



SEKAR IMEJ CONSERVATION AREA (SICA)

# NEWSLETTER

Vol 05 2023



*Balionycteris maculata*  
Spotted-winged Fruit Bat

## IN FOCUS

Post SICA scientific expedition in 2022, the SICA team is excited about its findings. Preliminary results from the expedition have provided valuable baseline data for SICA. The knowledge and experience gained by the team have further empowered and built their confidence to overcome challenges in managing SICA. In addition to monitoring and patrolling the forest, the establishment of the SICA nursery and strengthening of knowledge and capacity in tree planting and forest restoration are some of the key focus areas for the SICA project in 2023.

This edition highlights the findings of the Scientific Expedition on Bats and Kg. Mononood, which is an important village near SICA. It also includes the vision of Wilmar Europe on SICA, the Rangers' technical visit to Kabili-Sepilok Forest Reserve, the Wildlife Awareness Outreach Programme to community and students, and other interesting activities. This volume offers a snapshot of the ongoing efforts on nature conservation and community engagement in promoting biodiversity conservation in the production landscape.

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# Bats of SICA

## Scientific Expedition – Series 1



Scientific expeditions play a crucial role in establishing baseline data. During the Sekar Imej Conservation Area (**SICA**) scientific expedition from 18<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022, various studies have been conducted by researchers from the University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and the University of Science Malaysia (USM).

For the first series of sharing on findings from the scientific expedition, we have chosen the world’s smallest and free-flying mammal – BATS! There are more than 1,400 species of bats worldwide. Bats are nocturnal animals and are active at night time. They sleep on day time and play a vital role in pest control, plant pollination, and seed dispersal. Recent studies estimate that bats eat enough pests to save more than USD 1 billion per year in crop damage and pesticide costs in the United States corn industry alone.

**SICA** with 2,469 hectares of forest plays a crucial role to provide shelter and food sources for bats and may act as a transitional zone for the bats between the Paitan and Lingkabau Forest Reserves which

borders **SICA**. The **SICA**’s forest vegetation is primarily lowland mixed dipterocarp forest, with a mix of young regenerating forest with lots of young saplings and low-density mixed dipterocarp forest as the forest structure.

A total of nine species of bats were recorded in **SICA** during the expedition. *Rhinolophus trifoliatus*, *Kerivoula intermedia*, and *Kerivoula pellucida* were recorded at Kibundu trail, while *Hipposideros cervinus*, *Kerivoula papillosa*, and *Balionycteris maculata* were recorded at Gerowong trail. At Monjuk trail, *Cynopterus brachyotis*, *Balionycteris maculata*, *Rhinolophus borneensis*, *Hipposideros cervinus* and *Kerivoula whiteheadi* were recorded.

All bat species recorded from Parcel 5 of **SICA** were not protected under Sabah Wildlife Conservation Enactment (1997). However, several species were identified with high conservation value from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species such as *Rhinolophus trifoliatus*, *Kerivoula intermedia* and *Kerivoula pellucida* (Near Threatened) (Table 1).

Species	Sabah Wildlife Conservation Enactment (1997)	IUCN Red List of Conservation Status
<i>Balionycteris maculata</i>	Not Protected	Least Concern
<i>Cynopterus brachyotis</i>	Not Protected	Least Concern
<i>Rhinolophus trifoliatus</i>	Not Protected	<b>Near Threatened</b>
<i>Rhinolophus borneensis</i>	Not Protected	Least Concern
<i>Hipposideros cervinus</i>	Not Protected	Least Concern
<i>Kerivoula intermedia</i>	Not Protected	<b>Near Threatened</b>
<i>Kerivoula pellucida</i>	Not Protected	<b>Near Threatened</b>
<i>Kerivoula papillosa</i>	Not Protected	Least Concern
<i>Kerivoula whiteheadi</i>	Not Protected	Least Concern

**Table 1: Conservation Status of Bats from Sekar Imej Conservation Area, Sandakan, Sabah**

There are more than **1,400** species of bats worldwide

"We see then that the bat is a very wonderful creature,  
one of Nature's triumphs and masterpieces. "

