

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

FULL REPORT INCLUDING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

Section I. Project Information	
Project Title: Kerinci Seblat Tiger Protection & Conservation	
Grantee Organisation: Fauna & Flora	
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, which is also important tiger habitat. Field activities are primarily focused to the central section of the national park and buffer-zone forests in an area of approximately 350,000ha, however investigations and other activities extend impacts more widely across the Kerinci Seblat landscape.</p>	<p>No. of tigers in project area, giving evidence & source:</p> <p>Based on park-wide Occupancy Surveys by the Fauna & Flora Kerinci Seblat Tiger Monitoring team (2019-2020) and camera trapping in the KSNP Core Area (2020), Kerinci Seblat NP and adjoining forests protects 128 Sumatran tigers with 119 individuals of these tigers within the national park and 29 in the Tiger Core Area. This figure <i>excludes</i> tigers in the wider Kerinci Tiger Conservation Landscape, in particular the 300,000ha Batang Hari watershed forest, and is the single-largest tiger population in Sumatra.</p>
<p>Partners: <i>(Please give details of partners, including communities, academic institutions etc. for this project)</i></p> <p>Kerinci Seblat Tiger Protection and Conservation has operated under a partnership between Fauna & Flora Indonesia programme (FFIP) and KSNP since 2000 under multi-year national level MoUs and local agreements which underwrite all aspects of the programme's activities and provide a clear legal framework and responsibilities. An MoU, signed-off in early 2020, concluded in late March 2023 and a new, multi-year agreement between Fauna & Flora Indonesia and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) has been finalised, but awaits formal approval at the highest level of government. Such approvals frequently take time and, pending formal approval of a new MoU, a 'Permission in Principle' has been issued allowing Fauna & Flora Indonesia to maintain existing activities in approved project sites.</p> <p>Kerinci Seblat National Park authority: National Park officers, on secondment to the project team, lead or oversee field operations, reporting to the Director of the National Park and thence to the MoEF in Jakarta and the FFIP Kerinci Seblat Landscape team. All project personnel, both KSNP and Fauna & Flora, are formally tasked with conservation and protection of Sumatran tigers in and</p>	

adjoining the protected area under letters of authority issued by the director of the national park. Under this system, community members of the team are recognised as auxiliary NP rangers and hold wide decision-making powers during the 20 days per month that warrants are generally active.

Units for the Conservation of Natural Resources (KSDA): Operating units of the MoEF tasked with nature conservation outside protected areas and leading collaborative/multi-stakeholder Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation Taskforce groups. Primarily KSDA Jambi and KSDA Bengkulu.

Indonesia National Police: Provincial and park-edge district divisions. Reporting and coordination

Fauna & Flora Kerinci Seblat Landscape Village Forest team: Over the last decade, the team has worked with more than 80 forest-edge villages in three park-edge provinces to leverage sustainable, community-led management of more than 106,000ha of forests under licenses issued by MoEF. The project works with park-edge communities and district forestry management units (KPH) and is presently focusing on forests bordering KSNP in the far south-west of the landscape in Bengkulu province. During this interim reporting period, the Kerinci Seblat Tiger Monitoring team worked closely with the village forest team to conduct biodiversity surveys of park-edge forests proposed for village forest status and so was unable to conduct camera trapping surveys for tiger in the Core Area.

Others – informal liaison and communications:

Local and national :- Lingkar Inisiatif – now increasingly focused to developing tiger conservation capacity in the south-east of KSNP in Musi Rawas and Musi Rawas Utara districts of South Sumatra province in the south-east of KSNP; Institut Conservation Society (West Sumatra), Flight (primarily focusing to IWT in wild birds but with teams informally sharing information of mutual concern), Biology Faculty of the University of Andalas, Padang (West Sumatra); Forum Harimaukita (Sumatran Tiger Conservation Forum), representing Sumatran tiger conservation practitioners in Indonesia. International: Environmental Investigation Agency, Traffic SE Asia, Tiger Conservation Coalition.

