

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	
<b>Project Title:</b> Kerinci Seblat Tiger Protection and Conservation	
<b>Grantee Organisation:</b> Fauna & Flora	
<b>Location of project:</b> Kerinci Seblat National Park, Sumatra, Indonesia	
<p><b>Size of project area (if appropriate):</b></p> <p>1,386 m ha (KSNP) excluding adjoining buffer-zone forests, some also forming 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><b>No of tigers and / or Amur leopards in project area, giving evidence &amp; source:</b></p> <p>Based on park-wide Occupancy Surveys by the FFI 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><b>Partners:</b> <i>(Please give details of partners, including communities, academic institutions etc. for this project.</i></p> <p><b>Kerinci Seblat National Park (KSNP):</b> The programme operates under a long-standing partnership between FF-IP and KSNP with National Park (NP) officers leading or supervise field operations and reporting to the Director of KSNP through a field manager, also a National Park secondee. This provides a clear legal framework and remit for activities. All project personnel, both KSNP and FF-IP, are formally tasked by the NP with conservation and protection actions for Sumatran tiger in and adjoining KSNP, which are conducted under monthly letters of legal authority (SPT) issued by the Director of the NP. Under this system, community rangers are recognised as auxiliary NP officers during the 20 days per month that warrants are active and have legal authority to conduct a range of activities in and around the park in four provinces of Sumatra.</p> <p><b>Provincial Conservation of Natural Resources Agency (BKSDA):</b> Primarily in Jambi, West Sumatra and Bengkulu provinces. BKSDA are operating units of the MoEF responsible for nature and wildlife conservation outside the NP. They lead multi-stakeholder Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) mitigation task force groups, or <i>Satgas</i>, established in three park-edge provinces since 2014.</p>	

**Indonesia National Police and MoEF Law Enforcement directorate (Gakkhum):** Traditionally, park-edge police divisions are the programme’s main partner for tiger law enforcement actions, this sends a clear message to offenders and the wider community that poaching or trading Sumatran tiger is a serious offence under Indonesian law and not just an offence against forestry regulations. The MoEF, of which KSNP is an operating unit, has extensive national-level agreements with the Indonesia National Police. These give the project team access to a wide range of specialist support by police forensic specialists where required. However, in some sites, far from NP-edge, the project will provide credible data to officers of the MoEF Law Enforcement directorate where Gakkum officers are best placed to respond. All communications, planning and decision-making relating to wildlife law enforcement is at the discretion of, and under the command of NP members of the project team and the Director of KSNP.

**The Kerinci Seblat Village Forest Programme (VFP)** is strongly focused on building sustainable community-led management of park-edge forests, with more than 148,000 Ha now recognised under licences issued by MoEF. Working with park-edge district forestry management units (KPH) and villagers, the VFP supports SMART community patrols in village forests, where key villages have received training in HWC mitigation. During this project period, selected TPCU personnel will provide guidance to the VFP team coordinators in recognising and responding to suspected IWT threats to tigers and other wildlife. Information exchange between TPCUs and Village Forest coordinators will be strengthened to broaden and extend the capacity to identify and reduce threats to tiger and their prey.

**Others:**

Local civil society and academia: Primarily Yayasan Lingkar Inisiatif (conducting tiger and other wildlife conservation actions in the south of KSNP where TPCUs do not have the capacity to maintain a routine presence). Other stakeholders include the Institute Conservation Society (Solok Selatan, West Sumatra province), Flight, Biology Faculty of the University of Andalas, and Padang. National: Forum Harimaukita, representing tiger conservation practitioners in Indonesia. International TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, EIA, ENV (Vietnam), Panthera Malaysia.

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**Actual start date of project:** (if different from 1<sup>st</sup> February)

**Reporting period: Feb – July 2024**

## Section II. Project Progress

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

The Kerinci Seblat Tiger Protection and Conservation team maintained a range of field actions to protect and conserve wild Sumatran tigers in and adjoining Kerinci Seblat National Park with Tiger encounter rates on SMART forest patrols higher than in the same six-months period of 2023.

