

This report will be made public. If it contains confidential or sensitive information, please also provide a revised report for sharing with the public.

Section I. Project Information	
Project Title: Kerinci Seblat Tiger Protection & Conservation	
Grantee Organisation: Fauna & Flora International	
Location of project: Kerinci Seblat National Park, Sumatra, Indonesia	
<p>Size of project area (if appropriate):</p> <p>1,386m ha (KSNP) excluding adjoining buffer-zone forests, some also rich in Sumatran tiger Field activities are primarily focused to the central section of the national park and adjoining forests in an area of approximately 350,000ha however investigations and other activities extend more widely across the Kerinci Seblat landscape.</p>	<p>No of tigers in project area, giving evidence & source:</p> <p>Drawing on park-wide Occupancy Surveys by the FFI Kerinci Seblat Tiger Monitoring team (2019-2020) and camera trapping in the Core Area (2020) and a revised methodology for tiger density calculation; Kerinci Seblat NP and adjoining forests protects 128 Sumatran tiger with 119 individuals of these tigers within the national park and 29 in the Core Area.</p>
<p>Partners: <i>(Please give details of partners, including communities, academic institutions etc. for this project)</i></p> <p>Kerinci Seblat National Park Authority: The TPCUs operate under a partnership between FFI Indonesia and KSNP which is recognised in a national level multi-year MoU between FFI Indonesia and the Indonesian MoEF and under a second landscape- level MoU between FFI and KSNP and these agreements provide a legal framework underwriting all field activities which are conducted under the legal authority of the director of KSNP.</p> <p>Units for the Conservation of Natural Resources (KSDA): Operating units of the MoEF responsible for nature conservation outside protected areas including human-wildlife conflict mitigation.</p> <p>Indonesia National Police: Provincial and park-edge district divisions.</p> <p>FFI Kerinci Seblat landscape Village Forest team: Over the last decade, the team has worked with more than 70 forest-edge villages to secure community-led sustainable management of more than 106,000ha of forests under licenses issued by MoEF. The project team works with park-edge communities and district forestry management units (KPHP) in three provinces and additionally with KSD and project focus is now commencing to shift to tiger rich lowland forests bordering the south-west of KSNP in Bengkulu province.</p>	

Others:

Local and national :- Lingkar Inisiatif – primarily focused on Lebong and North Bengkulu districts of Bengkulu but now developing activities in Musi Rawas district of South Sumatra in the SE of KSNP; Institut Conservation Society (West Sumatra), Flight (addressing IWT primarily in wild birds in Sumatra), Biology Faculty of the University of Andalas, Padang (West Sumatra); Forum Harimaukita (Sumatran Tiger Conservation Forum), representing Sumatran tiger conservation practitioners in Indonesia; WCS IP Wildlife Crime Unit.

International: Environmental Investigation Agency, Traffic SE Asia

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Actual start date of project: *(if different from 1st February)*

Reporting period: February-July 2021

Section II. Project Progress

Summary of progress for the first 6 months: *(please provide a summary for use in our communication materials)*

Tiger Protection & Conservation Units maintained a range of actions to protect and conserve the single most important wild tiger population in Sumatra. However, field activities were severely impacted by a surge in Covid-19 cases in Sumatra in the second quarter of this reporting period as the Delta variant took hold in rural Sumatra. Consequently only 48 SMART foot patrols could be conducted, covering a distance of 687Km (427 miles) by GPS Waypoint (966Km/600 miles measured by Tracklog). Patrol Effort to record tiger presence was stable while a record 66% of all patrols reported tiger present. Poaching threat to both tiger and their prey recorded on patrols remained far below the long-term programme average, even though this interim report period includes the fasting month of Ramadan when pressure on tiger prey species traditionally has increased. Investigations were conducted in park-edge districts of three of the four provinces which overlay the national park and supported the arrest of two tiger poachers and seizure of the complete body parts of an adult tiger poached from a protected area to the south of KSNP, this case has now proceeded to the first stage of the judicial process with a full Court hearing in early September.

Details of activities and results to date: *(Please give details of progress made towards the objectives & outputs of your Logframe, and activities included in your Workplan. Please add any relevant charts, maps and images.*

SMART forest patrols by Tiger Protection & Conservation Units:

Objective 1 *Consolidate gains made, since 2016, in detecting and containing threat to Sumatran tiger, their prey and habitat through routine and information-led SMART patrols and, through a forest law enforcement presence, deter opportunist forest and wildlife crime.*

Tiger Protection & Conservation Units conducted a total of 48 SMART forest foot patrols in and adjoining Kerinci Seblat National Park in seven districts of three of the four provinces which overlay the protected area.

The number of forest patrols conducted by TPCUs was lower than the 55+/- planned for this six-months period as a consequence of the Delta variant of Covid-19 spreading widely across rural western and central Sumatra from the second quarter of 2021.

Patrols covered a total distance of 687Km (427 miles) by GPS Waypoint and 966Km (600 miles) measured by Tracklog with the presence of not fewer than 35 Sumatran tiger recorded and with a record 66% of patrols reporting tigers present, park-wide.