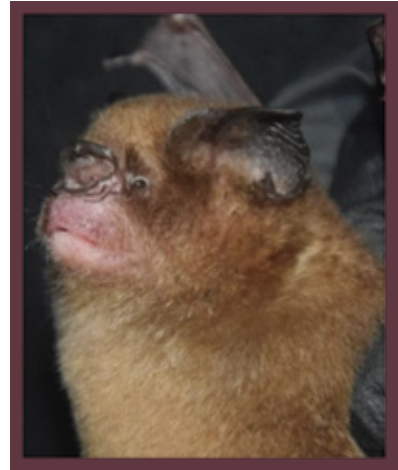
- W. H. Hudson



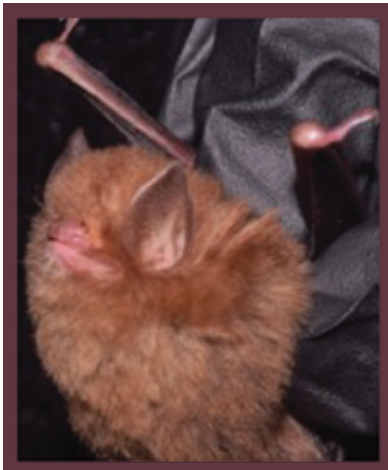
*Balionycteris maculata*  
Family: Pteropodidae  
Spotted-winged Fruit Bat



*Cynopterus brachyotis*  
Family: Pteropodidae  
Sunda Short-nosed Fruit Bat



*Hipposideros cervinus*  
Family: Hipposideridae  
Fawn Roundleaf Bat



*Kerivoula intermedia*  
Family: Vespertilionidae  
Small Woolly Bat



*Kerivoula papillosa*  
Family: Vespertilionidae  
Papillose Woolly Bat



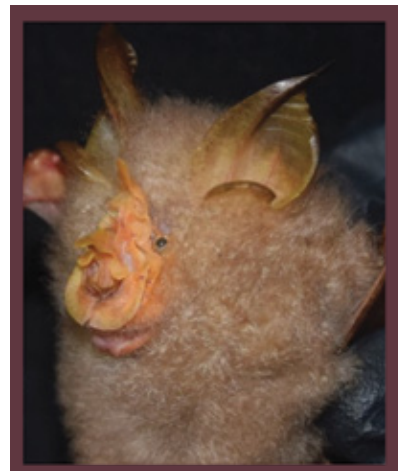
*Kerivoula pellucida*  
Family: Vespertilionidae  
Clear-winged Woolly Bat



*Kerivoula whiteheadi*  
Family: Vespertilionidae  
Whitehead's Woolly Bat



*Rhinolophus borneensis*  
Family: Rhinolophidae  
Bornean Horseshoe Bat



*Rhinolophus trifolius*  
Family: Rhinolophidae  
Trefoil Horseshoe Bat

**Figure 1: Bat Species Captured in Parcel 5 Sekar Imej Conservation Area (SICA)**

Source and Photo Credits: Elias, N. A *et al* (2022) Bats' Diversity in Parcel 5 of the Sekar Imej Conservation Area, Sugut, Sandakan, Sabah. Unpublished Report

# Kampung Mononood

Kg. Mononood was established in 1964 through the mass relocation of Kg. Kuron settlers, but it is believed that it was founded earlier. Dakat Mawan, along with an unidentified woman, were amongst the first settlers of Kg. Mononood. The village is named after "Sungai Mononood", a small river which runs through the village, but the origin of the river name remains unknown.



Village Head - Mr. Johan Jiu

The current settlers of Kg. Mononood were originally from Kg. Kuron, also known as Kg. Koron. Kg. Kuron, located 10km away from Kg. Mononood is said to exist well before WWII and the Japanese occupation of Borneo. The name of Kg. Kuron is adapted from a large clay cooking pot, called "kuron". According to folklore, there is an old gravesite by the riverbank resembling a big "kuron". To validate this claim, several search attempts have been made but have been unsuccessful thus far. This could be due to frequent floods at the riverbank, changes in landform as well as landscape due to agricultural and plantation developments. Despite these changes, signs of the old settlement can still be seen through the planted bamboo clumps along the riverbank.



# Sungai Tribe

“Sungai”, or river, was first used by the first British Resident of Sandakan, Sir William Pryer, during his expedition along the Kinabatangan River to refer to a community that had settled along the riverbank. Due to his lack of knowledge in local dialects, he referred to this community as “The River People”. Nowadays, the term “Sungai people” is used to describe the communities that settled along the riverbank of major rivers in Sabah such as Sg. Bengkoka, Sg. Tangkarason, Sg. Paitan and Sg. Segama. Despite being grouped due to their settlement patterns, Sungai tribes differ from each other by their dialects, culture and traditional practices.