Tiger Protection & Conservation Unit rangers conducted 39 forest patrols with 59% of patrols recording Sumatran tiger presence compared to 51% in February to July 2023. Patrol Effort to record tiger and Frequency of Encounter with tiger both at a park-wide level and in the Tiger 'Core' area of KSNP was also better compared to the same six months of 2023.

Direct threat to Sumatran tiger from snaring in patrol areas remained at an historic low, with no active tiger snares recorded during this six-months period. However, six recently deactivated tiger snare placements were recorded on two information-led patrols. Tigers were present on both of these patrol routes.

Snaring threat to key tiger prey species, in particular sambar deer, maintained a long-running decline, with no active deer snares recorded on patrols, including during the holy month of Ramadhan in spite of rangers drawing on local knowledge, SMART patrol records and supportive local community informants.

To broaden TPCU rangers' tiger conservation capacity, members of the tiger monitoring team conducted field training in basic camera trapping techniques for Bengkulu TPCUs and several camera traps were placed in national park forests.

Wildlife crime investigations and information collection was conducted by TPCU personnel in eight park-edge districts with more than 35 reports logged and graded for credibility. These found no evidence of any revival in organised illegal wildlife trade-driven threat to wild tigers but warned some older, habitual poachers were believed to still pose threat to tigers in and around Kerinci Seblat.

Although TPCU investigations and patrols recorded very low levels of threat, officers of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's law enforcement division (Gakkhum) arrested a tiger poacher and his broker in a district in the east of the park in Jambi. The tiger was poached in production forests outside the national park in a rarely patrolled area and one of the two arrested men was previously known to TPCU investigators.

The TPCU team maintained support for local human-wildlife conflict mitigation task force groups, joining colleagues in some activities and communicating information received on

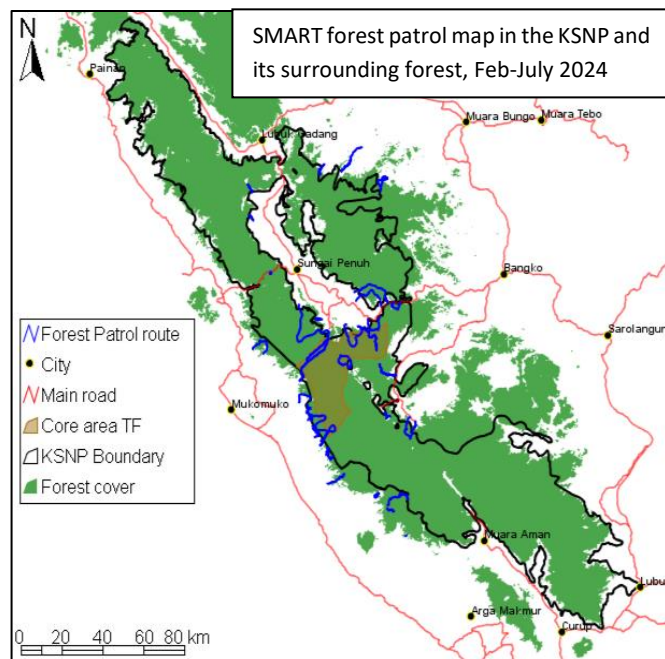
suspected conflicts involving Sumatran tiger. These were most frequently received in the south-west of the national park in forest-edge plantations where local farmers frequently leave cattle to graze overnight unattended.

**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.*

## **Objective 1 SMART forest patrols detect, address and contain threat to Sumatran tigers, their prey and habitat**

The number of TPCU SMART forest patrols conducted in the first semester of year 1 of the project period was identical to the same six months of 2023, which saw 39 forest patrols in and adjoining Kerinci Seblat National. However, the percentage of TPCU forest patrols conducted recording tiger presence was higher than in the same months of 2023, with 59% of forest patrols (23 out of 39 patrols) recording one or more Sumatran tiger present compared with 51% in 2023.

