Social and economic services were identified through impact assessments as not only addressing barriers and reducing the opportunity costs of conservation, but also created a “good will effect” where community partners believed and trusted the organisation.

Factors for success

- Devolved decision-making power so local communities have a voice in creating or co-creating solutions
- Effective and trusted community leaders
- Transparent and accountable distribution of benefits to local communities

Challenges

The major challenges related to the programme came from a lack of clarity on tenure. The Gunung Nyiut and Naning protected areas were customary forests that were turned into state-led protected areas in the 1980s. Many community members discussed that because there was no longer any local ownership, that they viewed it in their best interest to exploit the landscape before the government sold it to a private sector company or further limited their use of the area. This was a major limiting factor for villages located inside the protected area, that in accordance with the law, denies them the ability to access a variety of basic government services.

Factors limiting success

- Lack of supportive, multi-stakeholder partnerships with a shared vision
- Lack of clearly defined tenure or resource use rights

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/reducing-illegal-wildlife-trafficking-through-community-based-conservation-approach-west-kalimantan>

POKOK - using anthropology to mitigate orangutan killing and human-orangutan conflict in Borneo

Summary

POKOK is an anthropology-conservation initiative that aims to mitigate orangutan killing and improve human-orangutan coexistence in rural Borneo by using in-depth ethnographic research to explore the causes and contexts of orangutan killing. This knowledge will be used to formulate new and locally-appropriate methods for dealing with the problem and improving conservationists' long-term relations with local communities.

Country	Indonesia
Location	Research for this project is being carried out in West and Central Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo, with rural communities who live in and around the forest habitats of the critically endangered Bornean Orangutan.
Species affected	Bornean Orangutan

The poaching problem

The population of the Bornean Orangutan has undergone a precipitous decline in recent decades, and it is now listed as Critically Endangered. A key driver of their decline, which is relatively poorly understood and tackled, is killing, whether through conflict, poaching, or hunting.

Part of this research is aimed at understanding local people's motivations for becoming involved in poaching networks, whether as sellers or as middlemen. Preliminary research suggests that the key drivers are human-wildlife conflict (leading to the death of adult female orangutans and the capture of their babies), local/regional demand for orangutans as pets, and regional demand for orangutans in zoos and other destinations.

The approach

POKOK aims to work with a range of orangutan conservation organisations and individuals in Borneo, as well as with the thinktank Borneo Futures, to formulate evidence-based strategies and initiatives for mitigating orangutan killing. The initiative seeks to build up an in-depth, nuanced understanding of the lives of some of the rural communities who live in and around orangutan habitat. These include indigenous Dayaks, Melayu, Chinese, and migrants from elsewhere in Indonesia. It also seeks to understand their experiences and concerns in relation to other players, such as local and national government, ecotourism initiatives, and conservationists.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Raising community awareness about wildlife crime penalties and sanctions
- Strengthening and supporting traditional norms and sanctions against IWT

Decreasing the costs of living with wildlife

Build and/or support a sense of ownership or stewardship

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

The main insight from ongoing fieldwork with rural communities in/near orangutan conservation areas is that it makes a huge difference having regular, relatively direct/un-bureaucratic contact with conservation organisations. Conservation outreach and programme are much better received when there has been a consistent conservation presence in the area beforehand rather than a drop-in/drop-out approach. Regular conservation staff visits are critical in building trust/personal rapport, raising awareness of what conservation is (and isn't) about, and reminding people of the risks of undertaking illegal activities.

One example of a successful interaction between NGO workers and villagers involved a farmer whose jackfruit tree had been raided by a wild orangutan earmarked for translocation. The villagers held the NGO responsible for the damage, but the NGO was unable to pay compensation for the actions of wild orangutans. The individual staff members eventually defused this tension by taking the time to explain conservation work (and the limits of their capacities) to the farmer and making a special effort to keep the orangutan away from his fruit trees and crops after that. This personal connection was vital in bringing the farmer onside and improving the reputation of the conservation NGO in the area, particularly by proving that it cared for people too, not just animals (a common perception in Borneo).

Challenges

Regular and honest communication at the village and individual level remains an important challenge. Local distrust of and reluctance about conservation activity often results from a lack of communication. This has been documented in various cases where the rescue of a baby orangutan created friction between a village community and staff of conservation NGOs. For example, in a rescue that took place in one of the POKOK field sites during fieldwork, the pet keeper and the village government were informed of and agreed to the rescue. However, the arrival of two jeeps with conservation staff and government officials was observed with anxiety and distrust by most villagers. Only after many individual conversations with villagers and a subsequent visit of NGO workers (jointly requested by the POKOK team and the village's religious leader) was the intervention accepted by the majority of villagers.

Part of the research involves looking at how and why certain orangutan conservation interventions fail. The main factors are: 1) lack of local enforcement: people in remote areas are aware of the legal status of orangutans but also know that they are unlikely to be caught if they harm them; 2) lack of interest in/care for orangutans, which are seen as an animal that can cause great damage to fruit trees, crops, etc. (unlike, say, gibbons); 3) lack of a constant conservation presence in the area; 4) the perceived inability/unwillingness of conservation NGOs to properly care for humans, especially when their capacity to respond is hindered by bureaucracy.

These all overlap with each other and need to be addressed in tandem. 3) and 4) are especially difficult to redress because of existing funding structures and models, which prioritise contained, easily measurable conservation projects with specific outputs and objectives. However, the research is revealing that it may be better to maintain a constant, low-key, but responsive conservation presence in local areas. Such a presence is vital in demonstrating conservationists' commitment to the well-being of people as people, not just as tools in a wider project of saving orangutans (as they're widely seen). Building this up, however, requires a shift in funding models and priorities, as well as more in-depth, on-the-ground research on local people's requirements and interests, which may not always converge with those of conservationists.

To illustrate, a one-off awareness raising activity held in a remote village appears to have had very limited effect. Over the course of one evening an NGO's education team gave out information about the work of orangutan rehabilitation, what to do in case of human-orangutan conflict, and the legal protection of wildlife. Three years later, few inhabitants remembered this visit and even fewer could accurately recall what the NGO did. Moreover, NGOs' work is commonly conflated with the work of the government forestry service and national park management. The visit has not deterred local people from using violent methods to chase away orangutans. While the protected status of wildlife was accepted as a matter of fact, there was confusion about which species this includes. In the absence of

enforcement and conservation presence, the protected status of wildlife didn't have widespread impact on how people interacted with wildlife.

