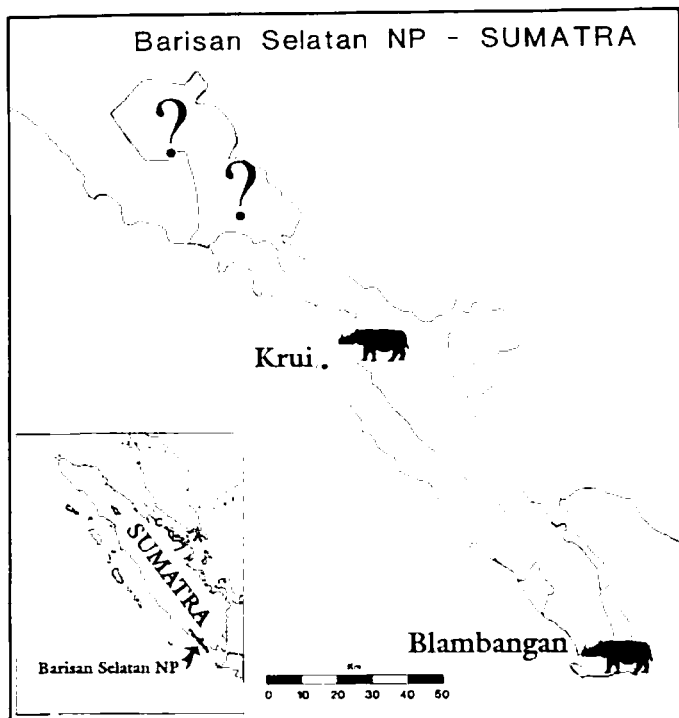


SUMATRAN RHINO IN BUKIT BARISAN



Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park, located on the southern tip of Sumatra, is the third largest protected area in Sumatra (235,000 ha) and is believed to contain one of the largest remaining populations of Sumatran rhino on the island. Although rhino surveys were conducted by Park staff in 1987 and 1990, these surveys were limited to the southern portion of the reserve near the Blambangan and Seman Rivers.

Haru, we found no sign of rhino. Additional surveys on the northern boundary of Lampung Province, near the village of Rata Agung produced no sightings. Rattan and garahu collectors active in the area claim that no rhinos have been sighted for over 10 years. In all areas surveyed, representative Sumatran mammals were sighted or signs were detected (e.g. elephant, sun bear, sambar deer, muntjac, mouse deer, pig, otter). Prints of tapir were sighted only in those areas where rhino were also detected.

Our sightings seem to support the general impression that the southern region of Bukit Barisan Selatan N.P. provides better habitat relative to the north for Sumatran rhinos. This may be due to the swampy conditions and more open canopy of the southern forests, or better protection in the south. We believe the proposed hunting reserve in the area of highest rhino density is cause for concern. Ground surveys in Bengkulu Province are still needed.

Dr. Margaret Kinnaird & Dr. Timothy O'Brien
Associate Conservation Scientists, Wildlife Conservation Society

RHINO POACHED IN UJUNG KULON