In total, TPCU patrols covered 573 km walking distance (by GPS Waypoint) or 690 km by Tracklog, with a total of 228 days spent in the forest and with TPCUs reporting increased detection of tigers. Effort to record tiger presence, park-wide, reduced to 1 tiger per 6.9 forest patrol days compared with 1-8.6 days in 2023 while patrol Frequency of Encounter (FoE) improved to 1 tiger per 17.4 Kms walked, compared to 21.6 km in the period February-July 2023.





The TPCU team member measures the size of a Sumatran tiger pugmark recorded on a forest patrol

Tiger presence also increased in the 'Core area' of the national park where 13 of 39 TPCU SMART patrols were conducted (see *SMART forest patrol map*). All TPCU SMART patrols in the Core recorded tigers present, with Frequency of Encounter rising to 1 tiger per 15.4 kms walked compared with 1 tiger – 18.5 km in the same six months of 2023.

In spite of continued use of supportive community informants, rangers' local knowledge and SMART patrol records to

strengthen patrol deployment, no active tiger snares were recorded during this six-months period.

However, TPCUs reported six 'recently-active' tiger snares on two different patrols and a further four, older snares on a third patrol, all in the south-west of the national park. Five of these snare placements were recorded on one information-led patrol in Bengkulu forests with the individual, suspected responsible for these snares, identified. In all these cases, rangers conducted broad 'snare sweeps' in the surrounding forest area but found no more snares, active or inactive, and examination of the sites advised that no tiger or other wildlife had been caught. Sumatran tigers were present on all three of these patrol routes.

An exceptionally-low level of poaching threat was also recorded for tiger prey species, marking the first six-months period in project history in which no active deer snares were recorded. This in spite of the fact that this reporting period included the fasting month of Ramadhan (March-April 2024) during which time nine TPCU patrols were conducted with a strong focus to detecting and reducing threat to tiger prey.

The very low level of poaching threat recorded has been the subject of much discussion among both the TPCU and tiger Monitoring teams. Rangers conclude it may, in part, be a consequence of currently very high prices for agricultural products, in particular coffee and palm oil.

However, investigations reported that many poachers are now aware that TPCU patrols make use of forest-edge information networks to detect active poaching threat and, in one area of the park, motivated tiger poachers now aim to leave their snares active for a maximum of one week to reduce risk of their snares being detected and destroyed.

During this reporting period, four long-serving TPCU community personnel, including one founding ranger member of the project team, resigned after being formally contracted as government officers in the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's Manggala Agni wildfire prevention brigade in Jambi and Riau Provinces. Subsequently, members of the tiger



monitoring team, who also have extensive experience in SMART forest patrols have joined TPCU patrols to maintain SMART forest patrol capacity.

In the final months of this reporting period, TPCU and Tiger monitoring teams conducted informal in-house and field practical training to refresh and strengthen SMART patrol database management.

Subsequently, members of the Tiger Monitoring team provided training in basic principles and techniques of camera trapping to TPCU personnel.

At date of this report, TPCU rangers, with the assistance of members of

the Tiger monitoring team have placed a number of camera traps in the south-west of the national park in Bengkulu province, which will provide valuable data but also build wider conservation capacity among TPCU rangers.



### **Objective 2: Investigations conducted under government approved PULPAKET procedures identify those poachers and IWT traders who still pose threat to wild tigers, their networks and trade routes and support law enforcement where evidence is available**

Collection of information on suspected tiger poaching and trade and the individuals implicated was carried out in eight districts in three of the four provinces of Kerinci Seblat NP with more than 35 reports logged and graded for credibility. No first-hand evidence of poaching or trade in Sumatran tiger was secured during these investigations although one, credible report was logged relating to a suspected poaching incident involving a tiger poacher long known to the project team.

TPCU rangers in the south-west of the national park in Bengkulu also collected information, using trusted informants, on the activities on a local tiger and deer poaching gang who are now adopting a range of tactics to avoid detection of their activities. Investigations continued to find little evidence of any significant, organised IWT demand for tiger body parts in areas where the project has a long-time focus and noted that suspected tiger poachers are now almost invariably older individuals.

