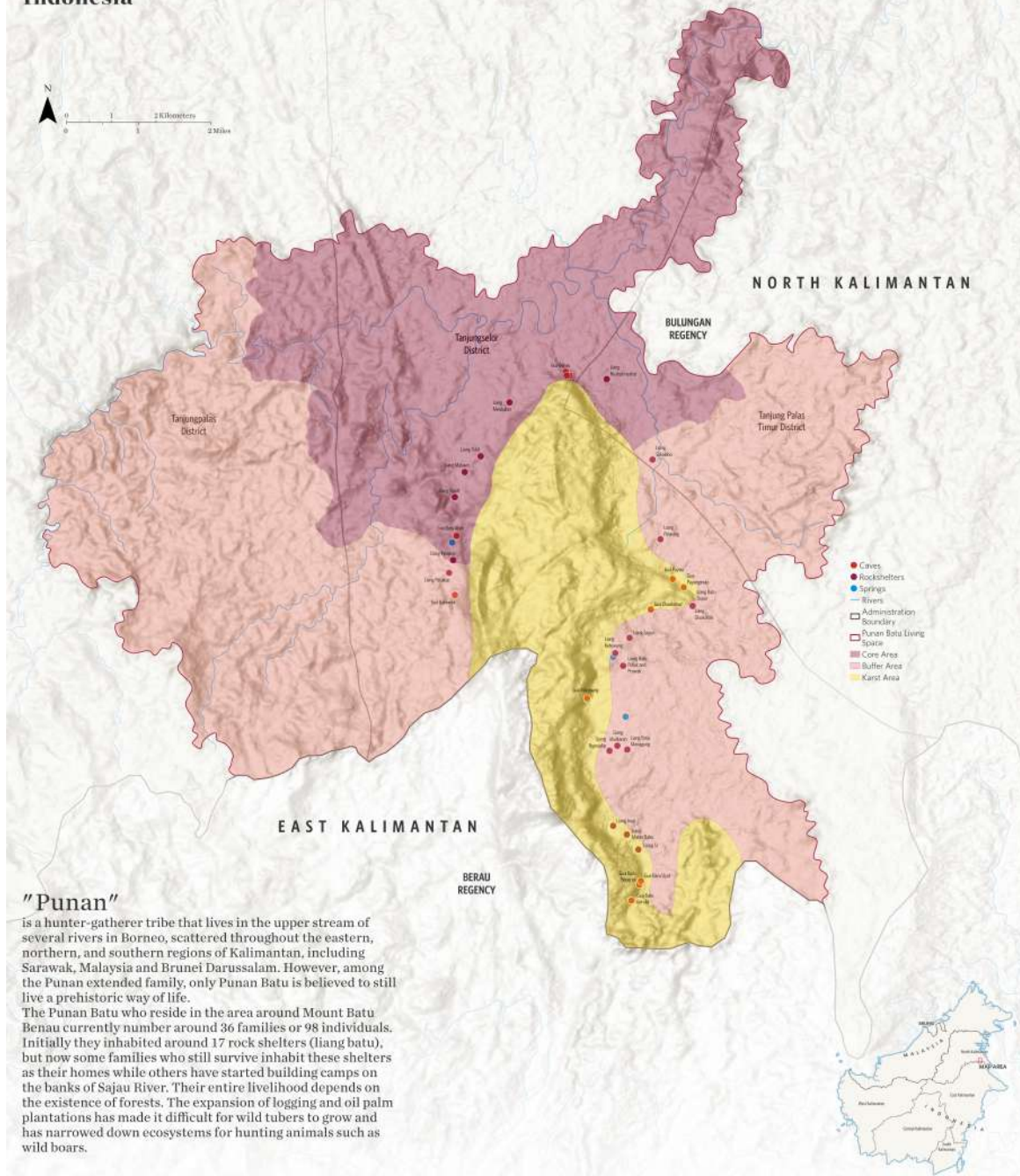


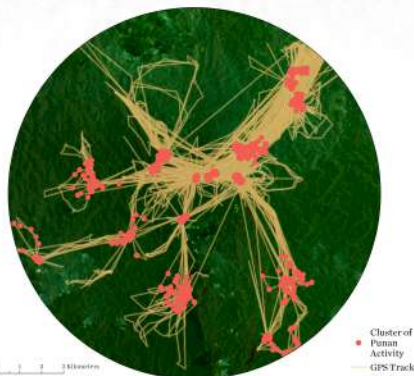
# Living Space for the Punan Batu Community, The Last Hunter-Gatherers Group in Kalimantan, Indonesia



## "Punan"

is a hunter-gatherer tribe that lives in the upper stream of several rivers in Borneo, scattered throughout the eastern, northern, and southern regions of Kalimantan, including Sarawak, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. However, among the Punan extended family, only Punan Batu is believed to still live a prehistoric way of life.

The Punan Batu who reside in the area around Mount Batu Benau currently number around 36 families or 98 individuals. Initially they inhabited around 17 rock shelters (liang batu), but now some families who still survive inhabit these shelters as their homes while others have started building camps on the banks of Saja River. Their entire livelihood depends on the existence of forests. The expansion of logging and oil palm plantations has made it difficult for wild tubers to grow and has narrowed down ecosystems for hunting animals such as wild boars.



According to Lansing et al (2022), data from GPS tracks conducted by 27 adult Punan individuals over three four-week periods indicate that they typically move their camps with an average distance of 4.56 km every 8-9 days. Some long straight lines on the map are due to travel by canoe. Important sites such as caves and rock shelters are located in the southern part of the area.

Source: Lansing, J. S., Juanda, G. R., Iwanan, R. R., Nongqari, P. R., Cui, M. P., Kibu, R. L., 2022. *The World's Last Hunter-Gatherers in Borneo*. *Department of Geology, University of Indonesia*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781017044222>

YKAN, affiliated with The Nature Conservancy, uses GIS to create maps of suitable areas that can support the future livelihoods of the Punan Batu community. This mapping process takes into account various factors, including the community's mobility during gathering and hunting activities, the distribution of high-integrity forests, the location of caves and rock shelters, water sources, and topographic aspect such as ridges. Based on these considerations, YKAN delineated an area of 18,000 hectares with the input of relevant stakeholders. This map has been included in the regent's decision to recognize the Punan Batu as indigenous community and will serve as a basis for proposing nationally recognized customary forest areas. The map of indigenous communities' living areas also helps concession managers within it to understand and respect traditional boundaries, while considering the impact of their activities on environmental sustainability and diversity.



The Punan Batu group survives by moving from one site to another, using either caves (left) or camps (right) as their shelters.

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