Project Contact Name: *(main contact via email)*

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

Reporting period: February-July 2023

Section II. Project Progress

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

The project team maintained a range of practical, field-focused actions to protect and conserve wild Sumatran tiger in and adjoining Kerinci Seblat National Park during this interim reporting period.

SMART patrols were conducted in national park and park-edge forests of three provinces with direct threat to tiger and tiger prey remaining below the long-term average for the fourth consecutive year.

Concerns that the ending of national and international Covid-19 restrictions in 2022 would subsequently see a resurgence in the illegal wildlife trade threat to Sumatran tiger were allayed. No active tiger snares were recorded during this six-month period, in spite of ongoing use of supportive forest-edge community information networks and local knowledge to support patrol deployment, while snare poaching pressure on tiger prey species continued a long-running decline.

However, field activities were again impacted by significant co-funding shortfalls compounded by the fact that only five TPCU were fully operational and by wider national-level administrative issues outside the project's control.

As a consequence, only 39 SMART patrols were conducted by TPCUs during this interim reporting period with patrols at a lower-than-optimal intensity for part of this period.

Park-wide, tiger encounter rates were reduced compared with the same months of 2021 and 2022, however all patrols in the national park Core Area reported frequency of encounters with tigers in the Core Area being stable or better.

Collection of information on suspected poaching and illegal wildlife trade was conducted in park-edge districts of the four provinces of Kerinci Seblat and Kerinci district police conducted successful tiger law enforcement in April, drawing on information collected by the programme.

Between 2021-2022 the TPCU team and partners in Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation Taskforce teams noted a surge in human-tiger conflicts in park-edge farmland and concluded this was linked to dramatic falls in wild boar populations since 2020 as a consequence of African Swine Fever.

However, patrols during the project period and interviews with forest-edge communities suggest common wild boar populations may now be beginning to recover, albeit slowly, with human-tiger conflict reports reducing and records of wild boar presence on patrols increasing.

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 in detecting and reducing threats to Sumatran tigers and so maintain the increase in tiger numbers recorded through camera trapping in the Core Area in 2020.

1.1 A total of 39 SMART patrols were conducted by Tiger Protection and Conservation Units in national park forests within three provinces, with seven of these patrols within the tiger Core Area of the national park (*see Maps, below*).

The number of patrols conducted between March and June was lower than the project norm due to ongoing financial constraints and wider administrative issues outside the project's control.

Patrol capacity was further impacted by the fact that only five TPCU were fully-operational following the death of two TPCU Bengkulu rangers in August 2022 with recruitment of new personnel 'on hold' pending funding being secured.

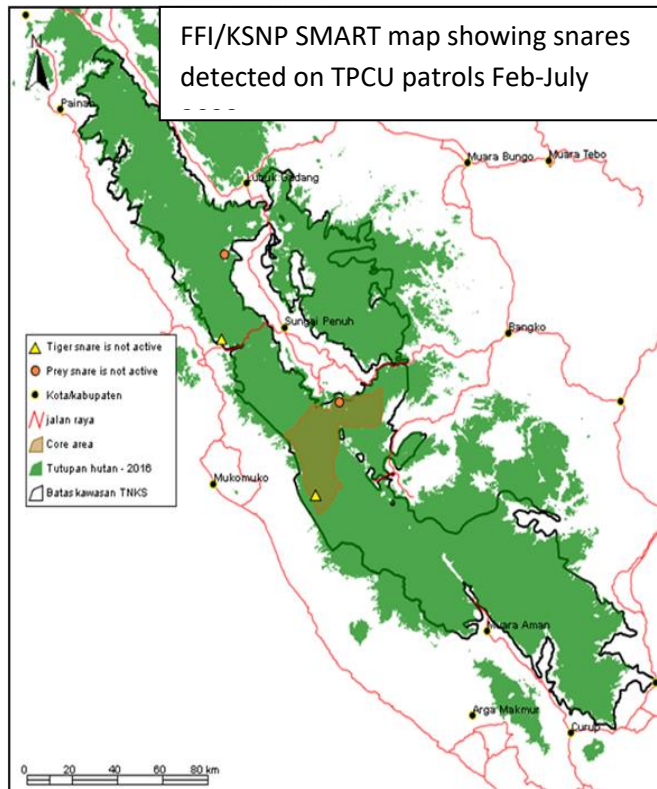
SMART patrols covered a total walking distance, in national park and park-edge forests, of 518Km (322 miles) by GPS Waypoint or 821Km/510 miles (Tracklog) with a total of 206 days spent in the forest under active service warrants issued by the director of the national park.