Factors limiting success

- Lack of long-term donor support that is flexible, adaptive and/or based on realistic time goals
- Insufficient time investment in building relationships and trust between the initiative and local communities
- Lack of devolved decision-making power so local communities have a voice in creating or co-creating solutions
- Unclear and intangible benefits to local communities from wildlife

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/pokok-using-anthropology-mitigate-orangutan-killing-and-human-orangutan-conflict-borneo>

Using social forestry to stop illegal logging and benefit local communities

Summary

A local organisation called Yayasan Hutanriau (Riau Forest Foundation) helped communities in the Bukit Betabuh Forest Reserve respond to the illegal expansion of palm oil plantations and illegal logging on their customary lands, which threatened their livelihoods and vital biodiversity. With support from the Rights and Resources Initiative's (RRI) Strategic Response Mechanism (SRM), the communities were empowered to create social forestry enterprises that would allow them to retain the rights to their lands and to economically benefit from the forest resources. As a result, the Bukit Betabuh Forest Reserve is better protected against illegal loggers and the communities are gaining an income from the forest whilst simultaneously re-planting traditional trees and plants.

Country	Indonesia
Location	Bukit Betabuh Forest Reserve is in an important wildlife corridor, connecting Rimbang Baling Wildlife Reserve and Bukit Tigapuluh National Park.
Species affected	Timber species

The approach

In 2015, 200,000 has of forest in the Bukit Betabuh reserve caught fire. Local community members from the Air Buluh village fought to stop the fire from spreading, which seemed likely to have been purposively caused to create an illegal oil palm plantation. Although the local communities confiscated equipment, illegal oil palm plantations and illegal logging continued inside the reserve, ignored by the provincial and local governments.

With help from the RRI's SRM, local communities were supported to initiate plans to convert their village forestlands into social forestry enterprises. The aim was to enable them to retain rights over their lands, benefit financially from forest products and protect the vital local ecosystem. One of the key activities was the development of sustainable crop commodity plans for the jernang, or dragon's blood, a particularly valuable non-timber forest product (NTFP). Jernang can fetch a higher price than oil palm and needs trees to stand, so the communities were also committed to replanting the area. In addition, many of the farmers were once illegal loggers who realised the economic potential from social forestry and instead became committed to guarding the Bukit Betabuh reserve.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Un-paid (voluntary) community scouts
- Strengthening and supporting traditional norms and sanctions against IWT

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

- Non-wildlife-based enterprise development/support

What has worked and why?

The social forestry enterprises in Air Buluh village are heavily involved in maintaining the reserve and 75% of people have switched professions from illegal loggers to forest guards, which led to a decrease in illegal logging. So far, these groups have managed to protect 900 hectares of the forest area from illegal loggers and other encroachers.

In addition, about 30 hectares of protected forest have been re-planted with traditional plants. The project has also provided a model for effective forest protection and community forest enterprise development, recognised by a second group of forest farmers implementing initiatives to protect the forest and optimise NTFPs.

Local elections for a new kepala desa (village head) were vital to the success of planting traditionally important tree and rattan species. During the early stages of the project a member of the forest-farmer community being supported by the SRM won the local election. This influenced the community and the forest-farmer group to afforest their protected areas with traditional trees and plants, as well as influencing other communities in the area to do the same.

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/using-social-forestry-stop-illegal-logging-and-benefit-local-communities>

Goats For Hope

Summary

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has been working with the Indonesian government to protect tigers by mitigating livestock predation by building corrals, organising night patrols to deter tigers from entering villages, and establishing a wildlife response unit that responds to reports of human-tiger conflict. These measures have reduced the number of livestock loss to tigers by 80%, meaning villagers are more tolerant of tigers and now provide intelligence about poachers to the relevant authorities.

Country	Indonesia
Location	Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park is located at the southern tip of Sumatra (approximately 324,000 ha). The northern part is mountainous with its highest point at Gunung Pulung (1,964 m), while its southern section is a peninsula.
Species affected	Sumatran Tiger

The poaching problem

Rural communities living in proximity to the park had little confidence in government programme intended to address human-tiger conflict and perceived many measures as imposing unjust rules that limited traditional use rights. As a result, government rules regarding trapping and hunting of tigers and their prey were frequently ignored or flouted. Many families set traps for pigs and other tiger prey and encouraged professional poachers to rid them of tigers that preyed upon these sources of food. Overall, the cost of living with tigers discouraged communities from engaging in anti-poaching activities and encouraged both retaliatory killings and support for professional tiger poachers.

The approach

Through Goats for Hope, a wildlife response unit works with local people to

1. build tiger-proof enclosures to secure livestock at night
2. support night patrols that keep tigers at a distance from village livestock
3. respond rapidly to community reports of human-tiger conflict.

The project helps communities generate additional income by providing higher quality breeder goats.

The strategy

Decreasing costs of living with wildlife

- Preventative measures to deter wildlife
- Reactive measures to deal with problem animals

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

- (Non-wildlife-based) enterprise development/support

What has worked and why?

Within the first year of implementing Goats for Hope in 11 villages in Talang, the number of goats and chickens killed by tigers declined by 80% and has continued to decline. Community members are now

willing to halt the retaliatory killing of tigers and curb hunting tiger prey for food. Rather than helping professional hunters, they now provide actionable intelligence. The project has also changed community perceptions regarding the hunting of tigers and their prey. Communities increasingly understand that killing tiger prey within the park increases the likelihood that tigers will leave the park in search of food, thus increasing the threat to livestock. At the same time, communities have begun to recognise that there are benefits to having tigers in the park since they eat pigs that are the main source of crop damage.

In 2015, the results from a survey using camera traps indicated that the population density of Sumatran tigers inside the park's protection zone had increased from an estimated 1.6 tigers per 100 km² (total of 40-43 individuals) in 2002 to 2.8 tigers per 36 km². Furthermore, the proportion of male and female tigers recorded was 1:3, indicating that the tiger population in the park is in a healthy condition and breeding opportunity exists for many females.