The settlers of Kg. Mononood are generally considered part of the Sungai tribe. However, some older individuals in the village claim that they are part of the Tombonuo tribe, one of Sabah’s native tribes that are understudied. The Tombonuo people historically settled along the coast but migrated to different areas to prevent conflicts with other tribes. They can still be found in Paitan and Sugut region, speaking in the same dialect as the Sungai tribe. Based on these, the claim of older people of Kg. Mononood may be true that they are part of the Tombonuo tribe.



## Custom and Culture of the Tombonuo Tribe of Kg. Mononood

Just like most of the natives of Sabah, the Tombonuo tribe practised Animism and relied on nature for their livelihood. They are highly skilled hunters, fishermen and are knowledgeable in plant identification for consumption and medical use. They practised shifting cultivation with short-term crops such as cassava, maize, hill paddy and vegetables. They traded forest products such as rattan and resin for income.

Nowadays, the majority of the community has converted to Christianity and Islam. Since the blooming operation of logging companies around Sugut, many settlers of Kg. Mononood have been employed by these companies, thus shifting the economic pattern of the people. Despite the ongoing modernisation, the Tombonuo tribe of Kg. Mononood continues to preserve their culture.



# Sustainability Insights

WILMAR Europe



“SICA - provides a research platform to better understand forest rehabilitation and restoration.”

## Bernd Noldt

General Manager of Wilmar Europe

I am responsible for Wilmar Europe’s commercial activities and have over 15 years of experience in the company. During my time as manager, I have seen the company grow to be a key player in the regional oleochemicals industry. Moreover, I see that our sustainability strategy has further developed, focusing on supporting conservation of the environment and the communities where we operate.

### What is Wilmar Europe’s motivation to support and fund the SICA project?

At Wilmar, we have a strong sustainability commitment. I have learnt that our conservation protected areas, such as SICA, are sanctuaries for many threatened and endangered species. They also provide a research platform to better understand forest rehabilitation and restoration. The local team tests best management practices involving plantation operations, government agencies, research institutions and local communities providing a win-win situation for everyone involved.

In Europe, our customers and employees are especially interested to support products that don’t compromise on sustainability standards. When the opportunity to support SICA was presented to us we did not hesitate to participate in the project. This is a great team and the work they are doing benefits not only Wilmar but the industry as a whole.

### What is Wilmar Europe’s hope and thought on the SICA project in the future?

We hope that SICA becomes a Biodiversity and Carbon Research Center by 2030. We can use the vast amount of local knowledge and information that is been gathered by the scientific teams to better understand biodiversity conservation and forest rehabilitation. Moreover, we are fully committed to reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions in our production throughout the whole value chain.

Areas such as SICA will help us understand how the forest acts as a carbon sink and helps us, and our customers, achieve our sustainability goals.

### Any message for SICA team?

We applaud the SICA team for all their efforts. Every time a newsletter comes out, I’m amazed by all the good work the team is doing. Therefore, I wish them all the luck for the future and hope to continue to see great results.

Wilmar Europe is part of the Oleochemicals and Biofuels division of Wilmar International Limited, which is Asia’s leading agribusiness group headquartered in Singapore. The division focuses on offering bio-based solutions to a broad range of applications.

## Wildlife Awareness Outreach Programme (WAOP) with Communities of Kg. Kinadaan



**SICA** is committed to continue engaging local communities and working with them to preserve and protect the forest and wildlife through awareness talks and outreach programmes. The Wildlife Awareness Outreach Programme (WAOP) was conducted on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 in Kg. Kinadaan. The talk was attended by Mr Jason Vil, head of JKKK, along with 44 adult settlers and their children.

The WAOP included an introduction to **SICA**, presentations of Rare, Threatened and Endangered (RTE) wildlife, and promoting awareness of Sabah's Schedule of Animal and Plant protection. It has helped to foster active participation and generate interest in the protection of wildlife amongst local communities. Feedback from participants indicated the need for a community tree nursery and further community engagement initiatives for biodiversity protection.



## Junior Ranger Programme - SK Matanggal



The Junior Ranger Programme (JRP) was held at SK Matanggal on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022, with a total of 133 students and 20 teachers.

