

**PROGRAM FINAL REPORT
FEBRUARY 2018 – FEBRUARY 2019**

**STRENGTHENING THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONSENSUS FOR
PROTECTION OF SUMATRAN TIGER IN BENGKULU AREA OF KERINCI
SEBLAT NATIONAL PARK, SUMATRA**



LINGKAR INSTITUTE

**KERINCI SEBLAT NATIONAL PARK AND BUFFER ZONE FOREST,
LEBONG AND NORTH BENGKULU DISTRICT OF BENGKULU PROVINCE**

A. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AND RESULT

The project objective is to reduce poaching and illegal wildlife trade threat to Sumatran tiger through practical collaborations between government, religious leaders and forest edge communities and building conservation awareness using Islamic perspective and values.

The project team worked closely with partners of the Lebong chapter of the Indonesia Council of Islamic Scholars (MUI) to strengthen awareness of the Fatwa MUI No. 4/2014 which prohibits Muslims in Indonesia from hunting or trading endangered wildlife such as Sumatran tiger.

These activities had a strong focus to key villages in Lebong district identified by the project team in 2017 as sources of poaching threat to Sumatran tiger in national park forests in Lebong and surrounding areas.

The Lingkar team also started working with the North Bengkulu chapter of the Council of Islamic Scholars in the neighbouring district of North Bengkulu and mosque leaders and preachers in this district are now also routinely socializing the MUI Fatwa during religious and other community events.

Socialisation of the MUI Fatwa in this district has been mainly focused to forest-edge villages and market towns where previous investigations by Lingkar Institut and project partners have identified tiger poachers or traders.

The project team also commenced to work closely with local government education department officials and secondary school teachers in Lebong District to prepare to incorporate nature and wildlife conservation into the education curriculum for junior high schools in Lebong district.

The work committee formed jointly between LINGKAR INSTITUTE and the Department of Education and Culture of Lebong Regency, has completed teaching materials (RPP) and will be tested through school visit activities in 2019.

This planning has been enthusiastically received by district government decision makers and it is now expected that Lebong district will be the first in Indonesia to incorporate conservation into the secondary school education syllabus.

Eleven SMART patrols were conducted by a collaborative Rapid Response patrol team composing rangers from the national park and local forestry service and the local community.

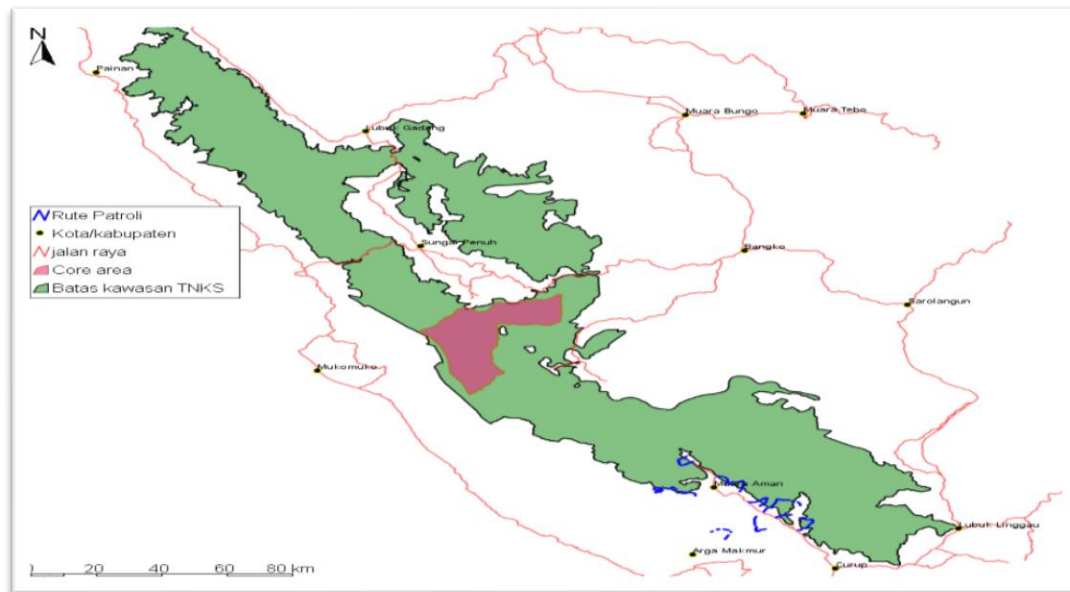
Patrols were conducted routinely and using information from the forest-edge community and mosque congregations and reported six tigers present on patrol routes with only one active tiger snare recorded – in a watershed protection forest adjoining the national park on the Lebong-North Bengkulu borders.