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/goats-hope>

The Little Fireface Project

Summary

Slow lorises are threatened by the illegal trade for pets, medicines, and tourist photo props. The Little Fireface Project educates the local community about the ecological importance of the Critically Endangered Javan slow loris, instilling a sense of pride in local people who live alongside the species and who are essential players in the conservation of this species.

Country	Indonesia
Location	Cipaganti village, Garut District, lies in the foothills of Gunung Puntang, which is part of the mountain range containing the active volcano Gunung Papandayan. While Gunung Papandayan is recognised as a nature reserve, the agricultural areas surrounding the nature reserve rely wholly on local people for their protection.
Species affected	Javan Slow Loris

The poaching problem

Over the last few decades, slow lorises have been regularly recorded in the open wildlife markets in the region. In 2007, the demand for lorises led to their listing on CITES Appendix I.

Interviews throughout Java, including with hunters, showed that much of the trade at its initial stage in the chain was done for minimal profit, as a secondary event to other activities such as agriculture.

The approach

The Little Fireface Project engages the local community to protect the Javan slow loris from poaching and IWT through education and empowerment. A major goal of the project is to encourage people to not keep slow lorises as pets, to understand the importance of slow lorises in the ecosystem, and to be able to identify slow lorises rescued from the illegal wildlife trade.

Social networking has been used to present news about research, announce events, provide petitions and information on how to report illegal internet activity regarding slow lorises, and to collect information about IWT. In addition, socialisation events, such as public lectures, films and live music have been held to raise awareness and build a sense of pride and ownership of the species.

The strategy

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

- Provision of community level benefits

Build and/or support sense of community ownership or stewardship

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

The initiative appears to have slowed the poaching of the Javan slow loris from the forests. Only one monitored animal disappeared in 'mysterious' circumstances - other found animals were taken to the project's personnel. There is also an indication that the project has influenced local villagers further afield.

It has been vital to gain the community's trust and to incorporate their needs into the project's conservation strategy.

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/little-fireface-project>

Alam Sehat Lestari

Summary

Alam Sehat Lestari (ASRI) is a local NGO working around the Gunung Palung National Park (GPNP) in West Kalimantan. Their main focus is to implement health and conservation-orientated community development programme in order to reduce illegal logging in GPNP.

Country	Indonesia
Location	Gunung Palung National Park covers 90,000 hectares of protected area in West Kalimantan, Indonesia.
Species affected	Bornean Orangutan, Timber

The poaching problem

GPNP has been persistently threatened by illegal logging for the past several decades. Between 1988 and 2002, up to 38% of the lowlands and 70% of the buffer zone of the park was deforested by timber concessions. Concessions usually operated legally within buffer zones but later expanded illegally beyond concession boundaries into protected areas. Between 1992 and 2004 it is estimated that 13% of the park's designated area was deforested. Although most of the timber concessions have since expired, population growth combined with increases in palm oil demand has continued to pressure GPNP and community-based logging has also been a major problem.

The approach

ASRI carries out the following activities to decrease illegal logging and provide better access to health care and alternative livelihoods for the communities surrounding GPNP.

Alternative livelihoods

- The family garden programme aims to increase the capacity and knowledge of housewives in farming practices on their own land. The programme builds and increases the productivity of family gardens and is integrated into the management of family finances.
- In 2016 ASRI began an entrepreneurship programme that aims to explore potential business opportunities as permanent livelihood solutions for loggers. Communication is established with loggers and their capacity increased through entrepreneurship training and financial management training. The programme uses the Chainsaw Buyback scheme where loggers are given capital through selling their saws which they can exchange for business assistance including business management and household finance.
- Goats for widows aims to increase widow income by providing an alternative livelihood option in goat farming.

Health services

- The ASRI Health Clinic was established in 2007.
- A mobile clinic has served around 1,700 patients from various hamlets around GPNP.

Reforestation

- The purpose of the ASRI reforestation land on Laman Satong is to rehabilitate burnt land and to prevent fires at the Laman satong reforestation site.
- There is also an area of ASRI reforestation in Begasing, which aims to care for and monitor the development of the ecosystem and prevent fires at the reforestation site.

Deforestation monitoring

- Forest Friends was formed in 2010 to involve local community members in conservation programmes, such as monitoring reforestation activity, as well as destructive activities such as illegal logging. ASRI uses this information to set discounts at clinics as an incentive for people who support reforestation efforts. Currently, ASRI is partnered with 30 villages around GPNP with at least one Forest Friend representative in each

Community outreach programme

- Communities are given education materials describing ASRI activities and how they can benefit from health services and community conservation programmes.
- Health education sessions are held at the clinic.
- The Kids-Teens programme teaches younger generations about health and the environment.

The strategy

Increasing incentives for wildlife stewardship

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

- Non-wildlife-based) enterprise development/support

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

Since reforestation activities began in 2009, over 200 hectares have been reforested with over 200,000 trees planted. The programme has received widespread support from local community members and there have been no community conflicts over land tenure. Additionally, a survey in 2013 revealed that 80% of respondents agreed that the presence of the reforestation programme had reduced incidents of illegal logging in GPNP. The survey showed that involvement in reforestation activities was correlated with perceptions in the decline of illegal logging. Over 68% of respondents have also started to engage in self-initiated tree planting activities.

The survey also showed that many respondents expressed increases in personal confidence and professionalism due to skills gained in various community programmes. Overall, 1,200 loggers have changed their livelihoods with many reporting that they now view the forest differently as a result and an 89% decrease in the number of illegal loggers

The health clinic has been a particular success. By the end of 2019 ASRI Clinic had received nearly 95,000 visits from over 30,000 patients, with a 67% decrease in the number of infant mortalities. A mobile medicine programme also helps to reach the most remote villages.

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/alam-sehat-lestari>

Reducing the trade in live songbirds

Summary

Over one million live songbirds, including critically endangered species, are trapped every year in Indonesia. Using a bottom-up community-driven approach, Planet Indonesia has initiated workshops to raise awareness in Western Borneo and developed alternative livelihoods for low-income bird trapping communities. This has had positive results, there are now fewer traps and nets in the forest and local people have a greater understanding of the importance of and threats to songbirds.

