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### **Lawsuit to Tesso Nilo National Park Authority**

Overlapping license of palm oil plantation cooperation in Tesso Nilo National Park has taken much energy and time of the Tesso Nilo National Park office to handle it. Head of cooperation owned by local palm oil farmers whose area overlapped with Tesso Nilo



Heading to area being disputed between palm oil cooperation and Tesso Nilo NP office to check boundary signs. Photo: Samsul Komar/ WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.



Field inspection to see boundary signs as one of the court process activities. Photo: Samsul Komar/ WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.

National Park filed a lawsuit against the national park and registered the case at the State Court of Rengat-Indragiri Hulu district. The Head of the Mekar Sakti cooperation filed his sue in the court in 20 September, 2007. The State Court of Rengat had tried mediation between the cooperation and the Tesso Nilo National Park office in November to take compromise action against the case. However the compromise could not be met by both parties. Since then series of court process have been carried out.

In 1999, the Land Agency of Indragiri Hulu district government issued 515 pieces of land ownership certificates of 1,080 ha for members of palm oil cooperation while the area at the time belonged to limited production forest. With this status, this forest function cannot be changed. When Tesso Nilo National Park was designated in 2004, according to the park official map, the area claimed by the cooperation is included into the national park. On September 2007, Tesso Nilo patrol team found out



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heavy equipment that would be used to cultivate an area which is claimed by one of the certificate holders. Based on certificates that the cooperation has, the head of the cooperation then filed a lawsuit against the national park office.

WWF has involved in supporting the Tesso Nilo National Park office with related data and facilitated the park authority in providing documents needed during the court process. Besides that the project contracted two lawyers from the Law Aid Bureau of Riau to help the park authority in the court process and helped prepare regulation analysis needed in the court process.

For further court process, field inspection was done in March 6 for the first time in order to see directly the area that is being disputed by both parties. At this inspection, the court visited two borders signs exist in overlapped area. Based on the field inspection, the judge decides that pole number 1 is proven to be included inside Tesso Nilo National Park while pole number two is considered to exist outside the park. Pole number two is the pole that had been set up by the litigant. To respond to this finding the judge recommended the Land Agency of Indragiri Hulu district and Forestry Department to give evidences of the park boundaries.

The second inspection was done in March 27 to verify two other border signs. According to this inspection, the judge decided that pole number three exists outside the park and pole number four exists inside the park.

The court process still goes on to verify testimony of witnesses either from the national park office and the cooperation. Through the winding court process, we hope that the park office can win the case so that it can become a good lesson learnt for other overlapping license cases existed in the park.

*The final conclusion of the court process will be announced next week at May 28*

### **Training Intelligence in Collaboration with Police Department of Riau**

Gathering data from the field, especially intelligence data such as illegal wildlife poaching and trade, illegal logging practices and the like, needs specific techniques. To upgrade the skills of WWF field staffs, especially on digging information from various resource persons, the project conducted intelligence training from 17 -24 March, 2008. Besides targeting the Tiger Unit and Forest Crime Unit, this training is open to WWF's



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partner such as forest rangers from Tesso Nilo National Park office, Bukit Tigapuluh National Park office, and the Conservation Authority of Riau. The training was given by instructors from the Security and Intelligence Division of Riau Police Department.

In this eight day training, fifteen participants were taught techniques on investigations, data and evidences gathering and making field report. The participants were not only given theory but also followed by field practice. In the field practice the participants were divided into five groups who were deployed into five villages for three days to apply the theory that had been obtained within the three day classroom training with tasks to collect data and information on wildlife poaching and trade. The evaluation then was made in order to discuss the application of the theory and practice that the participants had made.



Police instructor is giving training materials to participants.  
Photo: WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.

Being able to participate in this training made the participants felt so enthusiastic as they really get lesson that is very much applicable to their task in the field. “I am happy that I get this kind of training since I get a lot of favorable knowledge to my routine task. Besides that I got the thrill of the police work, I understand we don’t have the authority like the police but the knowledge I receive from the training had open my horizon to have techniques to get valid data which of course will be useful not only for the project but

also for the authority,” said Erizal one of the Tiger Protection Unit of WWF.

The Tiger Protection Unit (TPU) of WWF together with the Conservation Authority of Riau have conducted routine patrols around three protected areas in the landscape; Tesso Nilo National Park, Bukit Rimang Baling Game Reserve, and Bukit Tigapuluh National Park. This TPU patrols the areas to prevent poaching of tiger and its preys and also collects data on wildlife trade. During their patrol, this TPU sweep away any snares they found in the forest.