Using these activities, the project team has continued to work to build broad-based support for conservation of tiger and other wildlife and reduce threat from wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade

B. ACTIVITIES AND RESULT:

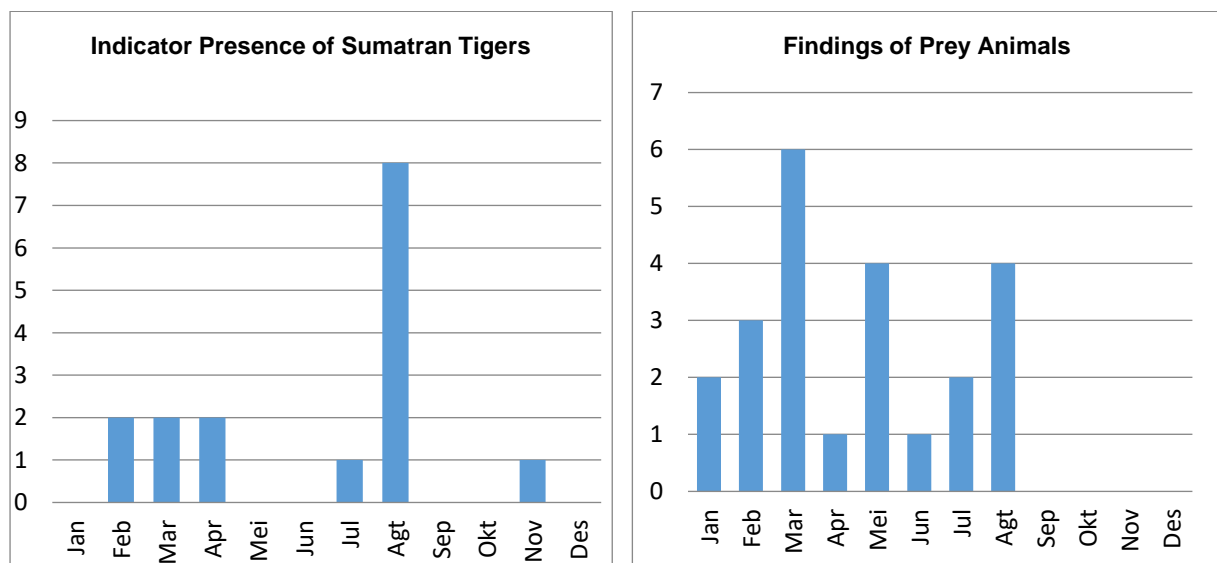
1. SMART Forest Patrols by a Collaborative Rapid Response Patrol Unit

A total of eleven SMART patrols were conducted in national park and park-edge forests in Lebong District with support from WCCA and other donors by a patrol unit composing national park and local forestry service rangers and members of forest-edge communities. These patrols covered a total walking distance of 176.65 km (by GPS Waypoint) in a generally very hilly area with 54 unit days spent on SMART forest patrols in the project area.



Map SMART Patrols 2018

Patrols reported the presence of not fewer than sixteen Sumatran tiger on these patrols with tiger presence identified by pugmarks, faeces and scrapes/scratch marks of the eight patrols conducted in the project area reporting tiger present. In addition, twenty-three prey animals such as pigs and deer were found.