Park-wide, records of tiger presence reduced slightly compared with same six months of 2022 with 51% of TPCU patrols, park-wide, reporting tiger presence and with efforts to record tigers rising to 1 tiger per 8.6 days park-wide and 1-21.6Km (1-6.7/19.7Km in the same months of 2022).

This lower level of tiger detection at a park-wide level was primarily a consequence of a number of exploratory patrols which recorded low or no tiger presence in addition to patrols seeking to contain tiger habitat loss and these influenced results in the short-term (six months).

All patrols conducted in the Tiger Core Area of the national park reported one or more tigers present with TPCU efforts to record tiger presence stable or better at 1 tiger per 5.4 patrol days (5.3 in 2022) and Frequency of Encounter with tiger improving to 1-18.5Km (1-19.9km in the same period of 2022).

In spite of on-going use of forest-edge supporter networks, rangers' local knowledge and the project's SMART database, no active tiger snare placements were recorded and only the remains of two 'non-active' tiger snares were reported on two different patrols in the east and west of the protected area. No evidence of tiger mortality or other large mammal through snare poaching was recorded.



Poaching pressure on rusa sambar and muntjak deer remained low with only 10 deer snares destroyed although the remains of a further 37 deer snares, recently dismantled or abandoned, were recorded on a further two patrols, one information-led.

It is believed that some poachers have moved to make use of illegal firearms to hunt deer in some areas but, to date, there is no substantial evidence that this is a significant contributor to the reduced snare poaching threats recorded.

1.2 Fauna & Flora's three-year MoU with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry concluded in March 2023 and subsequently the national park authority and FFIP sought guidance from the MoEF at national level

regarding permissible TPCU activities pending formal approval of a new MoU between FFIP and the MoEF.

This temporary uncertainty resulted in a lower-than-usual patrol intensity during the holy month of Ramadan when TPCUs are, traditionally, focused on addressing and containing a local market-driven spike in poaching pressure on deer, which in the past has been recorded in some areas of the national park.

Patrols during and immediately before Ramadan drew on both local information networks and the project's SMART database to select areas where a rise in seasonal deer poaching has been recorded in the past but, for the second consecutive year, no active deer snares were recorded during this period.

Subsequently a national 'Permission in Principal' was issued to cover existing activities of both this and other Fauna & Flora Indonesia projects pending formal sign-off of a new MoU and the national park advised that TPCUs should work as normal, under the authority of the national park director, to conduct existing activities within the protected area and, from July, a more normal number of patrols were conducted.

1.3 Patrol teams routinely sought to engage with forest-edge farmers while entering and leaving the national park forests and to build friendly, mutually respectful relations, while counselling (regarding wildlife and forest conservation) was conducted with minor offenders encountered on patrols within the national park or at forest edge.

1.4 Patrol planning and evaluation of results continued to be conducted collaboratively by teams at the beginning and end of each month and this delivered valuable guidance to TPCU field coordinators and field manager and the Kerinci Seblat Landscape team in wider planning and evaluation of activities.

1.5 The Fauna & Flora/KSNP Tiger Monitoring team conducted no camera trapping for tiger in the Core Area during this interim reporting period and was primarily focused to biodiversity surveys in planned new Village Forest areas adjoining the far south-west of the national park. However, TPCUs and the Monitoring team maintained routine, informal discussions with results of one MHS survey possibly linked to information received by a TPCU team member on a suspected tiger poaching case. It is hoped that training in basic camera trapping techniques will be delivered to members of the Bengkulu TPCU by MHS personnel late in 2023 and so build rangers' knowledge and understanding and ability to use a valuable species conservation tool.

