



Press Release

In Honour of International Primate Day, Eight Orangutans Released to Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park

Eight orangutans who have completed the rehabilitation process will be returned to the wild in celebration of International Primate Day, which falls annually on 1 September. This event is made possible through cooperation between the BOS (Borneo Orangutan Survival) Foundation, the Central Kalimantan Natural Resources Conservation Agency (BKSDA), the Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park (TNBBBR) authority, and USAID LESTARI. The release of these eight orangutans will increase the total orangutan population released to the national park to 136.

Nyaru Menteng, Central Kalimantan, 3 September 2019. The BOS Foundation is marking this year's International Primate Day with the release of more rehabilitated orangutans to a wild habitat.

After the successful release of eight orangutans last month in the Hiran River Basin, in the forests of the Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park (TNBBBR), Katingan Regency, the BOS Foundation is again working together with the Central Kalimantan BKSDA, the TNBBBR authority, and USAID LESTARI to release another eight orangutans. These orangutans have completed the long rehabilitation process at the Nyaru Menteng Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre and will be released in the same location as last month.

This is the 17th orangutan release to be carried out in the TNBBBR since the first reintroduction event in August 2016, and this will be the 30th release in Central Kalimantan Province since 2012. It will bring the total number of orangutans released in the TNBBBR to 136 individuals.

Dr. Ir. Jamartin Sihite, MSc., BOS Foundation CEO said; "In celebration of International Primate Day, the BOS Foundation will again release eight orangutans in cooperation with three extraordinary stakeholders: The Central Kalimantan BKSDA, the TNBBBR authority, and USAID Lestari.

The current situation is dire, as the number of orangutans in our rehabilitation centres who are ready for reintroduction continues to grow by the day. This is what drives us to conduct orangutan releases as frequently as possible, to send them back to the forest where they belong. The problem is, the three release sites we manage are quickly approaching their maximum carrying capacity.

We are working hard in our search for potential, suitable release sites to accommodate orangutans who have completed the rehabilitation process. We are also calling for stricter legal action against those who endanger orangutans and their habitats. But this needs support from all stakeholders. Conservation is not a one-man show, but a collaborative effort that should involve all parties."

The eight orangutans to be released include three males and five females, departing in two separate groups to new release points in the Hiran River Basin. The journey will take up to 19 hours by road and river. The previous release points were located in the Bemban River Basin, a 15-hour journey from the Nyaru Menteng Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre. The new release points in the Hiran River Basin were chosen to optimise orangutan population distribution. In an earlier survey, the forest in this area was found to have huge potential to support orangutan release activities.

Ir. Adib Gunawan, Head of the Central Kalimantan BKSDA said; "As a wildlife species protected by the law, orangutans must be kept safe in their natural habitats. The Central Kalimantan BKSDA, in cooperation with stakeholders such as the BOS Foundation, the TNBBBR authority, USAID LESTARI, the private sector, and local governments, has successfully rehabilitated hundreds of orangutans and



released them back to natural forests. It means a lot to us, to be able to return orangutans who are ready to live in the wild, especially in light of International Primate Day.

Everyone can participate in supporting the conservation effort. You can help report to us if you witness any attempt to hunt, capture, kill, or keep protected animals - like orangutans - as pets. Protected species contribute greatly to the forest ecosystem. We must protect our forests and the biodiversity within them."

Agung Nugroho, S.Si., M.A., Head of the TNBBBR Authority added; "As a conservation area with a natural ecosystem that is properly managed and protected, the Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park meets all the requirements to support a sustainable orangutan metapopulation. Releasing rehabilitated orangutans to this national park is a positive step in ensuring the conservation of the Bornean orangutan, which is currently at "critically endangered" status.

Our staff work in close cooperation with the BOS Foundation team to conduct regular patrol, and secure the areas within the national park for the safety and welfare of released orangutans. Hopefully, orangutans will thrive here and form an independent and sustainable wild population."

Rosenda Chandra Kasih, USAID LESTARI's Central Kalimantan Landscape Coordinator said; "The orangutan is an extremely important species. Orangutans hold a specific function in the process of forest regeneration. A rapid decline in the orangutan population will deeply affect other fauna and flora species in the forest. Hopefully, this release will not only help increase orangutan populations in the wild, but will also have a positive impact on forest ecosystems. This release is evidence of the commitment by USAID LESTARI and other stakeholders in Central Kalimantan, in supporting the Indonesian Government's efforts to protect and conserve our forests and the biodiversity within them."

To ensure a successful conservation effort involving all stakeholders, the BOS Foundation continues to work closely with the Government of Indonesia at all levels, including the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the Central Kalimantan Provincial Government, the governments of Katingan and Pulang Pisau Regencies, the Central Kalimantan BKSDA, and the Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park Authority.

The BOS Foundation would like to acknowledge the invaluable support of the communities of Katingan and Pulang Pisau Regencies, our official global partner organisations (BOS Australia, BOS Germany, BOS Switzerland, BOS UK, and Save the Orangutan), private-sector donors like PT. SSMS, individual supporters from around the world, and institutions that assist and contribute to the conservation effort in Indonesia, such as USAID LESTARI.

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This release is supported by:



Editor's Note:

ABOUT BOS FOUNDATION

Founded in 1991, the BOS Foundation is a non-profit Indonesian organisation dedicated to the conservation of Bornean orangutans and their natural habitats, working together with local communities, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, and international partner organisations.

The BOS Foundation currently cares for more than 500 orangutans in two orangutan rehabilitation centres, with the support of 440 highly dedicated staff members and experts in the fields of primatology, biodiversity, ecology, forest rehabilitation, agroforestry, community empowerment, communications, education, and orangutan welfare. For further information, please visit www.orangutan.or.id.

ABOUT USAID LESTARI

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead U.S. Government agency that works to promote and demonstrate democratic values and advance a free, peaceful and prosperous world. Through international development programs and disaster assistance, USAID partners to save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises, progress beyond assistance and attain self-reliance.

The USAID LESTARI project supports the efforts of the Government of Indonesia to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to increase biodiversity conservation in forest ecosystems and ecosystems of high conservation and carbon value.

ABOUT ORANGUTAN RELEASES

Since 2012, the BOS Foundation has released 414 orangutans (422 after today's release) into two release sites in Central Kalimantan (Bukit Batikap Protection Forest, and Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park) and one in East Kalimantan (Kehje Sewen Forest). This year, the BOS Foundation has released 28 orangutans to natural habitats (as at September 2019).

This is the 17th release conducted by the BOS Foundation in the TNBBBR since August 2016, and takes the total population of released orangutans in the TNBBBR to 136.