

# SUSTAINABILITY BRIEF

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS: WILMAR'S CONSERVATION EFFORTS



*It is a priority at Wilmar that our supply chain is free from deforestation and biodiversity loss.*

Celebrated on 21 March, the International Day of Forests aims to raise awareness of the importance of all kinds of forests. This global observance serves as a reminder of the vital role forests play in sustaining life on Earth, providing habitat for biodiversity, regulating climate and supporting the livelihoods of millions worldwide. Recognising the significance of forests in mitigating climate change, it is a priority at Wilmar that our supply chain is free from deforestation and biodiversity loss. Our steadfast commitment to forest preservation is reinforced with the introduction of our No Deforestation, No Peat, No Exploitation (NDPE) policy in 2013.



Wilmar's commitment to environmental stewardship has seen us set aside over 33,000 hectares (ha) as conservation areas across our operations globally. This translates to about 10% of our total landbank in Indonesia, Malaysia and Africa.

## INDONESIA

### West Sumatra



*The Blackfurred Gibbon, also known as siamang (*Symphalangus syndactylus*), is notoriously difficult to reintroduce into conservation areas*

In West Sumatra, Indonesia, we oversee a High Conservation Value (HCV) area spanning 1,760 ha within PT Kencana Sawit Indonesia (PT KSI). This conservation zone serves as a sanctuary for an array of wildlife and plant species. It is home to a remarkable 356 species of flora and 273 species of fauna, among which are 23 species of wildlife classified as Critically Endangered or Vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, underscoring the area's significance for biodiversity conservation. There are 37 wildlife species, including 12 identified as Rare, Threatened, and Endangered (RTE) that are protected under Indonesian law and regulations.

A survey by Yayasan Kalaweit Indonesia identified the HCV area in PT KSI as previously being home to the Blackfurred Gibbon, also known as siamang (*Symphalangus syndactylus*) before the species

became locally extinct. We embarked on a strategic partnership with Yayasan Kalaweit Indonesia in 2014 to reintroduce siamangs into the PT KSI conservation zone after concluding that the biodiverse area is a suitable habitat for the species. Reintroducing siamangs poses significant challenges, particularly concerning the availability of food and suitable tree cover crucial for their survival. These primates are notoriously difficult to reintegrate due to specific habitat requirements, without which they often struggle to adapt and face a high risk of mortality shortly after release.

Twenty-two siamangs have been successfully reintroduced into our HCV area. They came from the Supayang Rehabilitation Center, which is managed jointly by Yayasan Kalaweit Indonesia and the Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam (BKSDA), or the Natural Resources Conservation Agency of Indonesia. Once relocated to PT KSI, each siamang pair may need a unique habituation process lasting between three to six months before release. During this period, the primates are acclimatised within a designated habituation enclosure where they receive food and continuous monitoring. To minimise disturbance during the siamangs' adjustment to their forest surroundings, no human activity is permitted in the vicinity of the habituation area.

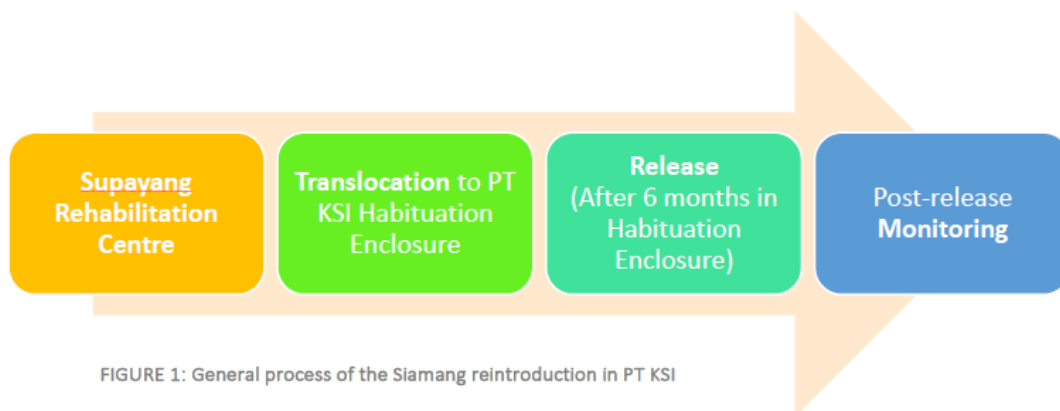


FIGURE 1: General process of the Siamang reintroduction in PT KSI

## Central Kalimantan



*Spanning over 850 meters, our Nature School or 'Sekolah Alam' eco-trail is equipped with informative signboards and posters that highlight key aspects of species and habitat conservation*

Wilmar's largest conservation site of more than 15,000 ha is in Central Kalimantan, where we utilise the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) to oversee and patrol our protected landscapes while we conduct comprehensive data analysis. The SMART system encompasses four primary data retrieval components:

- Location spatial data
- Date and time of patrol
- Observation of wildlife in HCV areas
- Human activities in HCV areas such as encroachment and illegal logging



Field data collected by our teams, including patrol counts, field images and observations, is input into SMART, enabling us to pinpoint HCV areas and detect encroachment within our plantation operations. This data serves as the foundation for evaluating and adjusting our management and monitoring strategies for conservation efforts in Indonesia.