Country	Indonesia
Location	Pontianak is the biggest city in Western Borneo and is home to over 100 small bird shops. The Mount Niut area is to the east of Pontianak and contains a nature reserve, which gives it a higher protection status than national parks in Indonesia. In theory, even entering the forest requires a permit, but local inhabitants, some of them ethnic Dayak who have lived off the forest for generations, have found it difficult to adjust to the rules.
Species affected	Black-winged Mynas, Pied Myna, White-rumped Shama

The poaching problem

Bird keeping in Indonesia is not only a popular past time and hobby, but in many western cities is a sign of wealth, sophistication, and stature. Birds are caught alive by several indiscriminate methods. It is common for birds to suffer and sometimes die during trapping, and other species such as pangolins can be caught accidentally too. Much of the trade in songbirds happens in the open and birds can be bought freely in shops and markets.

The approach

With over one million live songbirds traded each year in Indonesia, Planet Indonesia decided to host a workshop of trappers and traders to talk about solutions to reduce the threats to these species. In February 2017, 45 bird poachers, traders and hobbyists spent two days together and unanimously agreed that the loss and extinction of Indonesian birds would have a negative impact on everyone.

The workshops revealed that individuals were not aware that trapping birds was illegal, with participants frustrated that the government didn't set quotas on trade and, in particular, that low-income trappers had no opportunities to generate income from alternative means. The intention was that the 45 participants would act as the eyes and ears in their various communities and help Planet Indonesia set up additional community outreach events in the nine districts of West Borneo. Held back by a lack of knowledge and capital, Planet Indonesia now assists traders and bird shopkeepers in the area, hoping to help some of them transition into different lines of business, such as running a coffee shop or convenience store.

Planet Indonesia works in the Mount Niut area focusing on creating incentives for poachers and traders to stop hunting songbirds. The programme in Mount Niut helps farmers to become more productive and profitable, for example by linking them with buyers for their crops, with the aim of reducing incentives to hunt in the forest.

In addition, Planet Indonesia is involving local residents in forest patrols, meaning larger areas can be covered. A standardised monitoring and reporting tool has created more transparency and trust in the process. As an incentive to stop the poaching, community members participating in patrols are compensated. In addition, Planet Indonesia works with locals, often those who were once involved in the bird trade, to gather information and educate hobbyists and traders on the threats of continued poaching.

This approach is unique in Indonesia where conservation efforts have primarily been focussed on strengthening law enforcement.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Paid in money community scouts
- Non-monetary, in-kind incentives for community intelligence
- Raising community awareness about wildlife crime penalties and sanctions

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

- (Non-wildlife-based) enterprise development/support

What has worked and why?

The awareness raising workshops have gained momentum due to their success. As a result of the initial workshop, Planet Indonesia plans to hold similar awareness building workshops in another 9 districts, targeting a further 900 trappers. These events will be organised by traders, for traders and run by traders, although Planet Indonesia will act as facilitators, helping to empower participants to implement these community workshops.

Community patrols have also led to a reduction in the number of traps and nets in the forest.

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/reducing-trade-live-songbirds-indonesia>

Safeguarding Sumatran Tigers in Kerinci Seblat National Park

Summary

Of the estimated 400-500 Sumatran tigers remaining in the wild, approximately 150 are found in and around Kerinci Seblat National Park. Since 2000, Fauna & Flora International (FFI) has been working with park authorities and local communities to strengthen tiger protection through forest patrols, undercover investigations and law enforcement operations to combat the trafficking of tigers and their body parts. The team also conducts human-wildlife conflict mitigation, responds to wildlife emergencies and works to secure key tiger habitat in and around the park.

Country	Indonesia
Location	The 13,800 km ² Kerinci Seblat National Park spans the Indonesian provinces of West Sumatra, Jambi, Bengkulu and South Sumatra. Its forests and wildlife are managed by a single agency under the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.
Species affected	Sumatran tiger

The poaching problem

One of the main threats to Sumatran tigers is poaching. Hunter's trap or shoot them for their skin, bones and canines, which are in high demand as status symbols, primarily overseas, and for use in East Asian traditional medicine. Tigers are also threatened by conflicts with forest-edge communities. Snare traps are abundant in the park, set for tigers and their prey including sambar, wild boar and muntjac.

The approach

Consistent law enforcement

In 2000, to protect tigers and their prey, the park authority and FFI established two Tiger Protection and Conservation Units, hereafter referred to as 'patrol teams'. The mandate of the patrol teams is to secure the population of wild tigers inside the park and its adjacent forests through reducing the threats from poaching, domestic trade and human-wildlife conflict (HWC) with forest-edge communities.

By 2005, the number of patrol teams increased to six, each with its own distinct area of operation. Each patrol team is composed of three rangers drawn from forest-edge communities and is led by a national park ranger. This work is supported by a carefully cultivated network of local informants, who play a key role in guiding patrols to tackle active poaching and supporting undercover investigations to identify tiger poachers and traders. Teams then work with the relevant authorities to support law enforcement and prosecution of poachers and traders.

Human-tiger conflict mitigation

To address local concerns and prevent retaliatory killing of real or perceived 'problem tigers', swift responses from conservation teams are needed. The project has established rapid response units that react quickly to human-tiger conflict and have prevented many unnecessary killings and captures of wild tigers.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Performance-based payments/incentives for patrolling or guarding
- Monetary incentives for community intelligence
- Non-monetary, in-kind incentives for community intelligence
- Raising community awareness about wildlife crime penalties and sanctions

Decreasing the costs of living with wildlife

- Preventative measures to deter wildlife
- Reactive measures to deal with problem animals

What has worked and why?

As a result of this 'intelligence-led law enforcement' approach, Kerinci Seblat National Park was one of the few protected areas in Asia where, park-wide, a core tiger sub-population has stabilised (2005-present). Where there were relatively frequent ranger patrols fewer snares were found, and patrols responding to 'tip-offs' from local informants were significantly more likely to detect snares (by more than 40%) than routine patrols.

Between 2012 and 2015, after years of declining threat, tigers in Kerinci Seblat were the focus of a surge in illegal wildlife trade-driven poaching. FFI responded by strengthening information networks to support patrol deployment while working to identify the poachers and traders driving the threat and to support law enforcement. Since January 2016, 15 tiger poachers and traders have been arrested, prosecuted and jailed, and there have been dramatic falls in poaching threat across the landscape, wildlife trade networks disrupted, and the scene set for a recovery of the tiger population in the area.