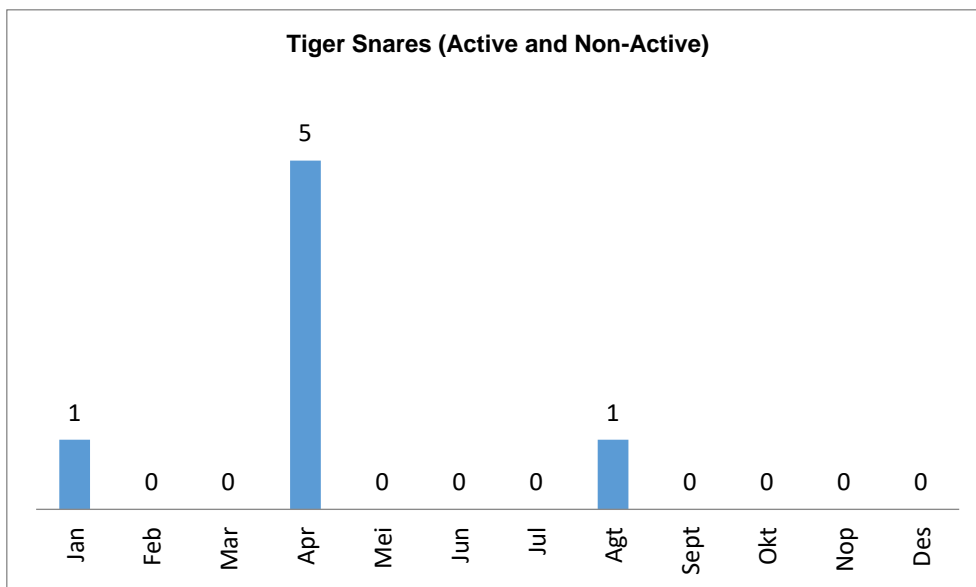


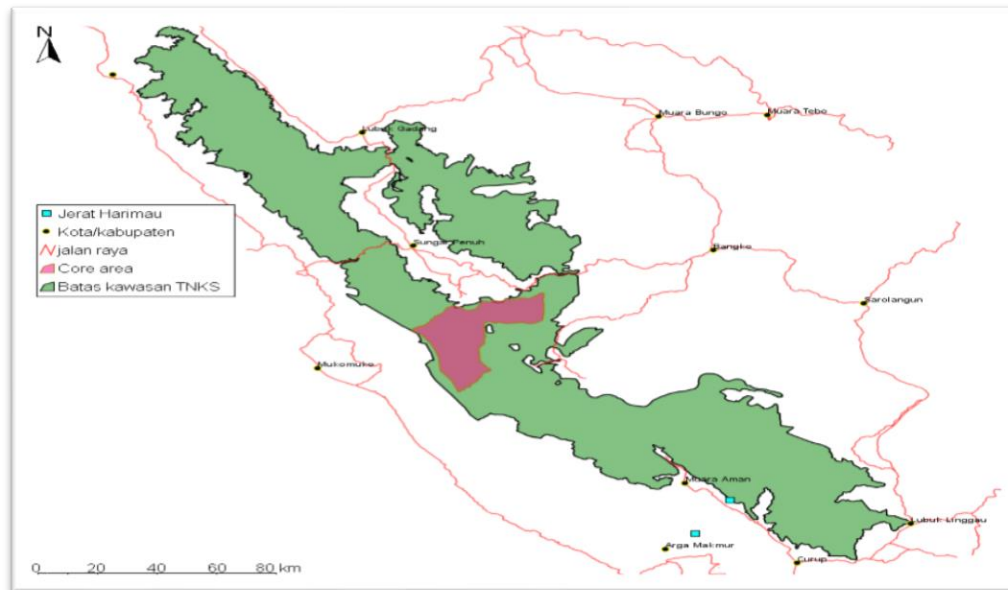
Based on the data displayed, the indicator of the presence of Sumatran tigers was found the most in August, which amounted to eight. if viewed spatially the location of the discovery of indicators of tiger presence is mostly found in the core area of BUKIT SOLANG.

This map has been removed for security reasons

Sumatran Tiger Presence Records

Active or potential poaching threats to tigers are recorded during the patrol period. seven tiger snares were found on patrol in park-edge forests on the Lebong-North Bengkulu district borders.





Map of Findings of Sumatran Tiger Snares in 2018

Team patrol in national park forests in eastern Lebong encountered a poachers' 'camp' and found five tiger cable snares or 'seling' – but no deer snares - concealed in the camp. These snares were found in a regularly-used camp in an area close to where a TPCU patrol in 2015 reported clear signs of the loss of three tigers to snare poaching.