The main objective of this programme is to raise awareness and foster local stewardship of SICA while instilling knowledge on nature conservation.

The programme encompassed a range of engaging activities including drawing, quizzes, colouring and tree planting. By harnessing the energy and enthusiasm of the young participants, the JRP aimed to engage and inspire the younger generation in forest conservation.





## Forest Tree Nursery

**SICA** is establishing a forest nursery at Sekar Imej Parcel 3 to support tree planting and restoration in the HCV areas. This permanent nursery will serve as a propagation and distribution centre for forest tree seedlings to support our forest rehabilitation efforts and Remediation and Compensation Plan (RaCP) project which helps to restore carbon stocks and the ecological function of the forest.



The nursery is designed to propagate a wide range of seedlings, including less viable tree species, under controlled conditions. In addition, the utilisation of local knowledge and the expertise of our experienced rangers will facilitate seed gathering for native species at **SICA**.

## Interns Supporting SICA

**SICA** initiated its first internship programme for three students from University Malaysia Sabah (UMS). The internship is ongoing and interns are exposed to **SICA** and Sekar Imej estate, engaging in activities such as nursery establishments, developing educational and interpretive materials such as posters, pamphlets, videos and other documentations for biodiversity in **SICA**, participating in restoration projects, and conducting short-term biodiversity-focused projects. The exchange of knowledge between staff and interns benefited both parties, allowing the latter to learn and grow while contributing to **SICA**'s development.



## Continuous Training and Practice for Rangers

Numerous trainings have been conducted for Rangers to develop their field monitoring skills in nature conservation and to improve their understanding and awareness. The key ideas of this exercise are to expand **SICA** Rangers and RaCP teams' knowledge on conservation work. In addition, some members of the **SICA** team attended the Drone Training in Sapi from 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> April 2023. These trainings are also part of introducing rangers and SICA team to new working tools with new technologies for better monitoring and finding.



“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.” — Benjamin Franklin

# Learning by Seeing the Big Picture

## SICA Study Visit at Kabili-Sepilok Forest Reserve, Sandakan

By Miwes Masitel & SICA Rangers



### Main Activities

Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre (SOURC)

Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre (BSBCC)

Rainforest Discovery Centre (RDC)

Forest Research Centre (FRC)

Entomology Lab

Herbarium

Seed Lab

Tree Nursery

EMU Nursery

The **SICA** team visited the 4,362 ha Kabili - Sepilok Forest Reserve (Kabili - Sepilok FR) to learn about forest conservation and nursery management as part of the capacity building. The visit, initially planned for 2022, was carried out on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023, and was met with excitement from all participants. One of the participants said, “Even though I was born in Hospital Dutch of Kent, Sandakan, I have never visited Sandakan and Sepilok as I grew up”. All participants started their journey as early as 5 am by gathering in front of Sekar Imej RSPO room before heading to Kabili-Sepilok FR which is located at Mile 24 Sandakan.

### Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre (BSBCC)

Before visiting BSBCC, our arrival was welcomed by two orangutans at SOURC, which captivated the attention of not only the SICA team, but also international visitors.

We were greeted by our guide, Ms. Gloria Ganang, who shared information on the sun bears in BSBCC. According to her, the sun bears in BSBCC were rescued from mini zoos in Sabah and individuals who kept them as pets. She also shared the physical morphology and uniqueness of the sun bears such as the fact that it is the smallest bear in the world with a height of around 150 cm for adult males, standing.

Despite all participants living in forested areas and working as rangers, most of us have never seen a sun bear in real life as we have only spotted its tracks, scratch signs and faeces during monitoring. Besides the opportunity to observe the sun bears first-hand, we were also interested in the *Eusideroxylon zwageri* tree, known locally as Belian that are used as machete handles, as well as to make furniture and houses.



### Dr. Wong Siew Te

We were able to meet Dr. Wong Siew Te, founder of BSBCC, who was observing the sun bears around the viewing platform. He overheard our conversation on harvesting the Belian and added that the trees were crucial for a stable climate. Dr. Wong said that deforestation has increased tropical cyclone rate, and intensity, which caused climate change that affects biodiversity and mankind. Furthermore, he shared the challenges in managing the centre, especially during the global epidemic of COVID-19.