The results not only demonstrate the effectiveness of the Kerinci Seblat law enforcement strategy in protecting wildlife but highlights the benefits from cultivating a network of reliable informants: the law enforcement strategy in deterred illegal hunting in the area, thereby creating the enabling conditions for a stable prey base.

Factors for success

- Long-term donor support that is flexible, adaptive and/or based on realistic time goals
- Supportive, multi-stakeholder partnerships with a shared vision

Challenges

Despite the positive outcomes, tigers and their prey continue to be poached in the Kerinci Seblat landscape. There is a need to conduct frequent analyses to enable ongoing adaptive management of the situation. For Kerinci Seblat, this should include increasing the number of patrol teams to cover a wider area and strengthening actions to identify and arrest traders who are often based in cities far from the protected area but, nevertheless, form the local source of demand.

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/safeguarding-sumatran-tigers-kerinci-seblat-national-park>

Tackling Illegal Logging in Ulu Masen, Aceh

Summary

Following the tsunami in 2004, Ulu Masen's forests in Aceh, Indonesia, came under extreme pressure to supply the large-scale reconstruction effort required in the province. In response, in 2008 FFI and local partners designed and implemented a community-based 'anti-illegal logging network' to tackle this issue. Various stakeholders were brought together to focus on strengthening the forest monitoring and protection systems, and institutions to enable sustainable forest management. The project led to nearly 200 reported incidents of forest crimes, seizures of timber, equipment and vehicles, as well as arrests and sentencing.

Country	Indonesia
Location	Within Indonesia, the 738,000 hectare Ulu Masen forest ecosystem in Aceh province is rich in biodiversity, supporting over 300 bird species as well as globally important populations of Sumatran tiger and elephant.
Species affected	Timber

The poaching problem

In Aceh, the socioeconomic and political conditions are highly conducive to illegal logging. The province has a low gross regional product, high poverty and unemployment, and was left under extreme pressure from timber demand following the reconstruction process of the December 2004 earthquake and tsunami.

Furthermore, the end of conflict in 2005 left thousands of former combatants unemployed and with few opportunities for sustainable employment and as a consequence many were drawn to illegal logging. Many communities also moved back to forest areas during this time, where they reclaimed or opened up new farmland, making it accessible and susceptible to illegal logging.

The approach

FFI and other international donors initiated the Aceh Forest and Environment Project (2006-2010), covering two forest ecosystems, the Leuser and Ulu Masen. This included the development and implementation of a strategy to tackle illegal logging across Ulu Masen, working in partnership with government law enforcement agencies, civil society organisations and forest-edge communities. The strategy was designed to explicitly address the challenges facing the forests using an anti-illegal logging network. Bringing various stakeholders together, the strategy focussed on strengthening forest monitoring and protection systems and institutions in order to enable sustainable forest management.

The strategy was made up of the following core activities:

- Supporting communities in monitoring and reporting forest crimes
- Building the capacity of local NGOs and law enforcement agencies
- Providing alternative and sustainable livelihoods for those complicit in forest offences
- Running forest management and livelihood training centres
- Improving systems of communication and collaboration between law enforcement agencies and community partners within the network

FFI sought to find ways to work with local communities to foster their support for the strategy. These included involving local NGOs in monitoring and reporting forest crimes, strengthening traditional mechanisms and institutions to take responsibility for sustainably managing the forest and offering alternative employment to those committing offences in the forest with the aim of increasing monitoring

and community outreach efforts. To build institutional and technical capacity, three local NGOs conducted forest crime investigations in order to identify the locations of illegal logging. To increase local awareness of the negative effects of illegal logging on human-wellbeing, a series of educational materials was developed and delivered through training programme and outreach work. To complement the work of the local NGOs monitoring and reporting activities, a community-based natural resource management programme was implemented by establishing 11 tree nurseries, providing benefits to nearly 14,000 families.

In February 2009, FFI began a 'Community Ranger Programme' to transform forest offenders, especially ex-combatants, illegal loggers and wildlife poachers, into highly-trained and respected community forest rangers capable of delivering essential environmental and forest management services to local communities around Ulu Masen. Aimed at fostering local community support for the overall strategy, the programme aimed to create a strong sense of local ownership over the ranger teams who were from the community and there to benefit them.

A principal threat to the livelihoods of communities is crop raiding caused by wild elephants, meaning community support was also dependent on efforts to mitigate problems with elephants. Conservation Response Units (CRUs) were therefore developed as rapid response units to incidents of both HWC as well as forest crimes.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Paid in money community scouts
- Paid in-kind community scouts
- Raising community awareness about wildlife crime penalties and sanctions
- Strengthening and supporting traditional norms and sanctions against IWT

Decreasing the costs of living with wildlife

- Reactive measures to deal with problem animals

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

The project contributed to the monitoring and reporting of illegal forest activities and resulted in criminal convictions and seizures of illegal timber and equipment. An effective working relationship was established between the law enforcement agencies and community stakeholders, with valuable insights gained into the patterns of illegal logging from intel-information gathered by the NGOs, which recorded 369 cases of forest offences from Ulu Masen. Based on this information, the community ranger teams continually adapted their monitoring locations and strategies in accordance with these changing patterns. This led to enhanced capacity of the rangers meaning they became more involved and influential in raising local awareness of the problems with illegal logging. Once they had conducted outreach activities, rangers started to receive direct community requests to monitor specific locations in the forest in order to pass this information on to law enforcement agencies.

Specific results include:

- 3,350 ha of degraded forest reforested as part of the CBNRM activities.
- Great sense of pride instilled in community rangers, who rejected their former activities with not a single ranger returning to his former ways.
- The training of law enforcement agencies in enhancing their technical capacity which led to successful seizures and intelligence operations just days after completion.
- The CRUs responded to 560 incidents of human-elephant conflict in 2009 and 2010, benefitting an estimated 2,500 households.

- District level meetings resulted in rapid reporting systems which built trust between community and government partners, forging strong and meaningful working relationships.

