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Report on a survey trip to Riau areas and the Mt Leuser Reserve to check the situation of the Sumatran rhino and the Orang Utan
(21 August to 13 September 1969)
By Prof.Dr. Rudolf Schenkel and Dr. Lotte Schenkel
on a mission for the World Wildlife Fund.

1. Introductory remarks.

We were asked by Dr. F.Vollmar, Secretary General of the WWF, to carry out a preliminary check-up on the present situation of the Sumatran Rhino and the Orang Utan in Sumatra, if time permitted within our mission to Ujung Kukon, West Java. We were also asked by Prof.Dr.B. Grzimek of Frankfurt whether we could contribute in any way to clarify the situation of the Orang Utan and make suggestions as to its effective protection. Prof. Emigy, Chairman of the Patronage Committee for Idjung Kulon, agreed that in order to obtain first-hand information we should carry out a survey trip to some key areas in Sumatra.

2.

We asked for information at the Offices of the Nature Conservation Service, Bogor and at the Limbaga Biologi Nasional, Bogor. **Mr. Buhadi, who had taken part in an expedition organised in 1959-61 by Mr. R. Ryhiner to capture Sumatran rhinos for the zoos of Kebun Raya Bogor, xxx and Copenhagen, told us that at that time there was a fairly large population of rhinos S and SE of Pakan Baru near the Sungei Sail (Province Riau).** We are grateful for his valuable information. With regard to the Orang Utan, we learned that the Mt Leuser Reserve in Atjeh Tenggara was their stronghold. In 1963 S.Milton estimated the remaining Orang Utan population of the Reserve to be 800 [?] individuals and credited the adjacent areas to the west and east with 700 individuals. He pointed out that if pressure by illegal hunting and capturing were to continue, the small population would be destroyed within 10 years. **The Milton report, also people from the Nature Conservation Service, suggested that a small population of Sumatran Rhinos might still live in the Mt. Leuser area.**

[2]

We decided to visit the areas of Pekan baru (Riau) and the Mt. Leuser Reserve (Atjeh Tenggara).

Dr. Hasan basjarudin, Director of Forest Development, kindly asked the officers of the Nature Conservation and Forestry Department in Riau and Madan to assist us. This proved to be of great help and we would like to express our gratitude to Mr. Hasan Basjarudin, as well as to Mr xxx nd xxx in Pakan Baru ...

3. The trip time-table

21.8.1969	Flight Djakarta to Pakan Baru
22.8.1969	Excursion to the Sail River Area
23.8.1969	Discussions in Pekan Baru and preparation for trip

24.8.1969 Trip to Rantau Barangin - Ujung Batu on the S. xxx
to Excursions into the Bukit Longkah area
28.8.1969 Back to Pekan baru
29.8.1969 Trip by bus pekan Baru - Bukittinggi - Sibolga - Danau Yaha
30.8.1969 - Pematang Siantar
2.9.1969 Trip together with Mr. Depari from Siantar to Kabatjana -
to Blangkerdjeren - Kotatjane - Brustagi, with S excursions
11.9.1969 on foot into the forest east and west of the Alas River
12.9.1969 Visit to Sibolangit Nature Reserve on the way to Medan
13.9.1969 Flight Medan to Djakarta.

4. Observations

a. PROVINCE RIAU

The rhino population S and SE of Pakan baru in the Sail River area has completely disappeared. Large areas which in 1960 were still covered by forest have been transformed into ladangs. Rice, cassava, coconut, bananas, papaya and nangka are cultivated. small patches of rubber trees mixed with some trees from the original forest are frequent. Where the land is not cultivated it is covered by grass and shrub.

b. MT LEUSER RESERVE

On our trips into the forest we were guided by Pa Amanaar who had also accompanied S.Milton in 1963. Amanaar, himself a xxx hunter of Sambar, knows the forest very well. He took us to different places where rhinos had visited days/years [?] ago and also to special places where orang utan were said to occur.

Rhino Area. In the whole area we found no recent tracks of rhino. In one place, near the Harpunga River, some saplings were cut in a way which may have been caused by rhino when browsing, and [??] may have been very old rhino footprints. Some cuttings by men followed the route of these footprints and [?] suspected that the rhino had been tracked by poachers.

On a trip into the Mamas Valley, we learned from two people [??] that three rhinos had been poached by men from the kampong Tandjung (10 km north of Katatjane) in 1968. The animals were said to have been caught by means of pit-traps combined with [??] devices by which the animal releases the fall of a [?] with a sharp bamboo point inserted which was poisoned. The rhino were said to have been caught 20 to 30 kms from the [?] river at the upper reaches of the Mamas River.

People were very well informed on the prices paid for the different parts of the rhino. Finally, three people from the local authorities in Kotatjane and Blangkardjaran, two of them hunters, told us that they had [?] rhino or fresh tracks towards the end of 1968 or early 1969.

[rest on other wildlife]

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