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In the closing section of the training the Vice Director of Security and Intelligence Division of Riau Police Department hoped that the knowledge obtained during the training can be well applied by the participants. He also welcomes participations from community to supply data that the police can follow up as they may have limited data and information. To maximize the effectiveness of the TPU's work and to follow up of this training and cooperation that has been built with the Police Department, the project plans to involve officials from the police in some strategic issues of the TPU's patrol schedules. With this involvement, it is expected that illegal wildlife trade and poaching cases can be shepherded into court process.

### **Workshop for Preparation Document of Better Management Practices for Sumatran Tiger**

With the issuance of Strategic and Action Plan for Sumatran Tiger Conservation 2007-2017 Program by the Forestry Department last year, there are three basic needs that should be taken into account to reach viable population of the Sumatran tiger. The basic needs are the availability of home range, preys, and additional habitat, if needed.

Related stakeholders in Sumatra comprises of government, researchers, and companies have recommended that they will build inter sector cooperation in support for conservation of Sumatran tigers. To unite the same perception of government and companies especially those that deal with palm oil plantation and industrial timber plantation, researchers, NGOs, a workshop to arrange document on Better Management Practice for Sumatran tiger was held in Jakarta on 22-23 April 2008.

This workshop was held in collaboration between WWF and Sumatran Tiger Conservation Forum. The aim of this workshop is to set up a guideline for Better Management Practice (BMP) for plantation sectors to save Sumatran elephant habitat. This workshop is a follow up action of field survey that WWF and appointed consultants for arrangement of BMP tiger document had conducted on early March. Through this workshop, inputs, suggestion for the completion of draft BMP tiger guideline are gained from the participants.

The two-day workshop began with presentations from the Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation on policy direction and Sumatran tiger management strategy and the need for active involvement from related stakeholder in conservation of Sumatran tiger. The workshop was followed with sharing experiences on managing tigers



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done by the participants. The participants then were divided into two groups; oil palm plantation group and industrial timber plantation group.

In this group discussion, roles of concession holders in giving room to Sumatran tiger was emphasized in order to provide favorable ecosystem for the tiger to live within their concessions. With better management, it is expected that the tiger can roam and make genetic exchange so that viable population can be obtained.



Participants of workshop for preparation of BMP -tiger. Photo: WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.

Among the problems highlighted during the discussion is the pressures from local community on high conservation value exist in the concessions. One of the pressures is coming from local people that cut and take trees along riparian illegally though it is against the regulation in which the area must be protected. To avoid the pressure, the concession holders are suggested to enhance coordination with related stakeholders to secure their concessions from losing the conservation value. Besides that, they also have to conduct more related socialization activities for anticipative measures. For the riparian where the forest cover has been cleared, the concession holders are suggested to restore the area in the hope that the conservation value of the area can be improved.

Inputs, problems, suggestions have been gained through this workshop for the completion of Better Management Practice for tiger guideline document. It is scheduled that the final document will be available by end of March 2008. The final document then will be distributed to related stakeholders to be applied in the effort to save Sumatran tiger.



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## **Establishment of Sumatran Tiger Conservation Forum**

Many NGOs work for conservation effort to save Sumatran tiger in the island of Sumatra. In general, their vision is similar and many of their day to day work are also similar. If these all can be integrated, it can become a big force that contributing to the survival of the endangered species. With the spirit to build collaboration and coordination among the NGOs, related institutions, professionals, as well as corporate, a two day meeting was



Workshop on the establishment of Tiger Conservation Forum.  
Photo: Zulfahmi/ WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.

held in Arau valley West Sumatra. This meeting aims at sharing information on the conservation efforts done by participants and to make more integrated efforts to save Sumatran tiger. The meeting which WWF involved in the initiation was attended by the Conservation Authority of West Sumatra, the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park, WCS, FZS, SCTP, Sinar Mas Group and other government institutions.

After serious discussion, the participants came to agreement that they need to build an umbrella organization that can be used as a media to integrate their program. Debate took longer time in deciding the formation and name of the organization before the participants finally selected forum as the form of the organization. Among several names given, "Our Tiger" Sumatran Tiger Conservation Forum" then was selected as the name of the organization that was just established. The forum's vision is that the population of Sumatran tiger can be preserved and they can live in harmony with development activity in Sumatra.