This initiative was successful because of three factors that provided a strong foundation upon which to overlay the strategies employed:

Political will

Government staff motivation remained high despite no financial or career incentives and partners demonstrated a commitment to conducting law enforcement operations, something that is unusual in Indonesia, where actions in tackling illegal logging are rare.

Local stakeholder support

The active participation of community rangers, local NGOs and the wider civil society in the project sent out a signal that many local communities do in fact oppose illegal logging, and this support was considered to have triggered the government law enforcement agencies to act.

Funding

The majority of the work was possible because FFI received a large grant, allowing them to allocate a substantial portion to required activities such as training as well as sub-grants to local NGOs. This brought together multiple partners within a single framework, without delays in waiting for annual government budgets to be disbursed or allocated within future budgets.

Factors for success

- Supportive, multi-stakeholder partnerships with a shared vision

Challenges

Although results were promising, they should be considered within a wider context as illegal logging persisted in each of the five focus districts of Ulu Masen. Furthermore, no effort was made to tackle the illegal conversion of forest to farmland nor the network of illegal traders and buyers. Most importantly, although access to funding was critical to short-term success, when the financial support from FFI was greatly reduced (after August 2009) there was a corresponding reduction in field activities, showing that the strategy was not yet sustainable.

Factors limiting success

- Lack of long-term donor support that is flexible, adaptive and/or based on realistic time goals

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/tackling-illegal-logging-ulu-masen-aceh>

Motivating local communities to protect wildlife via direct payments from ecotourism

Summary

Ecotourism as a strategy for achieving biodiversity conservation often results in limited conservation impact relative to its investment and revenue return, and projects are often criticised for not providing sufficient evidence on how the strategy has reduced threats or improved the status of the biodiversity it purports to protect. Preliminary results from this project clearly show that where local communities directly benefit from ecotourism (as opposed to indirectly benefiting) illegal hunting of wildlife is reduced compared to areas without ecotourism enterprises.

Country	Lao PDR
Location	The 4,229 km ² Nam Et-Phou Louey National Protected Area is located in the northern highlands of Laos.
Species affected	Tiger, bears, primates and pangolins

The poaching problem

Illegal hunting and trade was the principle threat contributing to wildlife decline in the Nam Et-Phou Louey National Protected Area (NEPL) (NPA). This threat was driven by international demand for tiger bones, bears, pangolins, and primates. Evidence gathered from camera trap surveys, focus group discussions and law enforcement patrols indicated that the hunters were primarily from villages bordering the NPA with access to illegal weapons, including guns, explosives, and traps.

Houaphan Province, where the ecotourism site was located, was one of the poorest provinces in the country, with 41% of its population in poverty. The average annual household income for villages around the NEPL NPA was US\$436-618 and the total expenditure per capita by the government and international development projects on public services in the province was US\$38.

The approach

The effectiveness of ecotourism as a strategy for achieving biodiversity conservation using an indirect payments approach, which is typical of alternative livelihood projects, has been identified as largely unsuccessful in demonstrating measurable conservation outcomes.

In Laos, where illegal hunting and trade is driving wildlife decline, an indirect payments approach has been used by many ecotourism projects hoping to reduce this threat by alleviating poverty in villages surrounding NPAs.

This initiative tested an ecotourism strategy designed to directly link the number and type of wildlife sighted by tourists with the amount of financial benefits received by beneficiaries (multiple villages and all families that have access to the ecotourism area where hunting is illegal) involved in an ecotourism operation with the ultimate goal of increasing wildlife abundance in the ecotourism area.

A variety of wildlife was targeted by using a tiered pricing system, with the purpose of protecting carnivores, ungulates, and primates that are declining due to illegal hunting and trade. Benefits were designed to increase incrementally according to the number of animals sighted by visitors in order to provide a greater return for increases in wildlife abundance.

The ecotourism site was located on the Nam Nern River in the NEPL NPA, which was identified as a feasible location for developing wildlife-based tourism because it provided a unique opportunity to see wildlife, which was relatively uncommon elsewhere in Laos.

The ecotourism model was developed following the completion of a business plan. A species-specific contract was developed with the local government and villages in the ecotourism area, which stated how benefits from ecotourism would be distributed and the conditions under which ecotourism would be managed. Benefits included a shared fund that established an explicit positive relationship between the fund and numbers of wildlife seen by tourists and a negative relationship between the fund and the number of infractions of NPA regulations committed by villagers. A mechanism was also developed that discouraged villagers working in tourism to illegally hunt or trade wildlife.

In addition to including these positive incentives for conservation in the ecotourism strategy design, disincentives for breaking NPA regulations were also created by the benefit distribution contract. For example, if anyone from an ecotourism village was caught by NPA law enforcement teams violating regulations, the village development fund of the respective villages of these individuals would be reduced for the year.

The strategy

Increasing incentives for wildlife stewardship

- Tourism

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

After four years (2010-2013), the initial results of this direct payments approach suggested that the ecotourism strategy was achieving the objectives of increasing village and NPA income from ecotourism and seemed to be contributing to a reduction in illegal hunting and an increase in wildlife sightings in the ecotourism area.

The results indicated a negative correlation between ecotourism income and hunting infractions and threats to wildlife slowed-down in the ecotourism sector of the protected area relative to non-tourism sectors (although trends in wildlife sightings continued to fluctuate).

The results illustrate how an ecotourism strategy using direct payments for wildlife sightings, along with a simple wildlife monitoring system can augment an enforcement strategy to reduce the threat of illegal hunting and trade. However, given the relatively short duration of the study and small sample sizes, these results should be viewed with some caution.

Factors for success

- Coordinated and coherent sectoral policies/legislation
- Transparent and accountable distribution of benefits to local communities
- Clear and tangible benefits to local communities from wildlife

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/motivating-local-communities-protect-wildlife-direct-payments-ecotourism>

Community-Based Ecotourism as a tool to reduce poaching in Malaysia

Summary

When the Tidong community was given the opportunity to engage in ecotourism - which generated alternative incomes and livelihoods - the incidence of illegal hunting decreased. However, when the funding bodies and associated professional managerial staff departed and the ecotourism venture was handed over to the community, and without adequate training to run the business or understanding of the global tourism market, the business crashed. The subsequent loss of income and employment saw a return of poaching by members of the community.