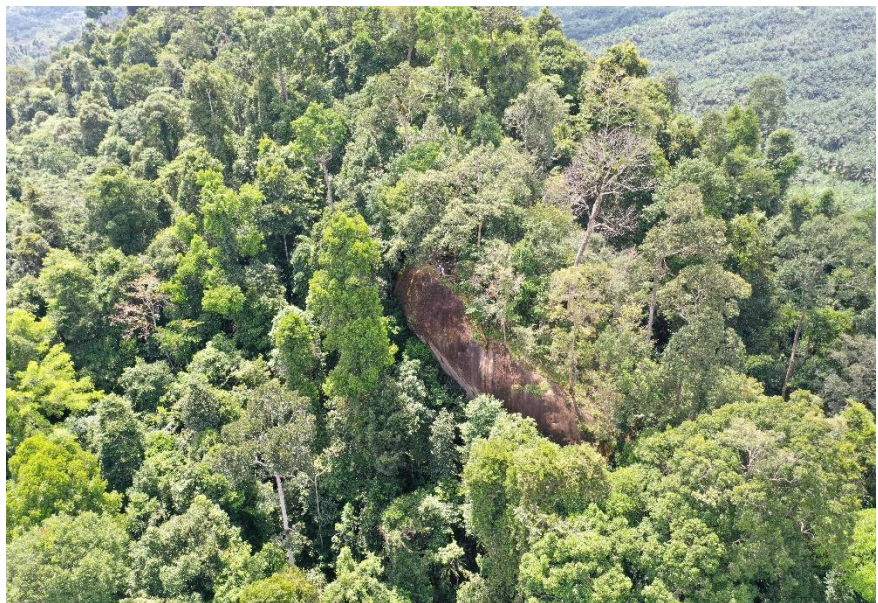
Additionally, to assess the effectiveness of our plantation management plans and identify areas for enhancement, we consolidate data on HCV management programmes, including restoration initiatives, signboard installations, marking poles, boreholes and community engagement efforts on our internal HCV Management Implementation Dashboard. Since the implementation of this system in 2015, we have conducted over 15,189 patrols, captured 32,512 field photos, and recorded 27,626 direct and indirect wildlife sightings, of which 14,965 involve RTE species.

In tandem with our ongoing commitment to raise awareness and promote conservation, we established a forest education eco-trail in August 2022 within the boundaries of our plantations PT Mentaya Sawit Mas and PT Karunia Kencana Permaisejati. Spanning over meters, our Nature School or 'Sekolah Alam' eco-trail is equipped with informative signboards and posters that highlight key aspects of species and habitat conservation while also offering activities such as flora and fauna identification, exploration of forest ecosystems, waste management education, fire prevention measures and tree planting initiatives.

## **MALAYSIA**

### **Sekar Imej Conservation Area (SICA)**

Situated amidst the lush landscapes of the Beluran district in Sabah, Sekar Imej Conservation Area (SICA) is the largest conservation site in Malaysia at close to 2,500 ha. The SICA project was initiated in 2020 when Wilmar intensified the protection of HCV areas within our oil palm operations. SICA serves as a beacon of biodiversity preservation in the face of challenges posed by oil palm operations and local development.



*Initiated in 2020, the Sekar Imej Conservation Area (SICA) project is the largest conservation site in Malaysia at close to 2,500 ha.*

Being one of the last intact forest patches midst the fragmented forests of the Beluran district, SICA plays an important role in providing ecosystem services in the Sugut region. However, land use change outside SICA's boundaries and forest fragmentation present challenges in managing SICA due to the increasing risk

of encroachment, poaching and deforestation. Land use change outside SICA can also potentially impact the species composition in SICA and lead to increased threats to the area.

SICA is the source of Non-Timber Forest Products for the surrounding region. More importantly, SICA acts as the main water catchment and is the source of gravity-feed water supply to nearby indigenous villages. Recognising the pivotal role of SICA in setting industry standards and inspiring conservation efforts, Wilmar plans to establish the Sekar Imej Biodiversity and Carbon Research Centre by 2030. It will spearhead innovative management approaches and community-driven initiatives to further bolster our conservation initiatives.

The objectives of the Sekar Imej Biodiversity and Carbon Research Centre are comprehensive and multifaceted:

- **Conservation Commitment:** Wilmar seeks to set a benchmark for HCV management and conservation planning within the industry, demonstrating our commitment to sustainable practices.