The newly established forum brings mission to enhance conservation effort of Sumatran tiger population and its habitat through intense communication and integrated action. The participants agreed on the function of the forum as Facilitator and Communicator which cover coordination, evaluation, advocacy and mediation. This forum is open to not only organizations but also individual. During this meeting, criteria for Forum membership had been set up, they are:



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1. have interest, competency, skill in conservation effort for Sumatran tiger
2. obtain reference at minimum from two forum members exist on the operating area
3. have institutional commitment for conservation of Sumatran tiger
4. not doing activities against conservation
5. maintain reputation of the Forum

### **Human Elephant Conflict in Segati Village**

Human elephant conflict had recently occurred in Segati, a village bordered with northern part of Tesso Nilo. The conflict was reported to begin from amid February and had taken attention from local government which caused them to do ground check in the beginning of April.

Elephant home range in Tesso Nilo National Park is divided into two groups; northern group and south eastern group. Escalation of encroachment activity in the park proposed extension might cause the elephants go out from the forest to search for food in community palm oil plantation existed around the forest. It is recorded that the frequency of the conflict is high enough within the last two years. Intensive report from community to local government on this elephant raid was then responded by the authority comprising of the head of Pelalawan District Police Department, the Head of Pelalawan Legislative to collect information from community regarding the elephant raid on late March. WWF staff was invited also on the trip.

The second ground check was done on April 8 with more related government services including the Vice Governor of Pelalawan district. The team at this time directly had a ground check to areas that had been raided. According to report from community predicted that the crop raiding was done by two wild elephants.

At the ground check, the team found several palm oil trees damaged, though still in small number. With this field observation, the Head of Pelalawan District Police and the Vice Governor instructed the Conservation Authority of Riau to conduct socialization to community on manual techniques to drive back wild elephants. They also recommended WWF give technical assistance on the socialization. To respond to this, WWF promised to help and train the villagers based on its experiences especially those of that have been applied by the Flying Squad team in their work in handling human elephant conflict. WWF also promised to distribute and teach the community on how to use pvc made



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cannons that will give loud noise to scare away the elephants from their palm oil plantation. The socialization is planned to be held amid this May.

### Member of WWF's Tiger Survey Team Encountered Tiger at Tesso Nilo



Camp set up in the forest which the tiger survey team uses it for their lodge. Photo: Kusdianto/ WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.



The acacia tree where Kusdianto tried to save him from his fear of direct encounter with a wild tiger. Photo: Kusdianto/ WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.

Still remember the story two years ago when WWF tiger team research had direct encounter with a wild Sumatran tiger in Rimbang Baling Game Reserve? Since then no such kind of thrilled experience have ever recurred until late this April. On April 26, the Tiger Research Team was deployed to some locations in Tesso Nilo forest for occupancy survey. One team consisting of Kusdianto, Egy and Gebok, a local guide headed to Nanjak Makmur concession in the proposed park extension. After the drop site, they had to walk by the side of the area that has been land cleared. Having walked for about one kilometer, the team came into community newly grown rubber plantation which is surrounded with shrubs. They continued walking until they arrived at the border of acacia plantation and Nanjak Makmur concession. Since it was getting dark, they decided



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to stay there for that night. Egy and Gebok then went around to search for river to get water for their consumption in that night, while Kusdianto was left alone in the area.

After taking some rest, Kusdianto tried to build their tent alone while waiting for his two friends. Having finished with his job, Kusdianto then sat under an acacia tree nearby the tent he had just built. Not long after that, suddenly he saw a tiger passed by, just about 20 meters away from him. He was numb and dumb founded realizing it was a tiger that he saw. He just kept silent and did not dare to move though a bit. Luckily the tiger did not saw him as it walked on the other direction of where Kusdianto sat. Though he only could see the back side of the tiger, he thought it was big enough and felt sure that it was a male tiger. He saw the tiger went out of green belt that exists nearby in the acacia plantation. When the tiger had left him, he felt so scared and in rush climbed the acacia tree. He then realized that, the tiger was heading to the direction where his two friends searched for river. Kusdianto shouted from the acacia tree reminding his friends to be very careful, that's the thing that he could think of to help his friends.



Kusdianto (in front) and his team mate in the forest equipped with their field supplies. Photo: Egy/ WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.

Kusdianto was sitting on one of the acacia branches for about fifteen minutes when finally his friends back to their camp. "I can't imagine that I can stay for some minutes in that small acacia tree" Kusdianto reminisced. "I must be so scared and what I can think to save me is climbing that acacia tree" he added. Seeing Kusdianto, on the tree, his two friends laughed at him and asked why he did so. Kusdianto then went down and told his friends about what he had just experienced. Together

then they tried to search for foot prints around the area to document this finding, but unfortunately the land was so dried so that no evidences of the tiger foot prints could be seen.



