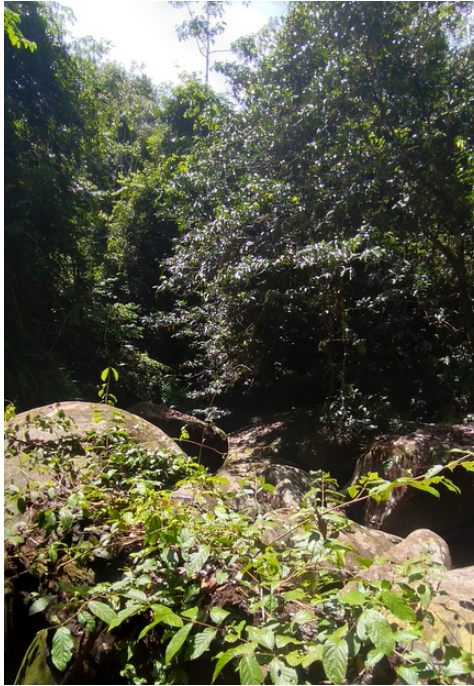




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SEKAR IMEJ CONSERVATION AREA (SICA) PROJECT NEWSLETTER

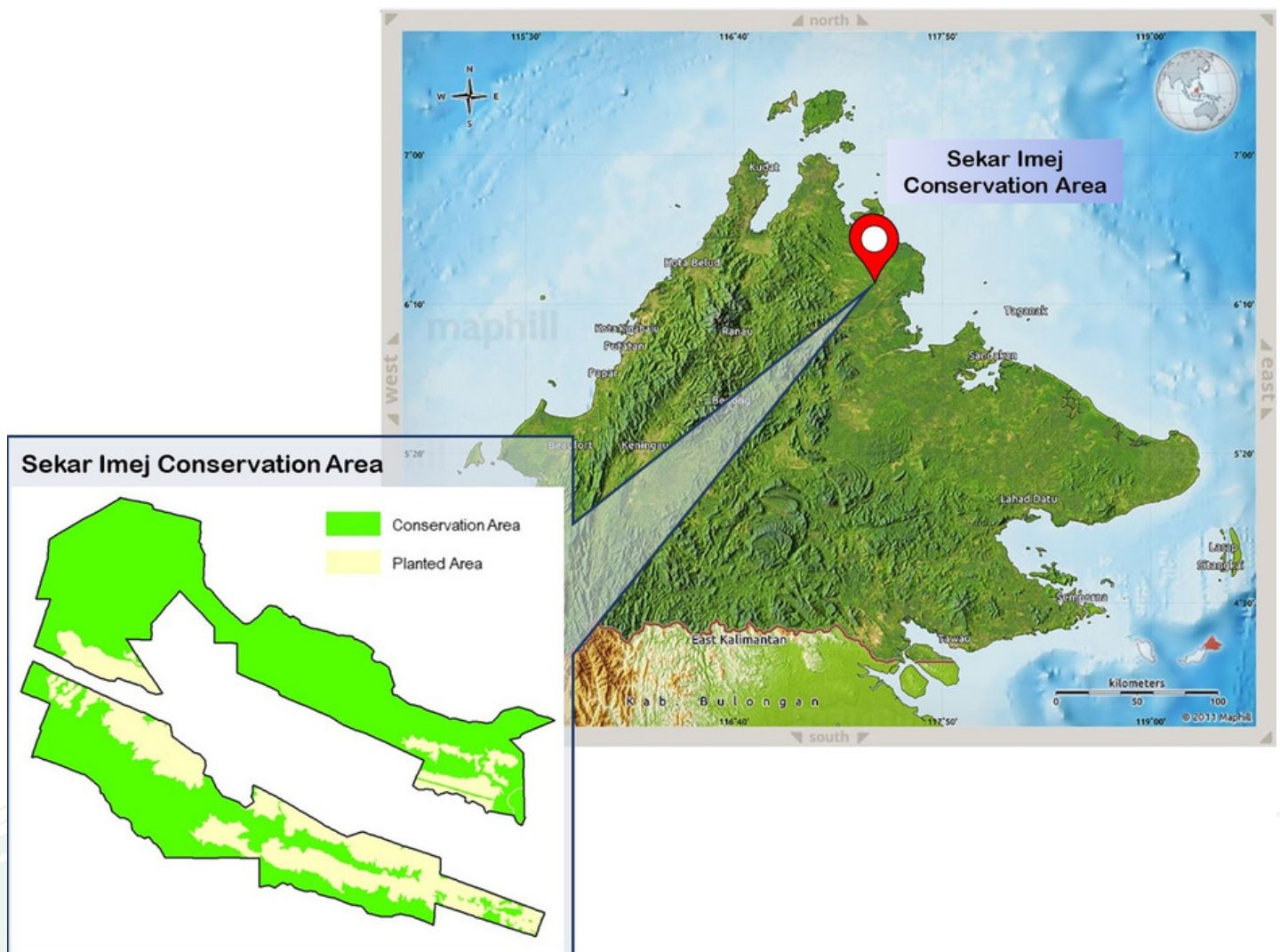


There are an estimated 8,399 hectares of conservation areas located within Wilmar's operations in Sabah and Sarawak, Malaysia, comprising of High Conservation Value (HCV) and riparian areas.

