



Press Release

Release Efforts Continue, with 115 Orangutans Now Thriving in Kehje Sewen Forest

The Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) Foundation and the East Kalimantan Natural Resources Conservation Agency (BKSDA) will release four more rehabilitated orangutans to the Kehje Sewen Forest in East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan, in their fifth orangutan release in East Kalimantan this year.

Samboja, East Kalimantan, 26 September 2019. The BOS Foundation is again working together with the East Kalimantan BKSDA to release rehabilitated orangutans back to natural forest habitats. Today, four orangutans - all of whom have undertaken years of rehabilitation at the Samboja Lestari Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre - will be released in the Kehje Sewen Forest, an 86,450-hectare Ecosystem Restoration Concession forest located in East Kutai Regency.

The northern part of the Kehje Sewen Forest is where the BOS Foundation conducted its very first orangutan release back in 2012. Reaching the release points in this portion of forest involves a long, arduous journey along rugged dirt tracks, which span great distances. The team for this release will make two overnight rest stops to break up the long trip.

This latest release will involve four adult orangutans (two males and two females): Randy (27), Arman (22), Marlies (20), and Sumirah (25). Each of the four orangutans in the group has undergone an extensive rehabilitation, between 16 and 22 years in length, at the Samboja Lestari Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre. All are ready to enjoy true freedom in a wild, natural habitat.

Ir. Sunandar Trigunajasa N., M.M., Head of the East Kalimantan BKSDA, said; "In 2019, the collective work undertaken by the BKSDA and the BOS Foundation has generated an intense series of orangutan releases. So far, cooperation between the two this year has resulted in five successive releases, with 18 orangutans being returned to natural habitats."

Actually, this number is far from ideal, considering that there are still many orangutans being cared for at the Samboja Lestari Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre. We desperately need support and participation from all parties, because we all benefit when orangutans – an important umbrella species in the forest ecosystem – are given the chance to protect and maintain their forest habitats. I demand that people stop capturing, killing, and keeping orangutans as pets, for those acts are not only illegal, but are also putting our environment in serious danger. Let's protect nature."

Dr. Ir. Jamartin Sihite, MSc., BOS Foundation CEO, said, "Today we will release four more orangutans from Samboja Lestari to the northern part of the Kehje Sewen Forest. This will be our fifth release to this particular forest this year, and we expect this number to grow as we still have many orangutans in our rehabilitation centres that are ready to be released.

That being said, the Kehje Sewen Forest is fast approaching its maximum capacity for

accommodating rehabilitated orangutans, which is around 150 individuals. To date, we have released 115 orangutans there, which means there is only space for 35 more. We urgently need to find new forest release areas under the IUPHHK-RE scheme, and we need support from all parties to acquire this.”

This release is being supported by private-sector parties concerned with orangutan and habitat conservation in Indonesia, including PT. Bank Central Asia Tbk. and PT. Wartsila Indonesia, an international electric company with a long history of operations in Indonesia.

Inge Setiawati, EVP Corporate Social Responsibility PT. Bank Central Asia Tbk., (BCA) stated; “As a key species in Sumatran and Bornean forests, orangutans play a significant role in maintaining forest quality, which produces outputs that we all benefit from, including clean water and air, a well-maintained climate, and products such as timber, ingredients for medicines, and so on. We at BCA sincerely hope that our contribution in supporting the conservation activities carried out by the BOS Foundation helps the only great ape species in Asia survive in the forest.”

The President-Director of PT. Wartsila Indonesia, Mr. Erwin Vanderkerff, added; “Our company philosophy - to support the creation of a sustainable society that utilizes smart technology and clean and accessible energy – aligns with the goal of preserving orangutans and their habitats, as set out by the BOS Foundation, for the benefit of all humankind. We believe that people can live in harmony with nature without overexploiting its resources, and that we all need to create and implement sustainable development efforts that are both intelligent and environmentally friendly. Let's support the BOS Foundation in protecting and preserving orangutans and their habitats.”

The BOS Foundation would like to express its deepest gratitude to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the East Kalimantan BKSDA, the East Kalimantan Provincial Government, the Regional Governments of East Kutai and Kutai Kartanegara Regencies, and the people of East Kutai and Kutai Kartanegara Regencies. We would also like to thank the patrons involved for their support in making these release activities possible, notably institutional funding from BOS Switzerland, and our other global partners (BOS Australia, BOS Germany, BOS UK, and Save the Orangutan); as well as our supporters from the private sector, notably BCA as the national leading bank and Wartsila Indonesia, an international energy and marine sector company. We would also like to thank all the supporters of conservation throughout the world for assisting our orangutan conservation efforts in Kalimantan.

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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 habitats, working together with local communities, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, and international partner organisations.

Currently, the BOS Foundation is working to rehabilitate as many as 500 orangutans, with the support of 440 highly dedicated staff 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 PT. RHOI

PT. Restorasi Habitat Orangutan Indonesia (RHOI) is a company that was established by the BOS Foundation on 21 April 2009, solely to acquire a Utilisation of Forest Timber Products through a Restoration of Ecosystem Licence (IUPHHK-RE), also known as an Ecosystem Restoration Concession (ERC).

As a non-profit organisation, the BOS Foundation is not permitted to apply for certain licences due to government regulations. Hence, RHOI was established. The permit gives RHOI the authority to manage a concession area - in this case, a forest area – which is imperative in the planning and implementation of orangutan releases.

On 18 August 2010, RHOI was issued an ERC permit by the Ministry of Forestry, for an 86,450-hectare section of rainforest in East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan. This ERC provides a suitable, protected, and sustainable habitat for orangutans for at least the next 60 years, with the option of extending for another 35 years. The funding to purchase the permit, which cost around USD 1.4 million, was received from donors and the BOS Foundation's global partner organisations in Europe and Australia.

The forest's name, 'Kehje Sewen', translates as 'orangutan' in local Dayak Wehea language. By name and nature, the Kehje Sewen Forest has become a forest for orangutans. For further information, please visit <http://theforestforever.com/>

ABOUT ORANGUTAN REINTRODUCTION

Since 2012, the BOS Foundation has released 422 orangutans (426 after this release) to three release sites in Central Kalimantan (Bukit Batikap Protection Forest, and Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park) and East Kalimantan (Kehje Sewen Forest). In the year 2019 alone, the number of orangutans released by the BOS Foundation (including today's) has reached 40 individuals.

This is the 22nd release conducted by the BOS Foundation in the Kehje Sewen Forest, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan. It will increase the total number of orangutans released to this forest to 115.