## Rainforest Discovery Centre (RDC)

At the RDC, we were welcomed by two officers-in-charge who guided us throughout the visit, Mr George Hubert Petol and Ms Sandy Tsen. Prior to the field visit, a briefing session was carried out by Mr George on the function of RDC which serves as a recreation park and environmental education centre.

The canopy walk was 374 m long and 25 m in height with three observation towers. In addition to the canopy walk, RDC also has a nine km trail and a night safari activity. The signboards and interpretative information signs around the centre provided the team with ideas which can be installed or implemented at **SICA**.



## THE SEPILOK GIANT



At the end of the RDC visit, we spotted a towering 65 m high yellow Seraya (*Shorea acutissima*), which is famously known as the Sepilok Giant.

“Thank you, Aki, for your perpetual service. May you live a long life for our kids and grandkids,” we uttered while touching its giant buttress before we left.

As we only had two hours in RDC, we did not get to explore most of the area, but we truly enjoyed the tranquillity of the forest and explored things on the management of the environmental education centre.

“Thank you, Aki, for your perpetual service. May you live a long life for our kids and grandkids,”



## Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre (SOURC)

In SOURC, we had the opportunity to see orangutans up close. Other than the sighting of orangutans, the participants were also interested in the tree labels along the route to the viewing and feeding platform.

## Forest Research Centre (FRC)



On the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023, we checked out early and got ready for the second day of our technical visit. We were greeted by FRC Head, Dr. Robert C. Ong and his officers in the FRC.

Dr. Robert presented several topics which included an introduction to FRC and its function, Sabah's forest classification and conservation efforts carried out by the Sabah Forestry Department. At the end of his speech, he encouraged all participants to venture into forest tree planting on vacant private lands.

He said, "As part of our forest plantation programme, FRC offers up to 300 seedlings of forest trees which can be harvested and sold once the trees mature in 10 years."

Dr. Robert's sharing was followed by a presentation by Mdm. Kuina Kimjus, FRC nursery supervisor. She gave simple explanations of nursery management from seed germination to field tree planting. After the presentations, we toured the FRC, visiting their entomology and seed lab, herbarium and nursery.

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## Herbarium

FRC herbarium hosts 276,000 specimens from 11,000 plant species. Mdm. Suzana Sabran, the officer of Systemic botany briefed us on the preparations of herbarium specimen voucher, label data and digital data management. She also stated that they offer plant identification services for individuals and private companies.

## Entomology Lab



The visit to the FRC entomology lab was guided by Dr. Arthur Y.C. Chung, the Research and Publication Deputy head who is also an expert in entomology. The lab has the highest number of entomology specimens in Sabah with 180,000 specimens of 18,000 different species.



Dr. Arthur is passionate about entomology and his presentation was simple, informative and easy to understand.



# Learning by Seeing the Big Picture

## Seed Lab



The visit to the seed lab was to educate participants in seed preparation and handling for germination. In addition, Mdm. Rebecca, head of the seed section explained the main functions of the FRC seed lab, types of seed, storage method and scientific research conducted in the lab. The lab assistants demonstrated the seed germination process and some of the participants were able to try part of the process.

## Nursery



Our last stop in FRC was the tree nursery. Mdm. Kuina briefed us on the whole nursery operation from the preparation of seedlings and media bed, the process of germinating seeds in the germination bed, seedling transplant, labelling and maintenance such as manuring and watering as well as saplings planting in the field.