The Sekar Imej Conservation Area (SICA) project, which is located in the interiors of the Beluran District, Sabah, is largely Lowland Mixed Dipterocarp Forest, with varying degrees of stocking density of logged-over forests. In support of the SICA project, an additional 669 hectares was allocated to further enhance the ecological resilience of our 1,801 hectares HCV area in our Sekar Imej estate. The SICA project is located between the larger Paitan and Lingkabau Forest Reserves and is interspersed with other oil palm plantations and local villages. With a total of 2,469 hectares, the SICA is the largest conservation area within Wilmar's operations in Malaysia.

Despite having a large forest landscape, SICA has limited biodiversity baseline data due to its hilly terrain landscape and remote location and accessibility, away from major towns. To date, even with the limited surveys done, we have about 82 species of fauna in SICA that are listed as protected under the Wildlife Conservation Enactment 1997, Sabah.

Wilmar has been providing various types of support to communities surrounding SICA , including Kampung Kinadaan, Kampung Mononnod and Kampung Kaiboton. Our support to the villages includes various Corporate Responsibility programmes such as providing medical aid, funding dental procedures and cataract surgeries; infrastructure aid such as building a kindergarten as well as our Water Gravity project to help improve the water supply.



With over 50 percent of our Sekar Imej estate being a large forest landscape connected to the Paitan Forest Reserve, we are exploring options and opportunities to develop an 'innovative sustainable business model' that integrates conservation and plantation.

FOREWORD BY SICA PROJECT ADVISOR

I started my career as a forest conservation officer in a large international NGO in Sabah. My job then was working with timber companies and exploring opportunities to integrate sustainability within business. What struck me then (and is still true now), is that to successfully enable sustainability and conservation within companies, the starting point is that the people in top management must believe in the end goal. But more importantly, the company must then be willing to put in the time and effort to make sustainability work for their business.

I joined Wilmar in 2015 because I had known the people in the company over many years in past roles as campaigner, consultant, auditor, and buyer. I saw first-hand how the company and the people were so totally committed to work from the ground up to integrate sustainability and conservation within day-to-day operations.

The Sekar Imej Conservation Area (SICA) project is testament of what Wilmar values as a company. Consistent with our belief in integrating sustainability and conservation into our business, this beautiful forest landscape located within our estate boundaries will be protected and preserved. Aside from the conservation of the area, which we are planning to pursue in-depth research through collaborations with the scientific community, the SICA project is also designed to allow us to provide support and contribute towards development and wellbeing of the surrounding rural indigenous communities.

Our hope is that our SICA project can serve as important scientific research site for the Sabah and Bornean landscape. It is our hope that this will help us in our commitment to becoming a responsible steward of our environment and can be model that can be emulated by other companies.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the SICA project team. We still have a long journey ahead, but the first step is the biggest one to take. I am proud to be able to share a commitment and passion with this team!

Thank you.



PERPETUA GEORGE

**GENERAL MANAGER
GROUP SUSTAINABILITY**



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Kopivosian and greetings everyone!!

We decided that it was just as important to share our conservation activities and progress in our new exciting (believe me...it really is!) Sekar Imej Conservation Area , or SICA Project .

We have lots of interesting information in our first newsletter and are certain that there will be lots more to come. So, please stay tuned!!!

Best regards,

Marcie Elene

SICA Project Assistant Leader

BIODIVERSITY AND CARBON RESEARCH

MISSION AND VISION

Building a World Class Centre on Biodiversity and Carbon Research in a Production Landscape by 2030.



BIODIVERSITY

Establishing and strengthening effective management of HCV and conservation areas for long term biodiversity conservation in the plantation landscape

CAPACITY BUILDING

Developing a complementary industry for the local communities in support of the project and to develop low impact livelihood programmes for local communities

COMMUNITY

Empowering local communities to support the protection and management of the Sekar Imej Conservation Area (SICA)

THE SICA TEAM

The SICA team comprises of Wilmar personnel with decades of collective field experience, and they now bring their wealth of knowledge and experience in conservation to the project.