Objective 2. Identify poachers and illegal wildlife traders posing a threat to Sumatran tigers and other endangered species in Kerinci Seblat and their networks, provide valid data to law enforcement agencies as appropriate and identify change in IWT demand so supporting adaptive strategies to counter any increase in threat.

1 Information collection and interviews with suspected poachers and traders and their associates was conducted in eight park-edge districts of four provinces primarily by community ranger members of the team.

A total of 37 reports were subsequently logged and graded for credibility, in addition to informal reports by rangers to TPCU field coordinators, relating to information of potential interest received through their wider social and family networks.

All active information collection was conducted under warrants of the national park and followed the government-authorised PULPAKET system which may only be conducted by government officers and their auxiliaries.

Only two PULPAKET activities reported first-hand evidence of wildlife crime – in one case a tiger canine offered for sale on behalf of an, as yet, unidentified poacher – with KSNP team leaders concluding both reports requiring further development before any additional action could be taken. A further five reports – one of which subsequently proceeded to successful law enforcement action in April (See Objective 3: Wildlife and Forest Law Enforcement) – were categorised as highly credible (A2) and prioritised for further development.

No evidence of any significant revival in organised illegal wildlife trade demand for tiger body parts was secured in the course of monitoring the wildlife black market in three park-edge provinces.

However, a revival in IWT demand for Sunda pangolin, first noted in mid-2022, was recorded in the course of a number of interviews, primarily in park-edge districts of West Sumatra province, although black market prices cited and demand appears to have remained below pre-pandemic levels.

This is not only a cause for concern for an IUCN Critically Endangered Red List species but also for Sumatran tiger given that there is a long history of Sumatran tiger being traded by the same black market cartels which threaten Sunda pangolin.

No significant change in sub-national sources of trade threat to wildlife in Kerinci Seblat was recorded with Medan, capital of North Sumatra province and Pekanbaru, capital of Riau province in eastern Sumatra, cited in a number of information collection activities as the primary source of IWT demand for both Sumatran tiger and Sunda pangolin.

Medan city – which has a substantial Christian population - was also cited as a sub-national source of trade demand for wild boar meat with two reports of wild boar meat traders

operating around the Kerinci Seblat landscape to supply demand in Medan, allegedly also purchasing tiger body parts and Sunda pangolin.

2 Forest-edge community information networks – including wild bird catchers and non-timber forest product collectors - remained a valuable source of information on local poaching and illegal wildlife trade threat but information on suspected active poaching was not always found to be geographically or temporarily precise when followed up with a patrol response.

Objective 3. Support fair and appropriate forest and wildlife law enforcement and so deter and contain wildlife and forest crime.

One Sumatran tiger law enforcement operation was successfully conducted during this interim reporting period by Kerinci district police, building on information previously collected by Tiger Protection & Conservation unit personnel.

Tiger law enforcement was conducted in Sungaipenuh, Kerinci in April by Kerinci police Criminal Detectives division and resulted in the arrest of one man and the seizure of the skin of an adult male Sumatran tiger, believed to have been poached in national park forests adjoining a remote enclave in the east of KSNP in late 2022.

Initial information on a possible tiger poaching incident in forests bordering a remote enclave in the east of the national park in Jambi province was first passed to a TPCU ranger by supportive community members in late 2022 but could not be validated, although the suspected poacher was tentatively identified.

In March, it was learned that the tiger poacher had allegedly passed this kill to a second man from a park-edge village in West Sumatra province who was planning to sell the tiger to an unidentified illegal wildlife trader in Riau province in north-east Sumatra.

Later that month information was passed to the TPCU that the planned sale in Riau had not proceeded and the evidence was to be returned to the broker and his poacher accomplice.