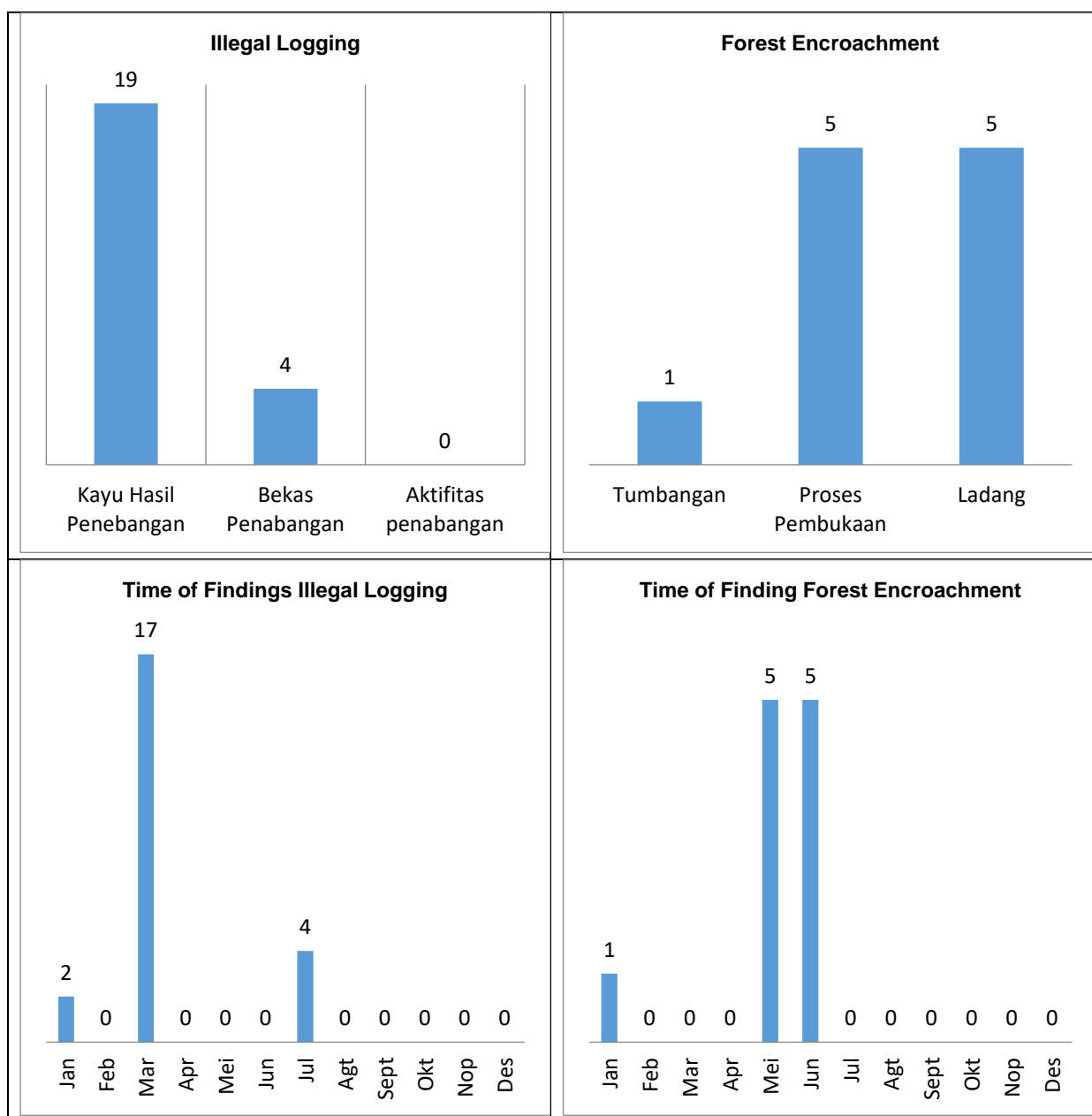
RRU patrol – launched on the basis of community information regarding suspected tiger poaching – resulted in the detection of an illegal muzzle-loader gun in a poachers' camp a full day's walk into the national park forest. This patrol was only accompanied by auxiliary national park rangers and not, as usual, a full park or forestry service ranger and the team was worried to carry it out and so destroyed the gun on site burning and breaking it.



A patrol evaluation meeting subsequently agreed that in the future, such items must be formally passed to the national park or other appropriate government authority for follow up action where possible. This patrol also met two armed men leaving the forest, one carrying a gun likely intended for shooting helmeted hornbill while the second was carrying a larger caliber weapon.

The patrol team was unarmed and so not in a position to detain these men who were subsequently identified as members of the pak Pong poaching syndicate, one of whom was arrested in a TPCU law enforcement action in Mukomuko in 2014.