PROJECT LEADER

CHIN SING YUN

Wilmar Conservation Lead

20 years working experiences in conservation, community based-conservation and collaborated with government agencies, NGOs and local communities.



PROJECT ASSISTANT LEADER I

MARCIE ELENE

Assistant Manager, HCV

Nine years working experiences in managing conservation within oil palm plantations landscape. Professional experience and interest in riparian restoration and conservation awareness.



PROJECT ASSISTANT LEADER II

AQILAH NABIHAH

Conservation Sustainability Trainee

Four years experience in Forestry while completing Post-Graduate in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).



GROUND PROJECT PERSONNEL

MC MILLAN WILFRED

ESH Officer - Sugut Region

Working as Environment, Safety and Health (ESH) Officer for 3 years in Sugut region operation. Actively assisting the Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD) as Honorary Wildlife Warden.



HEAD OF SECURITY

MATHEWS MANGI

Chief Security - Sugut Region

Worked in Angkatan Tentera Malaysia (ATM) for 22 years and now the Head of Estate Security in Sugut region for 5 years. Actively assisting the Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD) as Honorary Wildlife Warden.



GROUND PROJECT PERSONNEL

JAMALUDDIN SAKKA

Sekar Imej Field Officer

Has been working in oil palm plantations for 24 years and now as Field Officer. Participate actively with HCV activities in Sekar Imej Estate.



PROJECT ADMIN I

JUKINI GAMIUS

Documentation Clerk & ESH

Experienced clerk, in payroll, material management and document controller for 15 years for RSPO/ISCC/MSPO Certifications. The only female Honorary Wildlife Warden in Sugut Region.



PROJECT ADMIN II

J. SHARON JUPIN

Assist. Documentation Clerk & ESH

Newly appointed clerk for assisting RSPO audit, since 2019. Participate actively with HCV activities in Sekar Imej Estate.

THE SICA TEAM



SUPPORTING GROUND STAFF

AMRIN IBRAHIM

Sekar Imej Field Staff

Working in field related operations for 14 years.



SUPPORTING GROUND STAFF

ROSLI AING

Sekar Imej Field Staff

Experienced in managing nursery for 3 years and field operation for 13 years.



ASSISTANT HEAD OF SECURITY

JUSTIN RAHMAN

Sugut Security

Currently working as one of the security of Sugut Region and experienced as a lorry driver.



SUPPORTING PERSONNEL

CHRISTINE MOJINAK

Hostel Warden

Working experienced as creche attendant and at present as hostel warden. She also participates in HCV activities.



SICA RANGER

LAIMONG BULIGA

Conservation Ranger

An honorary wildlife warden, and also in charge of protecting HCV areas within Sekar Imej estate for the past 6 years.



SICA RANGER

DAHLAN DALING

Conservation Ranger

In charge of protecting HCV areas within Sekar Imej estate for the past 3 years.



SICA RANGER

JOY ROSLAN

Conservation Ranger

Ranger in-training since August 2020, with 4 years experience.



SICA RANGER

MASDAN LAIMONG

Conservation Ranger

Ranger in-training since August 2020, with 6 years experience

"It is fully understood that the SICA project will not be an easy task, but I strongly believe that with the commitments from the current SICA team members, this humble start will certainly pave the way to new ideas that will help realise the vision and mission of the project.

In trying to integrate the values in conservation areas with the plantation management and involving surrounding communities, I too believe that it would further strengthen our respect for the 3Ps (Planet, People & Prosperity) and that the perception of seeing standing jungle trees as a waste of land will come to an end in the industry"



Colman Ng

Group Manager Sugut Region

Togetherness Means Teamwork

The SICA Team comprises of individuals with different backgrounds pooling their skills, talents, knowledge and passion towards conservation. In line with sustainable practices, personnel from estate operations and sustainability are coming together with the surrounding communities as a single team with the aim of achieving wonderful things in the SICA project.



Coming together is a Beginning

Keeping together is Progress

Working together is Success

- Henry Ford



THE GEROWONG & LAIMONG TRAILS

DISCOVERING TRAILS OF UNKNOWN FORESTS

The Gerowong Trail is a unique ecological site with its main geographical feature being boulders of varying sizes surrounding the area with a stream flowing in between. The trail is home to bats and other wildlife species that have yet to be discovered.



Puncak Laimong is a summit where our Conservation Ranger, Laimong Buliga, uses as a guarding post to protect the conservation area from encroachers. Hence, in honour of him being the first person to discover this peak (which also has an amazing view), it was named Puncak Laimong or Laimong's Peak.