Tiger law enforcement was successfully conducted in early April in Sungaipenuh by Kerinci district police with the broker arrested and charged with possession of and seeking to sell a protected species. The skin of an adult male Sumatran tiger was seized as evidence. The tiger's bones, canine teeth and claws had already been removed and sold to unknown purchasers.

This case proceeded to a court hearing in late July. Sentencing was delivered after this interim reporting period in late August with a sentence of two years and six months and a fine of Rp50 million/£2,600 with an additional three months prison sentence if not paid. Sentencing was in line with recent national and landscape-level benchmarks for wildlife crime offences and higher than some recent illegal wildlife trade-related sentences.

Tiger Protection & Conservation Unit patrols responded, where possible, to forest and wildlife crime on patrols within the national park with song bird hunting using glue snares being the most commonly-recorded offence. Informal verbal warnings and counselling on permissible activities within the protected area were issued to a total 10 wild song-bird catchers encountered on five TPCU patrols in the east and west of the national park and to four fishermen encountered deep within the park on a sixth patrol.

A formal written caution was issued on one patrol to a man preparing to clear forest at the park-edge.

Although these individuals could, in some cases, have been arrested and prosecuted, TPCU rangers have learned that counselling and verbal warnings to such offenders frequently builds understanding and support for forest and wildlife conservation more widely and that formal law enforcement against minor offenders may be counter-productive.

Objective 4. Support to multi-stakeholder Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation Taskforce groups in preliminary responses to human-tiger conflict

Multi-Stakeholder Conflict Mitigation task force teams or *Satgas* now formed in three of the four provinces which overlay KSNP and operating under the leadership of Units for Conservation of Nature (KSDA) conducted mitigation of the majority of human-tiger conflicts reported during this six-month period.

In both the east and west of the protected area, the number of conflicts reported appears to have reduced significantly from the levels recorded between 2021-2022.

It is strongly suspected that this may be a consequence of a gradual recovery in wild boar populations which is reported both by local communities and on TPCU patrols since mid-2022 following the severe mortality among wild boar reported in 2021 due to African Swine Fever.

TPCUs conducted human-tiger conflict mitigation in three cases during this project period, all relating to one-off predation of semi-feral farmland guard dogs moving freely at night and not kennelled.

In all these cases, mitigation included counselling farmers and local villagers on tiger behaviour and safety precautions which may be taken when a tiger is, or has been, in the vicinity and conflict prevention measures such as livestock management.

Villagers in the conflict sites were generally supportive and helpful and the tigers in question appear to have moved on and back into the forest following the incidents, with post conflict monitoring advising there had been no attempt to exploit these incidents by poachers.

In the south-west of the national park in Bengkulu, TPCUs also provided back up to KSDA colleagues seeking to catch a tiger believed responsible for multiple cattle predation in forest-edge oil palm farms belonging to members of local communities. The tigress was finally caught and found to have an old snare injury resulting in the loss of the lower part of one forelimb and is under rehabilitation by KSDA Bengkulu pending a decision on whether she may be safely released.

This animal had been previously photographed during camera trapping in a nearby forest restoration concession and her injury was old. It was concluded she had commenced predating cattle in response to a sharp fall in wild boar populations due to African Swine Fever while examination of her injured forelimb advised it was likely caused by a snare set for wild boar and not for tiger.

Other activities - Stakeholder liaison/Co-ordination:

All program activities and outputs were reported monthly to the director of Kerinci Seblat National Park and then onward to the Directorate of Conservation of Nature and Ecosystems of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

Activities and results were also reported monthly to the Kerinci Seblat Landscape program manager, so informing wider conservation strategies by Fauna & Flora teams at a landscape level and in two districts in the south-west of the protected area where village forests are under development.

Key members of the project team also took part in distance discussions with colleagues in the Sumatran tiger conservation forum 'Harimaukita' on a range of wider national tiger conservation issues and strategies.

The team advisor additionally joined distance meetings with colleagues of the Tiger Conservation Coalition of international conservation NGOs. Identification of long-term sustainable funding for tiger conservation has now taken centre stage following approval of goals under the Global Tiger Recovery Program II and will form the subject of an international conference to be held in Bhutan in April 2024.