Threats of illegal logging and forest encroachment were also recorded during the patrol period. The high level of human activity carried out in illegal logging and forest encroachment greatly influences the existence of Sumatran tigers in an area. this, tends to make the tiger move to another place.



Two further patrols were conducted in July outside the Lebong project area in forests in central-southern Bengkulu province between Kerinci Seblat national park and Bukit Barisan Selatan national park with the support of Forum Harimaukita (Sumatran Tiger Conservation Forum) to mark Global Tiger Day 2018.

Both patrols recorded active tiger poaching with three active tiger snares destroyed and this may be a sign that some poachers have moved away from Kerinci Seblat area because of patrols and other activities by this team and our partners.

Lingkar members met with district or provincial national park officials routinely each month to discuss proposed RRU patrols and results of patrols and investigations with MUI leaders sometimes joining these meetings. All RRU patrols were conducted under Surat Perintah Tugas letters of authority issued by the national park section manager for Lebong area of the national park.

2. Investigation and Information Collection

Investigations were conducted across the project area to identify wildlife criminals and their networks and to secure information on suspected active poaching threat to tiger and their prey for a rapid patrol response.

A total of 25 investigations lasting between one and three days were conducted in and around the project area by members of the Lingkar team, excluding information collected from informants by telephone and incidental, unplanned direct meetings with informants or suspects.

The key finding during this period was that one of two tiger poachers arrested in an intelligence-led law enforcement action by TPCUs in Mukomuko district in the north of Bengkulu in 2014 is now active again and has built a new tiger poaching syndicate. It is very likely that the two armed men met by a RRU patrol in July were members of the 'Pong' syndicate. Discussions with district police advise that the leader of this gang is also known to police for arms offences.

A second investigation conducted in partnership with the Bengkulu TPCU team has identified a major illegal wildlife trader operating in a park-edge district capital to the south of the project area with the suspect trading both tigers and pangolin but also drugs (methyl amphetamine aka crystal meths).

This investigation is ongoing with information shared between Lingkar and Bengkulu TPCUs but information has not been shared with police as the suspect is known to be 'close' to some senior government officers.

During this period, the investigation team managed to identify the targets of the operation poaching and illegal wildlife trade. at the perpetrator's house, the investigator was shown one RANGKONG bird's head and one jungle cat. the results of this investigation have been discussed with the police for law enforcement.



Information from the community on suspected poaching and other forest offences and the wildlife trade – in particular trade in wild songbirds - was easier to secure this year than in 2017 and this is very likely to be a result of socialization of the MUI Fatwa in key villages.

3. Work with Religious Leaders from the Indonesia Islamic Scholars Council (MUI) of Lebong and Nort Bengkulu District to build Support for Wildlife Conservation using Religious Values.

Activities were conducted in two Kerinci Seblat national park-edge districts in partnership with local leaders of the Islamic Scholars Council of Indonesia to socialize a national fatwa issued by the MUI in 2014 which forbids poaching and trade in endangered wildlife.

In Lebong district, where Lingkar worked with district religious leaders of MUI in 2017 to socialize and activate the Fatwa MUI among the community, the main focus has been to park-edge villages identified as sources of poaching threat to tiger and other endangered species.

Activities have been conducted in partnership with MUI in five villages selected as a priority for awareness raising and we also worked to mobilise young people 'Nature Lover' groups in some location.



Socialising FATWA MUI in Ketenong Village



Training local Nature Lover group in the MUI Fatwa so they can use in their hobby to educate friends and family on tiger conservation

Best results have been achieved in the very remote village of Sungai Lisai where the community now quickly reports on outsiders entering their forests and where the community is becoming very supportive for tiger and tiger habitat conservation.

Lingkar already established good relationship with MUI leaders in North Bengkulu district which border Kerinci Seblat national park to the north of Lebong district during activities in 2017 supported by WCCA.

For this district, Lingkar held meetings with MUI of North Bengkulu to brief the religious leaders on wildlife crime in this area – which includes not only poaching and illegal wildlife trade in tigers but also Sumatran elephant.

Lingkar and MUI North Bengkulu then agreed an MoU identifying actions to be taken in this very big district. A training was then provided for North Bengkulu Ulama with trainers from KSNP, KSDA, Police and local government.

We had planned for this training to be for 20 mosque preachers and teachers but the religious leaders were very enthusiastic and more than 30 people attend this

wildlife and forest conservation training which explain the reason for the Fatwa of MUI on hunting and trade in endangered wildlife and wildlife conservation needs and threat to tiger in this area.