Country	Tanzania
Location	The Tidong Wildlife Reserve (TWR) was established as a wildlife reserve in 1984 and covers an area of over 120,521 ha. The Tidong community - comprised of 3 villages and home to approximately 518 people - is situated close to the boundaries of the TWR.
Species affected	Banteng, Bornean Bearded Pig, Borneo Pygmy Elephant, Sun Bear, Pangolins

The poaching problem

While some families were almost completely reliant on natural resources for survival, for most the forest provides a supplementary food source and for a small number of respondents, it was seen as a hobby that provided extra money. Where hunting was for cash it often occurred in response to orders from outsiders for specific products and Chinese medicines.

The approach

An aim of the project was to fund a nature-tourism project to provide employment and encourage community members to give up traditional activities such as poaching and hunting. As one of its objectives the programme funded the establishment of a home-stay style tourism venture in Kampong Dagat and employed external professional staff from Sabah Wildlife Department for a 2 five-year period (2007-2012) to undertake training of community members in management and marketing.

At the conclusion of the project in 2012 responsibility for managing the project was handed over to the community and funding for marketing previously provided was withdrawn.

The strategy

Increasing incentives for wildlife stewardship

- Tourism

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

During the five years that the project was externally funded the community experienced a significant improvement in their standard of living. During each year of the project, more than 2,000 Japanese tourists visited the community generating sufficient income for the families involved to enable them to meet their monthly cost of food, and when operating at capacity the project employed a significant

number of community members as drivers, cooks, gardeners, housekeepers, and in a few instances in managerial roles such as temporary wildlife rangers managing the forest around the villages.

Correspondingly, there was a decline in poaching. The community generally understood animals were a major tourism drawcard and needed to be protected to continue attracting tourists.

Factors for success

- Clear and tangible benefits to local communities from wildlife

Challenges

In 2007, the withdrawal of funding for professional managers, in particular, created a major crisis for the project in part because of inadequate training of the community to run a project of this nature and their lack of knowledge of the global tourism market where their product was sold. As a consequence, the community was unable to continue funding promotional activities leading to a steep decline in visitors to an average of 100-200 per year by 2010.

Income to the community and the individuals involved rapidly declined, most tourism-related jobs were lost, and the number of homestays supporting the enterprise fell by three quarters. As income from the tourism venture declined many community members felt pressured to resume hunting. While aware of the damage caused by poaching and expressing regret that this situation existed, villagers reported they felt they had little alternative but to resume poaching.

While conscious of the adverse impacts of poaching respondents expressed a fear that if they failed to take advantage of the resources in the present they will miss out because others will take all the available animals - aggravated by illegal hunting by people outside of the community who are seen as not caring about their impact as they will move on when the resource is finished.

In summary:

- Training to enable the community to develop appropriate managerial capacity was inadequate.
- The single market approach, in this case, based on Japan, lacked wisdom given the propensity for markets to make rapid changes in the style of product desired.
- The exit strategy was time and budget based. A more appropriate strategy would be to base the exit strategy on the demonstrated capacity of the community to continue the project on a long-term commercial basis.
- It is difficult to overturn centuries of tradition in a relatively short period of time. In the case of the Tidong community, the use of certain types of meat at community special events is based on hunter-gatherers traditions that in a sense define the community and the way in which it sees the world. Redefining traditions is a slow process that in some cases even legislative prohibitions are unable to overturn.
- Unless a community-based ecotourism project is able to demonstrate that the economic benefit of tourism provides a superior and sustainable standard of living over the long term it is difficult to overcome resistance to change both at the individual and community levels.

Factors limiting success

- Lack of long-term donor support that is flexible, adaptive and/or based on realistic time goals
- Lack of supportive, multi-stakeholder partnerships with a shared vision

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/community-based-ecotourism-tool-reduce-poaching-malaysia>

HUTAN - Kinabatangan Orang-utan Conservation Programme

Summary

In 1998, HUTAN, a French NGO, partnered with the Sabah Wildlife Department in Malaysian Borneo to establish the Kinabatangan Orang-utan Conservation Programme. Initially, the programme focussed on research specific to the orang-utan but has now grown to include working with communities to address human-wildlife conflict and developing alternative livelihoods. HUTAN aims to prevent the extinction of the orang-utan and solve human-wildlife conflict through the active engagement of all stakeholders, and by creating innovative mechanisms that address local development and conservation.

Country	Malaysia
Location	The Kinabatangan floodplain of Malaysian Borneo encompasses about 60,000 ha of forests. Roughly two-thirds of this is protected, and 400,000 ha of land comprises oil palm plantations and other human landscapes.
Species affected	Asian Elephant, Bornean Orangutan, Edible Nest Swiftlet, Green Sea Turtle, Helmeted Hornbill, Sunda Pangolin

The poaching problem

Traditionally, local communities have not participated in forest hunting but there are now increasing threats from outsiders who enter lower Kinabatangan in search of game or trade species. Human-elephant conflict is also on the rise, leading to increased poaching from retaliatory killings.

Generally, communities are not involved in, nor support, IWT. For the small minority of community members who do engage in poaching, this is usually in retaliation to conflicts or when species are seen as pests. The exception to this is illegal harvesting of edible nest swiftlets, which has caused a serious decline in the species' population and in some areas, local extinctions.

The approach

HUTAN has designed and implemented a number of community-based initiatives:

Wildlife Wardens

In response to threats to wildlife and protected areas, the Sabah State Government made a provision to appoint Honorary Wildlife Wardens through the Wildlife Conservation Enactment of 1997.

Reforestation Project

Since 2008, HUTAN has been working to rehabilitate critical orang-utan habitat, with the aim of recreating forest corridors for wildlife. Two of the biggest threats to the lower Kinabatangan region is forest degradation and fragmentation, and due to past logging activities fast-growing tree species need to be planted in order to promote natural forest regeneration.

Initially, four women from local villages were hired and trained and three plots were selected for seed planting. The survival and growth rates of the planted seedlings were monitored monthly and protected by an electric fence to prevent crop-raiding by elephants.

Swiftlets

Since 2009, HUTAN and the Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD) have worked together to develop a recovery programme for the edible nest swiftlet population in the area. The project aims to combine conservation with economic benefits to the Sukau community. Nests are an important traditional Chinese medicine and have been harvested and traded since the 14th century. Three cave systems,

once owned and exploited by local families, are now the property of the government and are managed by SWD.