*Wilmar collaborates closely with research institutions, organisations and academia to implement evidence-based conservation strategies.*

- **Innovative Conservation Management:** Leveraging the unique strengths of SICA, we seek to pioneer approaches to conservation, fostering resilience and adaptability in the face of environmental challenges.

- **Community Engagement:** Through inclusive, community-based conservation efforts, we aim to empower local stakeholders especially local communities to become active participants in safeguarding the forest landscape while promoting sustainable livelihoods.

To realise these goals, Wilmar collaborates closely with research institutions, organisations and academia such as [HUTAN](#), [South East Asia Rainforest Research Partnership \(SEARPP\)](#), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS). Wilmar and SEARRP extended a joint commitment to scientific research, with a focus on forest rehabilitation, which is detailed in a new [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#) signed in February 2022.

Through joint scientific expeditions and data collection efforts, we ensure the implementation of informed, evidence-based conservation strategies. In the



management of HCV and conservation areas, we adopt a holistic approach that encompasses initiatives such as reforestation and habitat rehabilitation, awareness raising and capacity building for local communities. Both within and outside concession areas, Wilmar is committed to restoring ecosystems and preserving biodiversity hotspots in the SICA landscape for future generations.

We have regular newsletters which provide regular updates on SICA which can be found [here](#).

### Bukit Durang, Sarawak



*Bukit Durang forest is the largest forest patch near Saremas.*

Conservation efforts in the Saremas estates began in 2008 and led to the identification of key conservation areas including the 994-ha Bukit Durang Conservation Area. Conservation areas were initially monitored sporadically until 2013 when Wilmar partnered with Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) to conduct biodiversity studies in HCV areas. This collaboration led to comprehensive biodiversity monitoring and the publication of a book titled "[Bukit Durang: The Hidden Jewel of Ulu Suai, Sarawak](#)" in 2023. Launched at the 2023 East Malaysia Palm and Lauric Oils Price



*Wilmar's GM for Sustainability, Daphne Hameeteman (left) presenting a copy of the book "Bukit Durang: Hidden Jewel of Ulu Suai, Sarawak" to the Premier of Sarawak, Tan Sri Abang Johari Abang Openg (right), joined by Wilmar's GM for Marketing, Chandra Naidu (centre).*



Outlook Conference held in Kuching, Sarawak, the book showcases the conservation significance of Bukit Durang.

The Bukit Durang conservation site is characterised by a diverse array of flora and fauna, including economically important tree species like *Eusideroxylon zwageri* and *Dipterocarpus spp.* Despite being a fragmented forest, Bukit Durang serves as a vital habitat for numerous species of conservation importance. Biodiversity surveys conducted from 2014 to 2015 revealed the presence of diverse fauna, including critically endangered species like the pangolin, Malayan Sun Bear, and Marbled Cat. The findings underscore the conservation value of Bukit Durang and highlight the importance of maintaining fragmented forest patches within oil palm plantations to support native species diversity and ecosystem services. Through collaborative efforts with UNIMAS, we have strengthened our capacity for biodiversity conservation and monitoring, contributing to the sustainable management of our plantations while protecting valuable habitats and species.

## NIGERIA



*We implement tree planting initiatives which reintroduce indigenous tree species to regenerate degraded area.*

Wilmar takes proactive measures to uphold environmental conservation, with a particular focus on monitoring and safeguarding 3,953 ha of HCV areas in Nigeria. All identified HCV areas are protected through regular patrols and monitoring initiatives to mitigate threats of illegal encroachment and activities. We spearhead reforestation and forest regeneration programmes by implementing tree planting initiatives which reintroduce indigenous tree species, *Irvingia gabonensis* and *Afzelia Africana*, to regenerate the degraded area. We also collaborate closely with relevant stakeholders to

bolster the protection of these conservation zones and foster partnerships that enhance conservation efforts. To prioritise community engagement, we conduct sensitisation programmes with workers and host communities for environmental awareness and stewardship.

Our biodiversity commitments are comprehensive and aimed at achieving effective conservation management. To fulfil these objectives, we have an eco-patrol team comprising dedicated eco-guards and wildlife rangers stationed at strategic camps or posts. The team conducts daily patrols to monitor for illegal activities and encroachments while ensuring the integrity of these vital ecosystems. Collaborating closely with research and educational institutions, we conduct extensive biodiversity surveys and ecosystem monitoring programmes documenting flora and fauna for conservation strategies and promoting sustainable land management practices.

Among the wildlife found at our conservation site include the African grey parrots, commonly called African grey. These birds are native to the rainforests of West and Central Africa which overlap oil palm production regions. Surveys at our plantations in Eyop Industries Limited and Biase Plantations Limited, in Nigeria and Ghana respectively, have shown the continued presence of this species despite it being extremely rare to find African greys in the wider neighbouring landscape.

As we celebrate the International Day of Forests, we seek to emphasise the coexistence of environmental preservation and economic prosperity. Looking ahead, we remain dedicated to implementing sustainable practices that prioritise the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems.