

INDONESIA - GUNUNG LEUSER

Major difficulties arose over the planning and establishment of the visitor centres. Nevertheless plans for the visitor centres at Cibodas are well advanced, through the voluntary work of some architects.

Regina Frey

Project 1514 Gunung Leuser Reserves -
Management

WWF GRANT 1978 - \$57,984

For previous report see Yearbook 1977-78 p.91.

Gunung Leuser and the adjoining reserves of Langkat, Sikundur, Kluët, Serbölangit and Kapi (together almost 1,000,000 ha.) are the most important conservation areas in Sumatra. The reserves include a whole range of vegetation types from the seashore to the peaks of some of Sumatra's highest mountains. They harbour as many as 30-50 Sumatran rhinos, probably the last viable population, and a fair number of other endangered animals like the Orang-utan, Elephant, Asiatic wild dog, Sumatran tiger, Clouded leopard and Serow.

Most of the area is still untouched by human activities. Many of the lowland habitats, which have by far the richest wildlife, are threatened by encroachment of settlements, poaching, timber exploitation, fishing with dynamite and pesticides.

WWF employs expatriate experts to draft the management plan and an Indonesian Treasurer whose main task is the coordination of all activities of WWF and other institutions in and around Leuser. WWF supplied two vehicles for the project and has supplied funds for one motorcycle to supervise the Kapi area.

Nico van Strien has recently completed a draft Management Plan for the Gunung Leuser complex of reserves, with sponsorship by WWF. The major recommendations of the draft plan include: to declare the entire complex of seven reserves a single Gunung Leuser National Park under centralized management; to establish four regional offices, along with 24 guardposts and 19 field-posts; to halt all logging operations within the boundaries of the new Park; to manage wildlife and wildlife habitat primarily through protection from disturbance; and to develop tourism on

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a concession basis, with PPA ensuring that only those forms of tourism that do not damage the natural ecosystems will be allowed. Under WWF sponsorship Prof. Dr. Moh. Koesnoe of the Airlangga University, Surabaya, has drawn up a report on the social and juridical problems in the Gunung Leuser Reserve.

Three expeditions on Rhino have been successfully carried out by Nico van Strien. The number of Rhinos is multiplying and tracks of poachers have not been found any more.

Dr. C. Aveling has also made a short expedition to the area of the Wampu river; this has been suggested by Dr. H.D. Rijkse as a place where no wild orangs occur which could possibly be used for release of rehabilitants.

Towards the end of 1979 the Rehabilitation Centre at Ketambe will be closed down to enable it to function as a purely scientific research station, zoological as well as botanical, in the near future. The remaining rehabilitants will be moved to Bohorok.

Although the first phase of this project, that of investigating the life, behaviour and population of the Orang-utan and the Sumatran rhino, is under way or nearly finished, the main aim of conservation of the tropical rain forests has hardly started. Perpetuation and regular patrolling of the boundaries and prevention of legal and illegal cutting of trees within the reserves must be considered as of utmost priority if this project is to be a success.

K.S. Depari
Treasurer and Financial
Administrator WWF Project 1514

Project 1517 Siberut - Endemic Primate Reserve

WWF GRANT 1978 - \$2,842

For previous report see Yearbook 1977-78 p.93.

The island of Siberut, 120 km off the western coast of Sumatra, has long been isolated from the mainland and harbours more endemic primates than any other island or land area in the world, as well as an endemic squirrel and several reptiles. Almost all its other mammals are distinct endemic subspecies. A survey supported by WWF has resulted in a Conservation Master Plan for the island.