## EMU Nursery

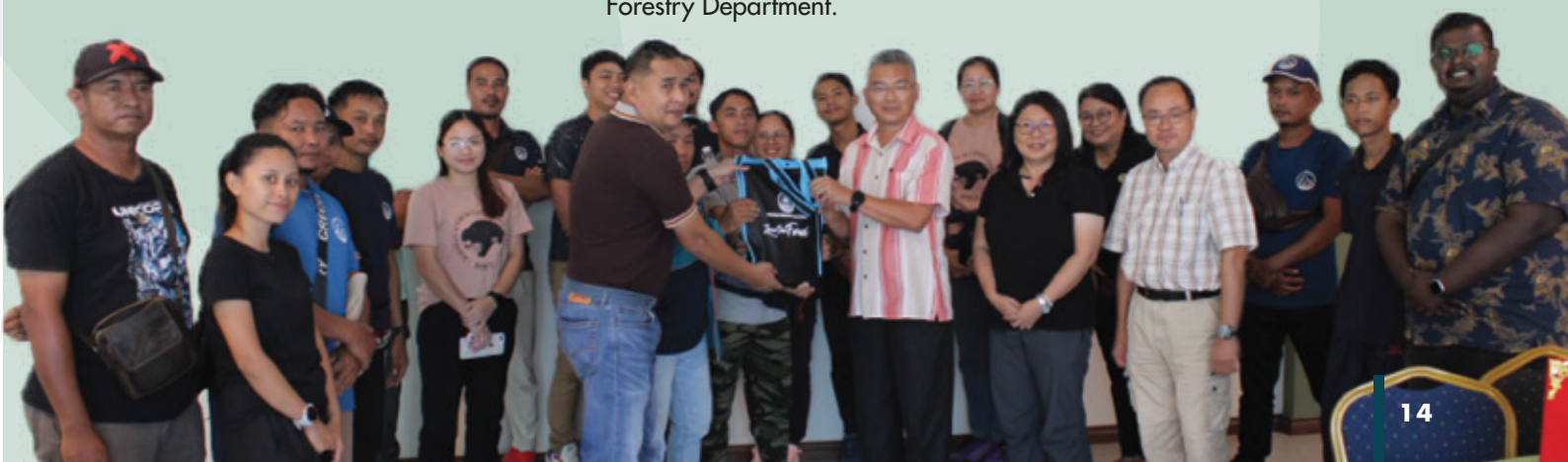
The technical visit concluded with a tour of the Eco-Management Unit (EMU) nursery, which is located at Sapi. This was the first time for many of the participants to visit the EMU compound. The main objective of this visit was to explore different types of tree nursery setup, to establish a more cost-effective way as compared to commercial nurseries. Mr James K. Helan, the person in charge, provided information on available species and its operation as well as management.



## 2 Days 1 Night in Kabili - Sepilok Forest Reserve

Despite the hectic schedule, the visit to Kabili-Sepilok FR was an eye-opener for all participants and provided SICA rangers and the RSPO team with valuable knowledge while highlighting the significance of forest conservation.

We would like to express our gratitude to the teams from BSBCC, RDC and FRC for sharing their valuable knowledge and expertise. We are especially grateful for the hospitality extended by FRC of the Sabah Forestry Department.



## Masdan Laimong

"I am not suitable to be interviewed, I am not highly educated nor am I well experienced, please interview someone else who is more qualified and suitable," he initially refused.

Masdan Laimong, 26 years old, is the son of Laimong Buliga, a senior ranger at SICA. Born in Kampung Mononood of Sugut in Beluran, Sabah. Masdan, is also known as Tua or Dan in his neighbourhood, is from the local tribe of Sungai Tombonuo. Married with two daughters, he joined SICA as a ranger in 2021 after working as a tractor operator for Sekar Imej since 2017.

Initially shy, Masdan gradually opened up during the interview. He is friendly, funny, responsible, brave and helpful.

"Before the development of oil palm plantations, we were fully reliant on the forest and river for our living and health, making Sungai Tombonuo people experts in hunting wild animals and catching river fishes. My hobby is hunting. After a long day spent in the forest, returning home with a big catch to be shared with the villagers always brings me satisfaction. Living together in a small village, the custom is to share our catch with everyone."

Masdan's perspective changed after joining SICA team, where he learned about the impact of deforestation and overhunting, especially the Rare, Threatened and Endangered (RTE) wildlife. According to Masdan, the most common animals to be hunted are deer, muntjac, mousedeer, porcupine, squirrel, monitor lizard and wild boar. Pythons, birds, wild cats and civets are also sought for hunting.

"People may not believe it, but previously we used to hunt gibbons and monkeys for consumption. The Sungai tribes used to hunt to fulfil their daily and basic needs, but to these days Sungai people and even outsiders tend to hoard and overhunt, exceeding actual needs." He added he frequently reminds his fellow friends of the importance of protecting RTE species whenever they talk about instances where they hunted RTE species.



As part of the SICA team, Masdan strives to preserve flora and fauna, starting at home with his family. He is actively involved in community awareness programmes like Junior Ranger, Wildlife Awareness Outreach Programme (WAOP) with Sabah Wildlife Department and many more. He explained that with SICA being inside the Sungai Tombonuo tribe's area, the hardest challenge in preserving biodiversity and being a ranger is the lack of understanding in the community towards the importance of biodiversity. Sungai tribes are known as avid hunters when there are resources available. They also collect forest products and chop trees to build homes.