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They then decided to collect dried twigs for making fire camp for their protection. They spent the night in the tent and fortunately there was nothing bad happened. In the morning they went on their trip following the map and collected data. They did not find any signs of Sumatran tiger around, but they found some signs of endangered wildlife such sun bear, tapir and also tiger preys.

On the eight days at May 3, the team approached back the area where Kusdianto saw the tiger; it was just about two kilometers away. At this time they met six illegal loggers. Based on information from the illegal loggers, one of their members also saw a tiger a day before around the acacia plantation. They were so frightened at the time and made them leap to their truck. According to them the tiger seemed so undisturbed and ignorant with human activity around.

This ten day survey is so special to Kusdianto as he has an unforgettable experience having direct encounter with the king of the forest. This experience does not discourage Kusdianto in carrying out his task, one week after this event he was off again to the field.

Kusdianto joined WWF since September 2004. He is one of eight local people around Tesso Nilo Bukit Tigapuluh Landscape that was recruited by the project at first period to help tiger project activity.

### **University Student Executive Body Hand in Their Recommendation in Tesso Nilo National Park**

University Student Executive Body of Universities in Indonesia held a three day workshop in Riau with theme "Law Supremacy in Cracking Illegal Logging" which followed by a field visit to Tesso Nilo National Park. This workshop was attended by 30 representatives of university students from six provinces in Indonesia. Riau University student executive body was assigned to host the national level workshop in Pekanbaru which was held on 12 to 15 March. As the series of the event, the participants handed in the recommendation that they have obtained during the sessions on the previous three days. The recommendation was given to the head of Riau Legislative Body.



Website: <http://www.wwf.or.id/tessonilo>

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Ria, a female flying squad elephant welcome the coming of the Head of Riau Legislative Body by putting string of flowers on his neck. Photo: Dani/ WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.

The trip to Tesso Nilo National Park was facilitated by WWF and the park authority. On the trip to the park, the participants were shown forest destruction on the proposed park extension along APRIL sector Ukui corridor. Along the trip, the participants were told about encroachment threat in Tesso Nilo forest by the Tesso Nilo National Park staff. This condition is very much link with the theme that the students had discussed in their workshop.” We invited the participants to have field trip to get first hand experience about the condition of forest in Riau. We know that Riau possesses two national parks, however they are under



Head of Riau Legislative Body gave a brief speech to respond recommendation given by the representatives of university student executive body. Photo: Dani/ WWF-Tesso Nilo Prog.

serious threat especially Tesso Nilo National Park. This condition is one of the reasons why we bring the participants in Tesso Nilo in the hope they see the reality and can distribute message for the urgency of protecting the forest, said Fajri, the Head of Student Executive Body of Riau University who is also in charge as the head of the committee for the workshop.

Arriving at Flying Squad camp, The Head of Legislative Body was greeted by a welcoming committee of the four adult Flying Squad elephants. Ria, one

of Flying Squad female elephants, came forward bearing a string of flowers that she placed around the Mr. Chaidir’s neck. He then enjoyed Flying Squad elephant ride around the camp. The session then was filled with explanation from the Head of Tesso Nilo NP office on threats and promises of the park.



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The representative of the students then handed in their recommendations on handling illegal logging practices to the Head of the Legislative Body. In response to this the Head of the Legislative Body promised to include the recommendation on the development planning consolidation meeting at province level.

### Upcoming event

To achieve its conservation target comprehensively, WWF has designated its global goal that is to enhance biodiversity conservation efforts through determination of priority areas and species concern. To face the challenge ahead, WWF-Indonesia had formulated 4 strategies of intervention which include conservation management, sustainable land use, sector reform, and sustainable financing.

Sumatra Island is one of priority areas and habitat for species concern in WWF network global program. Three WWF-Indonesia project sites exist in this island; Riau Program, Bukit Barisan Selatan Program and Aceh Program. As an approach to understand WWF-Indonesia 2009-2013 strategic planning in regional context and in relation to 4 interventions of WWF-Indonesia, a socialization of the strategic planning will be held in June in which Riau Program will host the meeting. The meeting will discuss the implementation of the strategic interventions for Sumatra island.

The meeting is scheduled to be held on June 18-20.