Please 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)*

Only five Tiger Protection & Conservation Units were fully-operational during this six-month period with recruitment of two new ranger personnel for the Bengkulu TPCUs put 'on hold' due to counterpart funding shortfalls.

Since TPCU Standard Operating Procedures require a minimum of four rangers per forest patrol to ensure the safety of personnel, this resulted in a reduced number of SMART forest patrols during this interim reporting period.

Consequently, even if funds are secured to restore ranger staffing levels in the Bengkulu TPCU team in the second-half of this project period, it is most unlikely that plans for 115 SMART patrols/575 forest patrol days will be achievable as this was based on six TPCUs being fully operational over 12 months and not five units.

However, TPCU patrols will continue to be deployed flexibly and appropriately, drawing on local knowledge and long experience in the forests of Kerinci Seblat, to conserve and protect Sumatran tigers and their prey and wider negative impacts on results should not be experienced.

The Fauna & Flora/KSNP Tiger Monitoring team also experienced very significant operational co-funding shortfalls and so no camera trap monitoring of tiger populations to advise of density changes in the Core Area was conducted. This therefore marks the third year in which the team has had no access to robust, scientific data on changes in tiger densities and wider species Relative Abundance indices.

Fauna & Flora's three-year MoU with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry drew to a close in March 2023 and, while a new draft Memorandum of Understanding has been finalised, this awaits approval at the highest levels of government.

Issuance of new MoU for international NGOs working in Indonesia is frequently subject to delays and the Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which oversees the activities of foreign/international entities in Indonesia, which has now been issued a 'Permit in Principal' for Fauna & Flora Indonesia programme and existing projects and activities. However, new activities may not be conducted pending formal sign-off for a new MoU.