Fishermen for conservation

Traditionally, bubu (prawn/fish traps) were made from tree bark, and fishermen would venture illegally into protected areas and unintentionally damage the trees by removing the bark. HUTAN developed a suitable alternative by working with experienced fishermen from the village to experiment with various types of environmentally friendlier materials. The best alternative to tree bark is plastic wire mesh, as it is quick and easy to make. The new bubu has spread to surrounding villages and HUTAN provides a small loan to cover the cost of equipment as well as free training.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Paid in money community scouts
- Paid in-kind community scouts
- Raising community awareness about wildlife crime penalties and sanctions
- Strengthening and supporting traditional norms and sanctions against IWT

Increasing incentives for wildlife stewardship

- Tourism
- Legal trade

Decreasing the costs of living with wildlife

- Preventive measures to deter wildlife
- Physical separation of people/livestock and wildlife

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

- (Non-wildlife-based) enterprise development/support

Build and/or support sense of community ownership or stewardship

Improving education and awareness

What has worked and why?

Specific results include:

- Monthly nest counts of swiftlets showed a maximum of 1,392 nests in 2016, a 35% increase in the number of swiftlet breeding pairs since 2015 and a 519% increase since the first nest count in 2011
- Illegal tree felling and bark harvesting has reduced within the region as a direct result of the fishermen for conservation initiative, with more than 10,000 trees saved
- Elephant Conservation Units so far succeeded in greatly reducing the extent of damages caused by elephants to the villagers' crops

Compared to baseline data, there has been a decrease of HWC over the years since project activities started. In particular:

- Formation and training of teams of villagers who would patrol and mitigate conflicts was successful in decreasing the conflicts by more than half. More importantly, villagers started to understand why there were conflicts: i.e., wildlife is losing its habitat and hence need to go into people's crops to survive.
- Tourism activities developed in the area started to benefit increasingly local communities. Villagers started to understand the financial value of wildlife presence in their vicinity. In this case, it is easier for villagers to accept a certain level of conflicts when animals offer alternative sources of incomes
- Awareness activities also raise the level of acceptance for peaceful co-existence.

The heart of long-term success lies with local communities: villagers need to become actively involved as guardians of their natural resources, and not only seen as passive collaborators. Such an approach is possible with any community but requires time and patience (hence a long-term commitment over more than 10-15 years).

Before anything else, there is a need to spend time with communities we want to work with; to try to understand their aspirations and issues, and to build trust with them. The project team cannot tell people what they could or should do; there is a need to listen to them, and together to design and implement solutions for their problems. People also need to understand that only they can find solutions that are sustainable in the long-term. They cannot rely on government agencies, industry players, or NGOs to solve their HWC issues. They need to understand the reasons for conflicts and design and implement their workable solutions.

Factors for success

- Long-term donor support that is flexible, adaptive and/or based on realistic time goals
- Sufficient time investment in building relationships and trust between the initiative and local communities
- Clear and tangible benefits to local communities from wildlife

Challenges

There is relatively poor communication and collaboration between the different sectors in charge of policies development or implementation. Additionally, there is poor law enforcement, for example, poachers have only just started to be prosecuted in Sabah, and some officials may even be involved in international trade.

Factors limiting success

- Ineffective and unaccountable community-based natural resources management institutions
- Ineffective and/or untrustworthy community leaders
- Lack of transparent and accountable distribution of benefits to local communities

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/hutan-kinabatangan-orang-utan-conservation-programme>

The Tuke Rainforest Conservancy

Summary

WildArk is working to protect the Tuke Rainforest Conservancy (TCR) in Papua New Guinea from illegal logging by supporting the Tuke Community to sustainably maintain their traditional lifestyle. In partnership with the Baia Sportsfishing Lodge and the CONNOISSEUR Rainforest Project, WildArk is providing education, medical, agricultural and other support so that the Tuke Community no longer need to sell their trees to illegal loggers.

Country	Papua New Guinea
Location	The TCR is located in the Nakanai Mountains in Papua New Guinea. The rainforest is home to many endemic species of plants and animals as well as the Tuke Community, who practice a traditional, hunter-gatherer way of life.
Species affected	Timber

The poaching problem

The lowland forests of the Nakanai Mountains are being illegally logged and cleared for oil palm plantations, which threatens biodiversity and the traditional lifestyle of the Tuke Community. Local people are often exploited by illegal loggers who offer them money in return for tropical hardwood.

The approach

Since 2018, WildArk has been working in partnership with Baia Sportsfishing Lodge to support the Tuke Community and protect the rainforest. Their activities include:

- Research to map biodiversity of the TRC
- Education and health services for the Tuke Community
- Supporting potential ecotourism activities
- Working with the Tuke Community to identify and train select members on how to monitor and report illegal logging
- Supporting more sustainable practices in agriculture and developing renewable energy sources

In addition, WildArk is partnering with the CONNOISSEUR Rainforest Project to support education services, to engage the Tuke Community and to ensure that they benefit from protecting the TCR. Specific activities include sponsoring secondary school children, funding school equipment and building education facilities.

The strategy

Strengthening disincentives for illegal behaviour

- Non-monetary, in-kind incentives for community intelligence

Increasing incentives for wildlife stewardship

- Tourism
- Subsistence resource access/use

Increasing livelihoods that are not related to wildlife

- Provision of community-level benefits

Improving education and awareness

Find out more:

<https://www.peoplenotpoaching.org/tuke-rainforest-conservancy>

The scale of illegal wildlife trade (IWT) internationally is a conservation crisis and tackling it is seen as a race against time. As a quarter of the world's land is owned or managed by communities, they must be central to conservation efforts – and community engagement is already internationally recognised as important to the global effort to tackle IWT. But because community engagement strategies are complex and take time to implement, not enough initiatives are being supported.

This compilation of case studies seeks to address this problem by showcasing a wide range of successful initiatives from South-East Asia that have engaged communities in tackling IWT in different ways. However, these need to be scaled up and scaled out, learning from experience and adapting approaches to fit specific contexts and to meet specific challenges.



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Project Materials

**Biodiversity, Natural Resource
Management**

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