A number of investigations recorded ongoing IWT demand for Sunda pangolin, a species frequently traded by the same individuals who pose threat to wild tigers, with investigations indicating a higher level of IWT threat in the far north of the Kerinci Seblat landscape in West Sumatra province.

### **Objective 3 Support fair and appropriate law enforcement through partnering with the most appropriate government agency and deliver a significant deterrent which contains and further reduces the threat to Sumatran tiger and tiger prey**

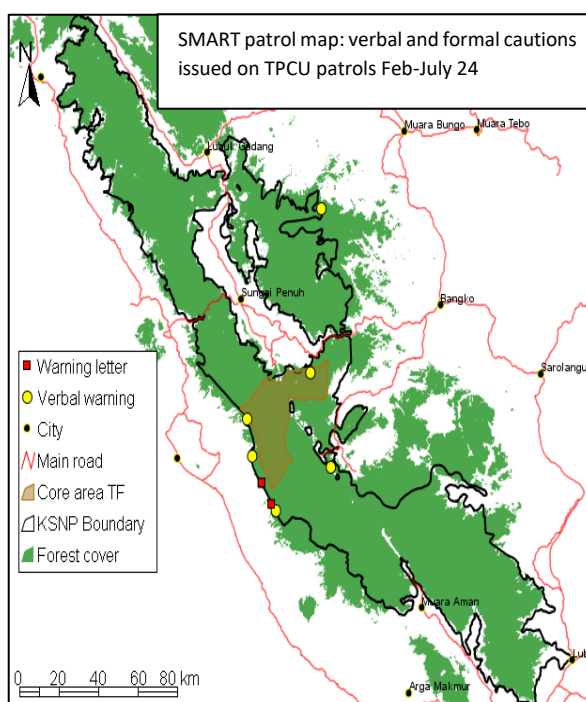
No formal tiger or other wildlife law enforcement action was supported by the project team during this interim reporting period however, TPCU rangers responded to a range of breaches of wildlife and forest law encountered on patrols.

While recorded poaching threat to tiger and tiger prey species was low, TPCU forest patrols continued to encounter incidents of wild songbird hunting and threat to tiger habitat, both from illegal logging and through encroachment and clearance of forests in the national park buffer zone and within the park itself for small-holder agriculture.

One of these cases recorded four local men clearing national park forests where, when interviewed, it was learned that three of these individuals had purchased national park forests from the fourth individual. Formal warnings and orders to Quit were issued and this case has now been passed to the MoEF Directorate of Law Enforcement who are preparing a legal case against the individual seeking to sell national park forest lands.

Five formal written Cautions and four verbal warnings and orders to Quit were issued by TPCU patrols to nine men preparing to clear national park and park-edge forests. A further nine verbal warnings and instructions to leave the forest were also issued on TPCU patrols for other offences including traditional gold mining in park-edge forests, wild song bird hunting, non-timber forest products collecting and fishing within the inviolate inner-zone of the park.

While poaching threat to tiger on TPCU patrols remained low, in late May officers of the MoEF Law enforcement agency (GAKKUM) in Jambi arrested and charged two men with tiger trade offences in Merangin district, Jambi and seized the pelt and bones of a tiger as evidence. Discussions between the project team and GAKKUM investigators reported that the tiger was poached in production forests outside the national park and in an area where there is no strong patrol presence. One of two men arrested was previously the subject of a TPCU investigation over suspected involvement in trade in Sumatran rhino horns. This investigation was halted when it was found that products being offered through the ‘broker’ were ‘fake.’