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

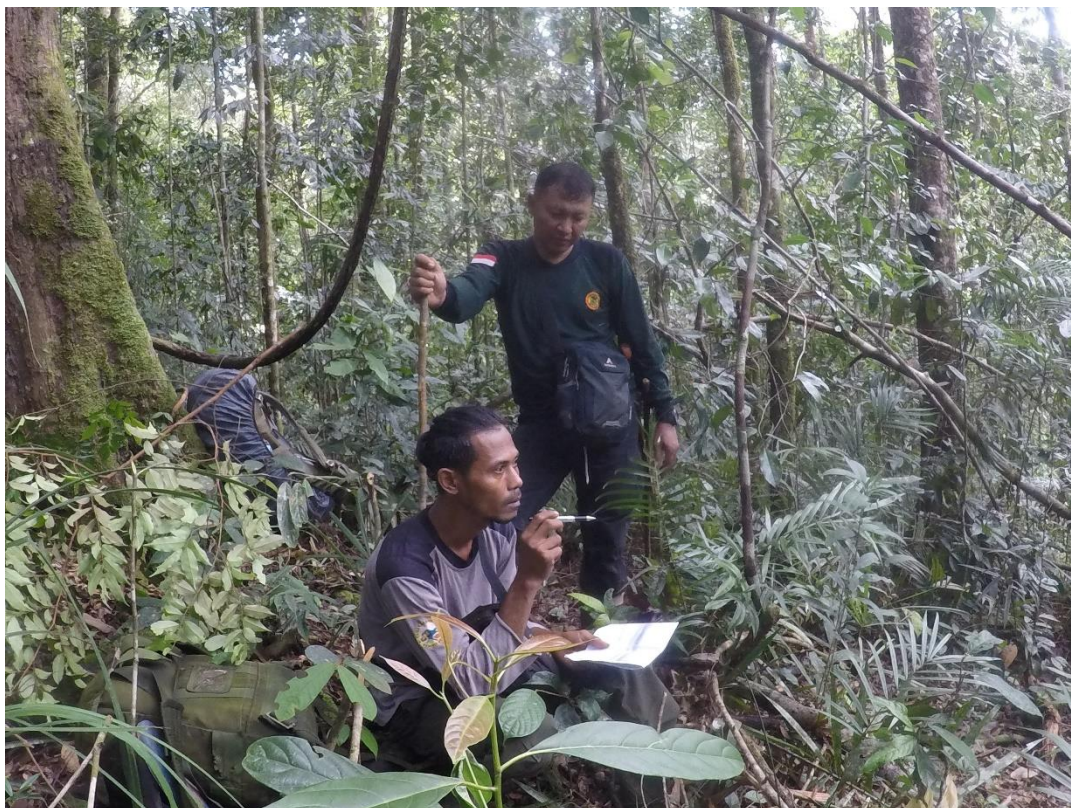
The budget spend is on target

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

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

Attached & see below for details

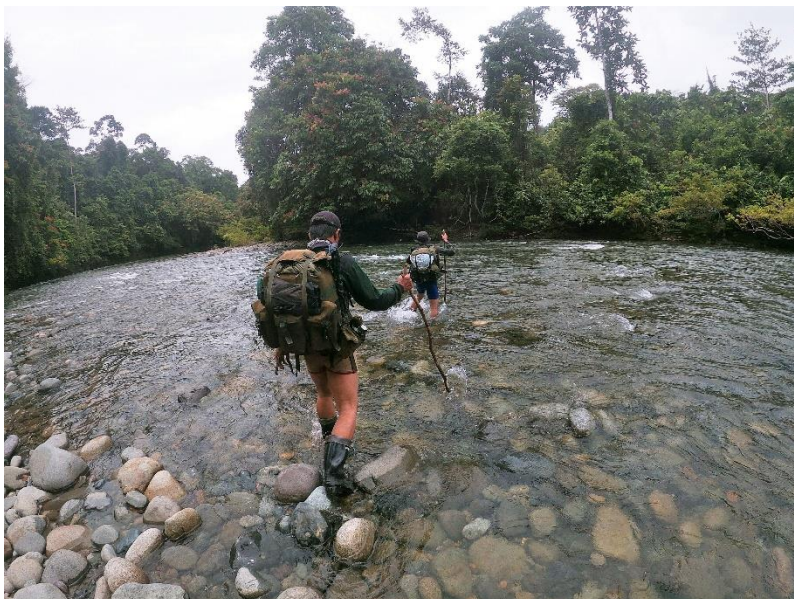
Photograph I: Kerinci Tigers Report to WCCA. Bengkulu TPCU Coordinator Geovril Seven and TPCU ranger Agus Setio Budi discussing routes on a TPCU patrol in national park forests© KSNP/Fauna & Flora



Photograph 2 Kerinci Tigers report to WCCA: TPCU rangers on a patrol in park-edge forests recently cleared for ‘small-holder’ agriculture – in this case for palm oil. In remote areas, clearances are often large as farmers consider the financial viability of their planned land-holding with access and management costs higher than in village-edge areas ©KSNP, Fauna & Flora



Photograph 3 Kerinci tigers report to WCCA – TPCU rangers crossing a forest river while on patrol. The headwaters of rivers in the national park often lie high in the Barisan mountains and many are prone to sudden flash flood events. ©KSNP/Fauna & Flora



Photograph 4 Kerinci tigers report to WCCA: TPCU rangers Amsar Batubara and Ali Purnomo on a forest trail consulting one of the 1-50,000 scale topographic maps which form a mainstay of patrol and route planning in the forest ©KSNP/Fauna & Flora



Photograph 5 Kerinci tigers report to WCCA TPCU ranger Ridion dismantles a snare set for ground birds such as endemic pheasant and small mammals on a patrol in the east of the national park. Some of the hunters setting such snares may be conducting 'surveys' in preparation for setting tiger and deer snares ©KSNP/Fauna & Flora



Photograph 6 Kerinci Tigers Report to WCCA Jambi TPCU rangers – Tholipin (L), Pendi (R) standing watch Unit Leader Jefri (L) and ranger Dendi Setiawan (R) measuring a scrape ©KSNP/Fauna & Flora