Now these preachers and respected religious leaders are socializing the MUI Fatwa 2014 and teaching about conservation in Islam in more than 20 mosques in forest-edge villages and market towns in North Bengkulu and MUI hope that this awareness programme may be extended in 2019 to more villages and to schools in this district.

In addition to the formal activities conducted in partnership with MUI in Lebong and North Bengkulu, Lingkar regularly coordinated with MUI leaders of these districts and there was often communication with village mosque leaders to report progress or to discuss problems including where they believed there was poaching or wildlife trade.

4. Development of a “Local Content” Conservation Education Curriculum for Junior High School Student in Lebong District

Activities to secure this objective commenced with focal group meetings between Lingkar – whose members include two provincial university lecturers – and Lebong district Education and Culture department.

These meetings identified key steps to be taken and in August there was signed an agreement between the Education department and Lingkar Institut so there is a formal basis for the next activities to be taken so that conservation become a part of the schools’ curriculum in Lebong district building a generation of young people who understand environment and wildlife conservation needs

Under our project planning we had proposed that Conservation should become a subject for students’ study under a Local Content Curriculum and to be fully active from 2020.

However, discussion meetings with senior education officials of Lebong with Lingkar team subsequently decided that a more integrated approach better for the students and for conservation and that Conservation should not be an ‘optional extra’ but part of the wider school curriculum.

This mean that wildlife and environment conservation will be included in teaching of various subjects – presently planned to be Biology, Geography, History, Religion.

The work committee formed jointly between LINGKAR INSTITUTE and the Department of Education and Culture of Lebong Regency, has completed teaching materials (RPP) and will be tested through school visit activities on the 2019 project that have been approved and received support from WCA.



Conservation Education Training for Junior High Schools Teachers in Lebong District

5. OTHER ACTIVITIES

5.1. Human Tiger Conflict Mitigation

During this period there were two reports of minor human-tiger conflict in the project area (in 2017-2018 there were no reported human-tiger conflict).

In one case a tiger was reported in a mature village rubber garden close to the national park and in the second case in secondary forest; in both cases these tigers were moving within half a kilometre or less from a village.

In both cases, members of Lingkar Institut team checked the sites and confirmed that the reports were true because there were footmarks but also found that in both cases the tiger was moving back to the national park.

RRU patrol unit then conducted SMART patrol in the nearby forests, in one case joined by an experienced TPCU ranger, to make sure there was no problem in the forest that was causing tiger to come close to village

This was very fortunate in the case of the incident in Turan Lalang village in Lebong Selatan sub-district as the patrol found that a hunter had started to build, but not yet completed, making a tiger snare. This partly-built snare-which was almost ready for activation and needed only the cable attached-was destroyed by the RRU and after the patrol the head of the village and Ulama of the mosque were briefed

about how some unknown person had tried to snare the tiger and they agreed to watch for and try to identify the person so he did not repeat this.

5.2. Regular informal discussion with other local NGOs, local government decision makers, on threats identified to tiger and tiger habitat

Lingkar routinely network with other local NGO in Bengkulu-WALHI, AMAN, Genesis etc-to discuss wildlife and forest conservation including threat to forest from mining (gold, coal) and with local police divisions to discuss patrol and investigation results where not too sensitive.

LINGKAR was also invited to join a team formed by the acting governor of Bengkulu which proposes forests bordering KSNP in North Bengkulu and Mukomuko districts be scheduled as Kawasan Ekosistem Esensial or Area of Vital Ecosystem to safeguard important Sumatran elephant (and tiger) habitat and natural forest corridors.

We also joined national and international conservation NGO and forestry for meetings in Bogor, Java island to give input to develop and agree a new 10-year Sumatran tiger Conservation Strategy and Action Plan.

5.3. Book Printing (FATWA MUI, Khutbah Jumat, and Preservation of wildlife for the Balance of Ecosystems)

As an effort to disseminate information related to the prohibition of Poaching and illegal wildlife trade to the public in general and Muslims in particular in the Lebong and North Bengkulu District. LINGKAR printed a book (FATWA MUI, Khutbah Jumat, and Preservation of wildlife for the Balance of Ecosystems) of 300 copies, which were distributed to religious leaders in key villages and surrounding communities.