THE GEROWONG & LAIMONG TRAILS

DISCOVERING TRAILS OF UNKNOWN FORESTS

Gerowong (1.0 km)



Puncak Laimong (700 m)



Batu Telinga Dinding (600 m)



Start here



The SICA Project Logo

The SICA project logo was designed by our very own, Mc Millan Wilfred, with the Monjuk Peak as the key feature of the logo.

The Monjuk Peak is located at Parcel 5, Sekar Imej and is a natural habitat for several protected species such as clouded leopard, primates and aves.

Historically, the peak appeared to be used as a base for hiding weapons during the Japanese occupation in World War II.

The monument that marked the weapon base is no longer present as this area was logged-over during the 1980s and 1990s, however the site remains one of the highest points in Sekar Imej estate.

Collaboration and Partnership

Wilmar signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) to collaborate on biodiversity conservation research projects. SICA will be the key priority area for biodiversity conservation related works under this MoU.



From left: Chin Sing Yun and Perpetua George from Wilmar together with Prof Dr. Amirul Al-Ashraf Abdullah (Dean), Dr. Zarul Hazrin Hashim (Senior Lecturer) and Dr. Rosazlina Rusly (Senior Lecturer) from USM's School of Biological Science.

Did you know?

SICA has been nominated as IUCN Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) pilot site.

"I grew up in Sugut, and was sent to Sugut operations in 1997, after having joined Wilmar a year earlier. A few years later, I was transferred to other estates before returning to Sugut in 2015.

I have seen lots of changes taking place in Sugut through the years, though one thing remains the same, and that is Wilmar's commitment towards conservation.

This is especially clear since sustainability best practice and sustainable certification was introduced.

I am certainly looking forward to the SICA project, with its potential to provide future opportunities to the younger generations of the local indigenous communities as well as toward sustainable development of this place, which is my hometown".



Aluddin Dullah
Sekar Imej Estate Manager

SICA PROJECT ACTIVITIES



The SICA team is working tirelessly to ensure the success of the project despite the challenges faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are adapting and taking a flexible approach to keep the project ongoing. Key activities for the project include:



IN-HOUSE TRAINING

In-house trainings and refresher courses are conducted for current and new SICA conservation team members with the intent of developing and enhancing skills and experience in biodiversity conservation for the manpower managing SICA and to ensure the presence of skillful rangers.

TRAIL ESTABLISHMENT

There are seven trails that have currently been identified and setup for use by researchers and visitors.

AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

Wildlife and conservation awareness programmes are constantly being conducted with the community members.

SICA STARS

In every newsletter we will feature a member of the SICA Team as a SICA Star, to share experiences and what makes them special to the team.

In this issue, we feature:

LAIMONG BULIGA



Laimong has passionately and diligently been protecting the Sekar Imej HCV areas for the past six years. Laimong was born and brought up in the Sugut region of Beluran, Sabah, and his village, Kampung Mononod is only a stone's throw from the SICA project.

Laimong continuously demonstrates his tenacity and initiative to gain new knowledge and experience in conservation.

Laimong, who is also a licensed Honorary Wildlife Warden, is our lead conservation ranger in SICA. His son, Masdan, was inspired by him and now follows in his footsteps by becoming a conservation ranger himself in the SICA team.

Aside from leading the conservation ranger team to protect SICA, Laimong also actively creates awareness on the importance of conservation amongst his fellow community members.



OTHER CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

WILDLIFE AWARENESS OUTREACH PROGRAM (WAOP)

Wilmar, through our operations in Sabah, Malaysia, partners with local NGOs and the Sabah Wildlife Department for the Wildlife Awareness Outreach Programme (WAOP). WAOP is an ongoing effort to improve the understanding among local stakeholders on the importance of biodiversity conservation. WAOP also aims to inculcate positive mindsets towards conservation and sustainable practices amongst people living in or close to the oil palm landscape.



REFORESTATION PROJECT

Enrichment Planting is one of our conservation initiatives in order to rehabilitate the riparian areas to reduce erosion and, more importantly, provide suitable habitat for wildlife, such as the Proboscis Monkey (*Nasalis larvatus*), especially in the Sabahmas estate.



OTHER CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

HCV- HCS ASSESSMENT

The conservation team conducts internal High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) assessments in Suburmas Estate. This is following the training conducted by Proforest in November 2019 to build knowledge and capacity of Wilmar's conservation team on Integrated HCV-HCS Assessment.



RETURNING WILDLIFE



Wildlife such as the Orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*), Maragang (*Presbytis rubicunda*) and Otter (*Lutrogale sp.*) have been spotted more frequently around Wilmar's estate. This is likely to be driven by the potential decrease in human activities in the surrounding areas.