TPCU patrol Effort to record tiger presence was stable at 1 tiger per 6.6 patrol days and 1 per 19.6km park-wide and at 1 per 5 days in the Core Area with just over 90% of patrols in the Core Area reporting tigers present. However, due to the lower than usual number of patrols, no judgments can be drawn on the results of Effort during this interim reporting period.

Two of these patrols were conducted at the request of the national park authority following discussions with KSDA West Sumatra who were seeking to identify a suitable location for the release of a young adult tiger rescued after roaming in village farmland. A resident tiger was recorded on one of these scoping patrols while the second location, although no tiger presence was recorded, the site was concluded to be unsuitable due to low prey base which would have the potential to result in conflict subsequently.

One tiger breeding record was made – a tigress and two cubs – on a patrol in national park forests in the south west of the national park in Bengkulu.

Active and recently-active (<2 months) poaching threat to tiger detected on TPCU patrols remained below the long-term average with only one active tiger snare recorded on a 10-day patrol crossing through the Core Area between Kerinci in the central area of the park and Mukomuko district in the south-west of the national park.

A second ‘recently-active’ tiger snare was recorded near the active snare and this had trapped a Malay tapir (EN) which had died approximately two weeks earlier.

The TPCU conducted a wider sweep of the area but found no further active or recently-active snares or camps which might have supported identification of the individuals responsible.

A further four ‘recently-active’ tiger snare placements were recorded on two patrols (both in the south-west of the national park), one of which was launched on the basis of information received during a search of an illegal loggers’ camp in park-edge forests whereby they found three concealed tiger cable snares.

The project team had feared that the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular due to job losses in the casual economy in larger towns and cities would trigger an increase in poaching of key tiger prey species, in particular of Sambar deer.

This has not occurred to date and the ongoing long-term decline in snare-poaching threat to key tiger prey species continued during this interim reporting period with 'only' 43 active snares detected and destroyed in the course of two patrols.

TPCUs conducted focused patrols during and immediately before the fasting month of Ramadan to combat an increase in pressure on deer which is recorded in some areas of the national park as hunters seek to meet increased local market for meat.

However only one of the 12 'seasonal' patrols conducted during and immediately before Ramadan recorded active poaching with a 'long' snare line of 40 traps destroyed on a local knowledge-led patrol; while a second patrol recorded and destroyed a further three deer snares so that only 5% of patrols recorded active threat to deer during this six- month period.

Very low levels of poaching threat to tiger prey species were also recorded in the same reporting period of 2020.

Some team rangers speculate this may be a consequence of forest-edge communities seeking to bar 'outsiders' from entering their areas for fear of spreading Covid-19 and so impacting on poachers from other areas.

However, the project team is also aware of the widespread availability of high-powered modified airguns and so the ongoing fall in threat to deer may in part be a change in hunters' practices, in some cases due to loss of their snares to TPCU patrols.

Patrol results were reported monthly to the director of the national park and to the Kerinci Seblat landscape team to be shared as appropriate, with village forest patrol teams and other partners so informing wider conservation strategies

Wildlife crime investigations and Community information networks

Objective 2 *Through investigations, including use of forest-edge information networks, poachers and IWT traders are identified, criminal incidents detected and investigations support tiger law enforcement where Evidence is available, Poaching and trade syndicates, domestic IWT routes and inter-syndicate linkages are identified and mapped and the illegal wildlife blackmarket is monitored for changes in demand*

More than 30 investigations were conducted, logged and graded for credibility during this interim reporting period, with activities conducted in villages and towns in three of the four provinces which overlay the project landscape.

Additionally, information was collected, in some cases *ad hoc*, while in the course of other activities, on suspected poaching and trade in other species including deer, Sumatran elephant and wild songbirds and wider threats to national park forests.

As with patrols, investigation capacity was severely constrained by the Covid-19 pandemic in the second quarter of this six month period due to concerns for staff safety if proposing to travel to or from areas with high rates of Covid-19 and meet first-hand with individuals of interest.

Of investigations conducted, two secured first-hand evidence of crime (A1) with one proceeding to full law enforcement in a combined operation between the MoEF Law Enforcement directorate (Gakkhum) and Bengkulu provincial police division in which TPCU personnel took key role. A second

A1 observation in the east of the national park was judged unlikely to proceed to a satisfactory outcome if law enforcement was launched and the suspect remains under observation.

The investigation resulting in tiger law enforcement commenced in early 2020 and the suspect was initially thought to be a local-level poacher but it quickly became clear that he had first-hand knowledge of several suspected tiger poachers and traders across three park-edge provinces.

As this investigation developed, it became clear that while the target may have also poached Sumatran tiger, he was primarily a broker or middle-man for both tiger and elephant poachers and traders, on occasion buying tigers directly and then trading them on acting as a broker and taking a share of the sales between tiger poachers and traders.

Investigations indicated that while IWT demand for Sumatran tiger – and other in-demand species, in particular Sunda pangolin – has been severely disrupted by Covid-19 impacts on international trade routes, illegal demand for tiger continues.