### **Objective 4: Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation Taskforce swiftly respond to and mitigate human-tiger conflicts reported with the purpose of protecting both tigers and forest-edge community livelihoods**

The majority of human-tiger conflicts in national park-edge recorded during the reporting period were managed and mitigated by the local units of BKSDA leading human-wildlife conflict (HWC) mitigation task force teams. In the south-west of the national park in Bengkulu, members of forest edge communities reported at least two emerging human-tiger conflicts to TPCU team members. These were reported to the conflict mitigation task force led by BKSDA Bengkulu, and TPCU and KSDA colleagues jointly responded to these incidents. The community reported appearance of the tiger in their rubber plantation which merge with forest-edge scrub, a couple of km away from national park forests and mitigation in the form of counselling and advice to communities and demonstrating a ranger presence was conducted. Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) populations appear to now be recovering from the worst impacts of the African Swine Fever (ASF) pandemic in 2021-2022 and a gradual increase in tiger prey base is likely to be behind a reduction in conflicts now being recorded.

#### **Additional: Changes in Indonesia Conservation Law.**

Wildlife and Forest protection and conservation, in Indonesia, has been managed, for more than 30 years, under Law No 5/1990. However, in early August 2024, following many months of discussion by the Indonesia parliament's forestry commission, Law No 32, 2024 regarding Nature Conservation was signed into law by the President. The new Act contains a number of important revisions to wildlife and forest conservation law including –

- **Introduction of Minimum sentences** for poaching and/or illegal wildlife trade in protected species and wider forestry offences. The new Act imposes a minimum three-years and maximum 15-years custodial sentence for poaching or trading a protected species compared with the previous law under which the maximum sentence was five years. The new law also sees a steep increase in fines for wildlife crime, ranging from a minimum £4,926 (the maximum under Law No.5) to more than £98,500 for the most serious offences. Higher fines and sentences may be imposed by courts on *companies* found guilty of breaking wildlife and forest conservation law with one clause stating that companies found guilty of (live) wildlife trafficking may also have to pay the costs of rehabilitating and releasing confiscated animals.

**Outlawing Wildlife trade using social media** – the new Act makes trafficking of wildlife or body parts, without a government permit in place, illegal on social media (Facebook, Telegram, TikTok etc) and electronic platforms more widely with stiff fines and a minimum two-years prison term for on-line wildlife trade. Courts may draw on advertisements and photographs and correspondence posted as evidence in reaching a judgment and not only on seizure of the animal(s) being offered for sale.



- **Legal protection extended to non-native CITES-Listed species** – Law No 32 declares that wildlife or wildlife body-parts imported, illegally into Indonesia or traded in Indonesia (without a permit) which are protected in their country of origin, are now also protected under Indonesian national law. Although this is particularly important for tackling the international illegal ivory trade, there have been tiger cases in Indonesia which could not proceed to a court hearing because Evidence was found to be from a Bengal or other non-native tiger sub-species.
- **Financial investigations** (wildlife and forest crime) – the new Law states that MoEF ‘state civil investigators’ duties will include detailed investigations into suspects’ financial affairs, allowing tracking of suspicious or illegal transactions and payments with powers including blocking of suspect bank accounts. This has huge positive implications for actions against the higher levels of illegal wildlife trade. The new law also returns criminal investigation and law enforcement case development capacity to the Directorate of Nature and Ecosystem Conservation and states that ‘state civil investigators should be assigned to major national parks to strengthen law enforcement capacity.
- **New category of Conservation Area** – Law No 32 also introduces ‘Preservation Areas’ – locations *outside* existing protected areas which currently have no formal protection but are identified as having high levels of biodiversity or important strategic values. Preservation Areas will include forest ‘corridors’ between protected areas and this may be one of the most important clauses in the new Act, for tiger and other large mammal conservation.

The project is now looking at the new legislation and how, and where these revisions to conservation law may be used to support and strengthen wild tiger conservation and any training or other activities required.

**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)*

- In January it was confirmed that four long-serving Jambi-based TPCU personnel – three rangers and the team driver - were to be appointed as formal, rather than honorary, government officers. Sadly, they were not posted to KSNP. Consequently, for much of this reporting period, TPCUs operating in the east of the national park were not fully-staffed and this impacted on both SMART patrol and Investigation capacity. The team is now trialling experienced members of the tiger Monitoring team joining some TPCU patrols with the purpose of restoring TPCU patrol capacity pending a longer-term solution.

## WildCats interim (mid-year) report template

**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

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

**We have sent these as separate documents.**