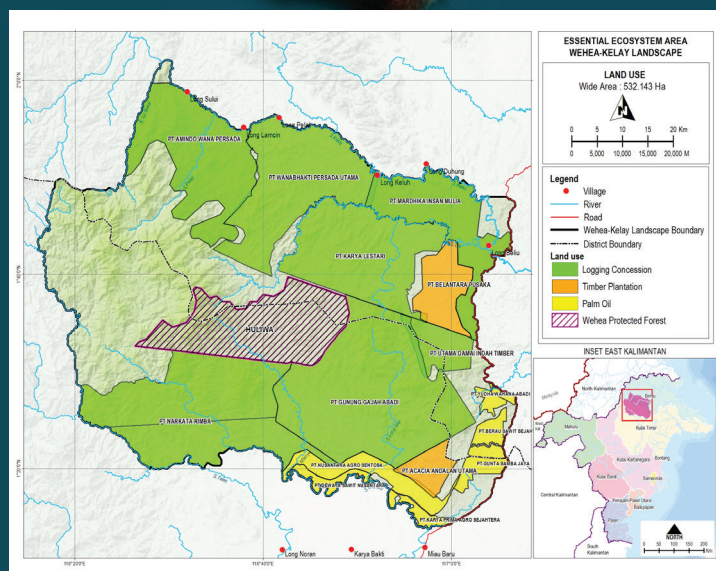




MANAGEMENT OF THE ORANGUTAN CORRIDOR ESSENTIAL ECOSYSTEM AREA AT WEHEA-KELAY LANDSCAPE

EAST KUTAI AND BERAU REGENCIES, EAST KALIMANTAN PROVINCE, INDONESIA

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Essential Ecosystem Area of Wehea-Kelay Landscape

Background

The total population of the Bornean orangutan sub-species *Pongo pygmaeus morio* in Indonesia's East Kalimantan Province is estimated at only 4,800 individuals remaining. Approximately 25 percent of these animals live in conservation areas and protected forests, while the majority live in production forests and sometimes travel outside forested areas, such as onto palm oil plantations.

In order to reduce the potential for conflict between human beings and orangutans, as well as other wildlife that are found outside conservation areas, Indonesia's national Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KHLK) has instituted several policies and programs. One of these policies directs the management of ecologically important ecosystems outside of conservation areas, known as "Essential Ecosystem Areas" (KEE or Kawasan Ekosistem Esensial).

These KEE have high potential to help sustain biodiversity by providing: a link or wildlife corridor between two or more conservation areas or a buffer to a conservation area; habitat for significant, rare, endemic and/or endangered species; social and economic services for humans; and/or cultural values related to biodiversity.

East Kalimantan Province, in cooperation with KLHK, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Wehea Customary Institution, and the private sector agreed to manage the 532,143-hectare Wehea-Kelay Landscape in East Kutai and Berau regencies. This landscape meets the criteria of a KEE as an important orangutan corridor as well as due to its high biodiversity, carbon stocks and the economic, social and cultural services it provides for the local community.

Objective of Management

1. Carry out best practices for sustainable natural resource management;
2. Engage in collaborative management at the landscape scale, particularly of orangutan conservation activities;
3. Protect orangutan habitat at the landscape scale;
4. Safeguard the buffering function of the forest areas outside the conservation area (Wehea Protection Forest) in the larger Wehea-Kelay Landscape; and
5. Support national efforts to increase orangutan populations.

Wehea-Kelay Landscape Description

The Kelay River watershed, where the Wehea-Kelay Landscape is located, supports 2,500 orangutans, spread out in various types of habitat, such as highland forest, hills and lowland forest, sometimes also accessing palm oil plantations. As such, the Wehea-Kelay Landscape is the largest habitat for wild orangutan populations in East Kalimantan.



sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*)

The forests in the Wehea-Kelay Landscape have very high floral species diversity. Tree species are dominated by the *Dipterocarpaceae* and *Euphorbiaeae* families, and fruit tree species are especially diverse, including durian (*Durio spp.*), rambutan (*Nephelium spp.*), sukun (*Artocarpus spp.*), *Baccaurea spp.* and mango (*Mangifera spp.*), which are very important for local people and for wildlife, such as orangutans, gibbons, and langurs.

This landscape also has a high diversity of animal species. Surveys of several “high-conservation-value areas” within the management areas of PT. Narkata Rimba, PT. Gunung Gajah, PT. Karya Lestari, and Wehea Protection Forest, identified mammals including the Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus morio*), Müller’s Bornean gibbon (*Hylobates muelleri*), maroon langur (*Presbytis rubicunda*), white-fronted langur (*Presbytis frontata*), sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*), Sunda clouded leopard (*Neofelis diardi*) and several others. Bird species included the white-crowned shama (*Copsychus stricklandii*), black-sided flowerpecker (*Dicaeum monticolum*), dusky munia (*Lonchura fuscans*) and various hornbill species.

Wehea-Kelay KEE Management Structure

The KEE orangutan corridor at Wehea-Kelay Landscape is still dominated by forest. The KEE extent of 532,143 hectares consists of 463,788 hectares (87 percent) forest cover. The KEE includes areas managed by the local community, natural forest and timber plantations license holders (concessions to manage the area from the national government) and palm oil plantation license holders.

On April 17, 2015, the following parties signed a cooperative agreement to manage the KEE: the Natural Resources Conservation Office of East Kalimantan Province, Wehea Protection Forest Management Agency of East Kutai Regency, Customary Institution of Wehea, TNC, natural forest license holders (PT. Gunung Gajah Abadi, PT. Narkata Rimba, PT. Karya Lestari and PT. Wanabhakti Persada Utama), timber plantation license holders (PT. Acacia Andalan Utama), and palm oil plantation license holder PT. Nusantara Agro Sentosa.

The KEE orangutan corridor management plan at the Wehea-Kelay Landscape covers the entire area of 532,143 hectares. KEE orangutan corridor management in the Wehea-Kelay Landscape is currently supported by a management forum and a working group, which were established in April 2016 by decree of the Governor of East Kalimantan and the Director General of Natural Resources Conservation, respectively. The main priority of the working group is to draft the Wehea-Kelay KEE management action plan and carry out coordination and communication, not only with parties that have signed the cooperative agreement but with other parties acting in the landscape that have not yet joined the agreement.



KEE Management Agreement



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