

# SUSTAINABILITY BRIEF

## SAFEGUARDING NATURE'S SANCTUARY

### *WILMAR'S EFFORTS TO PROTECT BIODIVERSITY*

Malaysia and Indonesia are home to some of the most biodiverse forests. It was only natural for Wilmar to develop sustainability and conservation policies to protect forests, given the proximity of our operations to these forests. Wilmar invests significantly in forest conservation, especially with sustainability at the core of our operations. We were among the early adopters of High Conservation Value (HCV) assessments, circa 2005. Since then, our investment into conservation has expanded to also include High Carbon Stock (HCS) areas which are enshrined in our [No Deforestation, No Peat, No Exploitation](#) (NDPE) Policy.

Over time, our conservation efforts have translated into areas which are now sanctuaries for more than a few endangered species. As of December 2020, almost 10 percent of our total landbank, which is 31,640 hectares in Wilmar oil palm plantations, are conservation areas as identified through HCV assessments for regular monitoring, conservation and protection.



*Conservation efforts in a riparian area in Wilmar's Sabahmas plantation in Sabah, Malaysia*

Wilmar entered into a long-term collaboration with University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) since 2013 to conduct biodiversity monitoring in HCV areas mainly at Bukit Durang and other patches of HCV areas within our plantations. The collaboration is aimed at systematic data collection and monitoring of the HCV areas especially the Rare, Threatened and Endangered (RTE) species and their ecology, as a basis for proposing appropriate management approaches.

Three mammalian surveys via camera trapping were conducted between 2013 to 2020, respectively, where a total record of 25 species by camera trapping were observed in the areas of Wilmar oil palm plantation during this period. Some of the sightings that were recorded included the Sunda Pangolin (*Manis javanica*) and Sun Bear (*Helarctos malayanus*) which are of high conservation importance. Both are listed under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as Critically Endangered (Sunda Pangolin) and Vulnerable (Sun Bear) (IUCN, 2019).



*Among the camera trap images captured in Wilmar conservation areas in Indonesia and Malaysia*

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. To date, we have about 82 species of fauna in SICA that are listed as protected under the Wildlife Conservation Enactment 1997, Sabah.



*The Sekar Imej Conservation Area, which is Wilmar's largest conservation area in Malaysia*

Besides planning and managing conservation efforts, Wilmar empowers rangers through the Wildlife Rangers Programme for effective monitoring and enforcement to curb and deter wildlife poaching.

As part of the management plans in these areas we have regular patrols and monitoring in place to safeguard the wildlife found within these areas. Wilmar is one of the only palm plantations that has government appointed Honorary Wildlife Rangers and Wildlife Wardens in both Sabah and Sarawak who are empowered to stop any illegal activities related to wildlife happening in our conservation areas. The rangers are empowered to do more than patrolling and monitoring of HCV areas. They can set up roadblocks at key roads into the plantations and are even authorised to confiscate illegal weapons or wildlife parts which would be turned over to the Wildlife Department for the due legal process.



*Wilmar Wildlife Rangers have the legal authority to stop any vehicle, including aircrafts, for inspection*

The Wildlife Awareness Outreach Programme (WAOP) is among our key conservation programmes to raise awareness on the importance of biodiversity conservation. Since 2018, together with civil societies and government departments, we have engaged over 2,700 stakeholders, comprising of our workers, local communities and students living in the vicinity of our oil palm plantations in Sabah and Sarawak. WAOP also aims to inculcate interest in environmental protection among the younger generation. We are currently the development of a 'Junior Ranger' programme with SK Suai 2, which is the government school near our plantations. The programme, which an extension of the WAOP, will involve activities such as awareness talks, tree planting, field visits and many others. WAOP have other engagements with SK Suai 2, which included organising overnight field trips for primary six students to the Niah National Park. A total of 67 participants joined the visit, accompanied by our Wildlife Rangers and representatives from the Sarawak Forestry Corporation.

This is not an extensive list of all the conservation programmes that we have in place to protect our rainforest, nor it is an exhaustive list of the efforts we would undertake. There can never be enough efforts done to conserve the rainforest we have, but we can do all possible to conserve, rehabilitate and find sustainable ways to co-exist together.