However, IWT networks appear to remain fragmented and illegal trade – with the exception of wild song birds to meet demand in Java – was seen to be less ‘organised’ and demand-driven than previously. No new trade routes from the project area were reported.

TPCUs continued to maintain communications, as far as possible, with park-edge community information networks who provided a range of information on suspected threat both to Sumatran tiger and prey, and to national park forests which were responded to when possible.

Law enforcement:

Objective 3 *Conduct law enforcement appropriate to the offence within the national park in the course of TPCU patrols and partner with other government agencies, primarily Indonesia National Police, where outside the national park’s area of legal jurisdiction and, through targeted law enforcement actions contain threat to tiger across the landscape and more widely through disrupting poaching and IWT networks and deterring opportunist wildlife and forest crime through example*

One intelligence-led tiger law enforcement operation was conducted during this six-month period with the arrest of two poachers from a district in south Bengkulu province adjoining Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park and seizure of a young adult male Sumatran tiger.

This was the second tiger law enforcement operation conducted in the last 12 months in which the evidence for law enforcement came from an area other than KSNP but where information was secured by TPCU investigators in the project landscape and demonstrates that, while IWT in tigers is less organised than in the past, both IWT brokers and poachers make use of trans-landscape networks to trade tigers.

This action was led by the MoEF Law Enforcement Directorate (Gakkhum) and Bengkulu provincial police criminal detectives’ division but with key members of the TPCU team, including the investigator, taking a full and active role in law enforcement. This case has now proceeded through the case development process and has been passed to the courts with a first hearing in early August and the full trial expected to be conducted in September.

Three formal written cautions and two verbal warnings were issued in the course of two patrols with two chainsaws and a high-powered airgun among items confiscated from offenders along with deer

snares, three tiger 'sling' snares and bird-catching equipment among items found in searches of forest-edge farmhouses or local, small-scale illegal logging camps.

Human-tiger and other human-carnivore conflict mitigation

TPCUs responded directly to only one human-tiger conflict during this interim reporting period with other human-wildlife conflicts reported attended by members of human-wildlife conflict mitigation taskforce groups led by local units of KSDA.

In this particular case, careful examination of the area and interviews with local farmers strongly indicated that the tigers reported, by a frightened farmer, were in fact Sumatran leopard cats. However, the team briefed supportive farmers in the area to monitor the situation in the event of further problems and to report any individuals from other areas entering the forest in search of 'the tigers' as the incident was widely reported in local news media despite advice being given that this incident did not relate to Sumatran tiger.

A further four 'low grade' human-tiger conflicts in the east of the national park were monitored by local forestry management units or KSDA with all of these cases relating to tiger pug marks or other signs of tiger seen in forest edge farmland and not posing any active threat to either the community or livestock.

Stakeholder liaison and networking

All project activities were reported monthly, to the acting head of the national park and subsequently to MoEF headquarters in Jakarta while the team's field manager routinely liaised with local KSDA officers to discuss approaches to mitigating conflict with other species, in particular Malay sun bear which continues to be the species most frequently coming into conflict with forest-edge communities. In spite of the severe restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, national park members of the team also maintained networking with local police partners. Meanwhile the team advisor was assigned by FFI to a working group formed from a number of international NGOs to develop key goals and actions required for the next 12 year- period of the Global Tiger Recovery Plan II, which will launch in 2022 marking the Year of the Tiger, with some of the lessons learned from more than 20 years of tiger conservation in Kerinci incorporated in the actions needed.

Give details of any obstacles to success that the project has encountered over the last 6 months.

(Please provide detailed examples, explain what impact these will have on the project results and the changes to the budget and timetable of project activities)

The emergence of the Delta variant in Sumatra in the second quarter of the project period together with financial constraints due to the pandemic's impacts on donors and an earlier-than- expected end to the UNDP tiger project caused significant operational issues to the project team during this interim reporting period.

No TPCU patrols were conducted in June as a consequence of tight local lockdowns in response to soaring Covid-19 rates and concerns that rangers would unwittingly infect other team members or, subsequently, their own families at a time when many park-edge district hospitals were operating at

or over capacity. The team attempted to recommence SMART patrols in July - but with reduced ranger numbers due to personnel infected with Covid-19 and, of the four patrols launched, two had to evacuate team members falling ill with Covid-19 or in response to information that close family members had contracted the disease. It is unlikely that the target of >115 patrols across 1850Km and 600 forest patrol days will be achieved if current constraints on operations continue. While coordination and networking with local and national stakeholders could be conducted using electronic media, TPCU rangers had difficulties in maintaining relationships and networking with forest-edge and other local information sources in more remote areas bordering the park since many have either poor or no mobile phone coverage.

Budget: Is the spend on target? **If not, please give details and provide an updated budget sheet.**

Yes

Media: Please provide a list of recent publications and media both local and national which mentions the work funded by this project and/or mentions WildCats Conservation Alliance

No current media to share.

Photos: WildCats Conservation Alliance asks for at least 5 relevant high-resolution jpeg files of images of the project activities during this time period.

Please see attached.