Despite the challenges, Masdan finds his job as a ranger exciting and hopes that the SICA project can educate the surrounding communities to preserve and protect biodiversity.

"I hope we can leave our future generations with the biodiversity intact. I also hope that SICA can be a world research centre which will bring positive impacts to Sungai Tombonuo communities, especially in eco-tourism."

When asked about his hobbies, Masdan chuckled and said, "I still hunt these days since I grew customised to it. But I can differentiate what to hunt and what not to. I make it a point not to overhunt."

After a long silence, he added, "There is nothing to be hunted anymore. Wild boar populations which grew rapidly even in an oil palm plantation has declined due to the African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak in 2019. Signs of wild boars nowadays are scarce and the government should classify them in class 1 of the Wildlife Conservation Enactment Schedule."

He also added that he spotted wild boar tracks recently but kept it a secret to prevent people from hunting the boars and allow them to thrive. As a ranger, he believes every effort, no matter how small, matters in the race against biodiversity deterioration.

# Best Management Practices (BMP) Training Workshop for Wilmar's Suppliers in Sabah & Sarawak, Malaysia

Wilmar and Proforest organised two series of Conservation Best Management Practices (BMP) Training Workshops in Sabah region on 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and Sarawak region on 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 for Wilmar's suppliers in Sabah and Sarawak. There were a total of 136 participants.

We continue to support, guide and collaborate with our stakeholders, including our suppliers, in a constructive approach to share information and build capacity that can further improve industry practices.

We extend our gratitude to our suppliers who participated in these workshops for their enthusiasm and dedication.



These workshops aimed to enhance awareness and understanding of the NDPE and MSPO requirements related to deforestation, as well as share global trends on palm oil.



The workshop also facilitated peer learning through practical guidance and hands-on experience in monitoring conservation, forests and unplanted areas in oil palm plantations, while also identifying issues, challenges and gaps in implementing NDPE policies.



**“The only way forward, if we are going to improve the quality of the environment, is to get everybody involved.”**

– Richard Rogers



# High Conservation Value (HCV) Refresher Training

The High Conservation Value (HCV) Refresher Training for Sabah operations was held at IPAS Training Centre on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of March, 2023 with a total of 30 participants. The training focused on HCV management, including High Conservation Value Management Area (HCVMA), Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), and Safe and Standard Operating Procedure (SSOP) in HCV areas, as well as HCV monitoring, restoration, and RTE species.

In addition to hands-on activities such as an introduction to the Avenza map and Forest Integrity Assessment (FIA), issues and challenges of HCV management were discussed. The goal was to enhance participants' understanding and implementation of HCV best management practices for conservation.



# Conservation & Recreational Landscape Project (CRLP)

The CRLP project was initiated by our Plantation Head, Mr Gurcharan Singh, in 2020 to support our NDPE policy and create a sustainable environment within oil palm plantations by planting varieties of native and ornamental trees along major roads and vacant spaces within plantations.

As of March 2023, a total of 19,305 trees have been planted across all of our operation units in Sabah for landscaping, achieving 88% of our target of 21,839 trees. This project is a significant step towards our goal of creating a greener and more sustainable environment within our plantations.



IPAS compound May 21



IPAS compound Sept 22



Tree planting activity with Mr. Viganeswaran Ponnudurai (ED of Wilmar Plantations Sdn. Bhd), Mr. Gurcharan Singh (PH of Malaysia Operation), Mr. Kiaw Che Weng (GM of Sabah Operation) and Managers as Part of CRLP initiative at IPAS Housing area on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

**"It is our collective and individual responsibility to preserve and tend to the environment in which we all live."**

- Dalai Lama



## **SICA** SUPPORTERS

The Sekar Imej Conservation Area (SICA) is the largest conservation area in Wilmar's operations in Malaysia, spanning a total of 2,469 hectares in the interiors of the Beluran District in Sabah. Located within our plantation's concession boundary, the SICA project is an ongoing joint effort between Wilmar and our stakeholders, including the surrounding local communities, to protect and preserve the largely Lowland Mixed Dipterocarp Forest. The initiative aims to develop SICA as a Biodiversity and Carbon Research Center by 2030. The key components include biodiversity conservation, capacity building and community-based conservation approach. SICA project is partially funded by Wilmar Europe from 2022-2024.

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