

Pelestarian Harimau Sumatera Kerinci-Seblat

Kerinci Seblat Sumatran Tiger Protection & Conservation

**Report on activities conducted with the
support of 21st Century Tiger 2010-2011
by**

Fauna & Flora International



Program Objective

To secure the long-term conservation of wild Sumatran tiger in and around a Natural World Heritage Site National Park which forms the greater part of the globally-important Kerinci Tiger Conservation Landscape primarily through controlling threat, in particular the poaching of Sumatran tiger and prey species and loss of habitat and through effective mitigation of human-tiger conflict.

Additionally through raising the ability of the forestry department and others to tackle tiger and other serious wildlife crime and winning the support of forest-edge communities and local governments for conservation of Sumatran tiger and tiger habitat

Summary of Activities

The program supported the activities of five Tiger Protection & Conservation Units during the period 2010-2011 who conducted forest patrols and other activities primarily in eight districts of the four provinces bordering Kerinci Seblat National Park.

A total of 93 field patrols and related forest and species field activities, including patrols to monitor safety in conflict locations were conducted covering a total walking distance of just under 1560 Km.

Not fewer than 72 tigers were recorded in the course of patrols and Frequency of encounter with tiger was almost identical with the previous year at 21.6 patrol kilometres walked per tiger record.

Full law enforcement actions against wildlife and forest crime by TPCUs within and outside the forest were severely impacted by (verbal) policy advisories on the acceptability of law enforcement by park staff, including the PHS team, issued by the National Park director.

As a result, only one law enforcement action, resulting in the arrest and prosecution of a Sumatran tiger poacher was successfully conducted and a second which resulted in the arrest and prosecution of an illegal logger.

Investigations to identify areas where tiger, tiger prey and habitat were at risk from poaching and other illegal activities and individuals posing a threat to Sumatran tiger and to monitor trends in the wildlife black market were conducted in all four provinces bordering Kerinci Seblat National Park.

Trend monitoring identified a huge surge in black market prices reportedly secured or offered for tiger pelts in a number of areas. Discussion with other tiger conservation programs in Sumatra and other Tiger range states advised this was a phenomena not limited to the Kerinci landscape alone.

A total of only 17 human-wildlife conflicts were mitigated directed by TPCU rangers, 15 relating to Sumatran tiger, one which, upon investigation was found to relate to predation of dogs and a goat by Asiatic golden cat and one incident relating to Sumatran elephant.

The number of conflict interventions conducted reduced after the National Park director instructed the program to 'report' conflicts occurring outside national park forests to the relevant KSDA Unit and not to intervene as has previously been program procedure where the conflict is occurring in an area contiguous with the national park albeit separated by production or other status forests.

In this issue, the team to some extent adopted the Nelson's Eye Principal, in particular where the conflict was occurring in key focus areas or areas difficult for KSDA colleagues to access quickly.

Plans to develop conflict mitigation support for the team through a former TPCU leader and training in the principals of early conflict mitigation and conflict reporting for some key forest-edge communities could not be implemented due to funding disbursement delays by the donors supporting the planned activity.

In addition to conducting conflict mitigation as possible, the team also worked with colleagues from West Sumatra KSDA in November 2010 following the rescue of a sub-adult male Sumatran tiger after its accidental capture in a pig-tail macaque pit trap in farmland to the immediate north of KSNP.

TPCU teams surveyed sites previously identified as suitable for tiger relocations to establish current occupancy, threat and accessibility status and after the animal was fitted with a GPS radio collar supplied by the ZSL tiger research team, he was released in park-edge forests. Unfortunately in August 2011 the GPS radio collar began to malfunction and then stopped sending routine GPS positions. The animal is believed safe and to still be in the area where he had established a territory.

The project period also saw international ratification of the St Petersburg accord on tiger conservation which was backed by tiger range states across Asia and development of national tiger recovery plans to support international agreement reached at St Petersburg regarding securing a recovery in tiger populations.

The Indonesia National Tiger Recovery Plan identifies Kerinci Seblat National Park as one of the five key tiger landscapes in Sumatra where actions will be focused from 2011-2022 and the Indonesia NTRP proposes replicating this program's integrated and collaborative approach to tiger protection and conservation to other landscapes

In early 2011 the Bupati (head of Kerinci local government) with support of the acting head of Sungaipenuh 'city' administration, submitted a proposal to the Minister of Forestry requesting permission for a network of roads from Kerinci to other districts and provinces through core zones of the national park using the rationale of Disaster Evacuation routes.

Initially it was assumed that the proposal would be quickly rejected by central government given the dubious rationale, core challenge to the basic principles of protected area law and pledges made only a few months earlier regarding infrastructure through core tiger habitats. However, by April 2011, it became clear that the proponents of the roads networks had secured powerful political backing at national level.

The program then commenced to mobilise local conservation NGOs, in particular from the AKAR network of park edge NGOs and worked with the Harimaukita Sumatran tiger conservation forum to conduct advocacy against the roads proposals.

In July, following detailed briefings to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee by the FFI Asia Pacific Director, Kerinci Seblat, Bukit Barisan and Gunung Leuser National Parks which form the Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra were placed on the Register of World Heritage sites In Danger . The roads building proposals remain active and the program has learned that political interests remain determined to secure a 'green light' for at least some of these roads in time for the 2014 Presidential and parliamentary elections.

Meanwhile, FFI and its local NGO partners in Merangin district of Jambi on the eastern edges of the national park secured Ministerial approval for a network of Village Forests (*Hutan Desa*) covering more than 30,000ha of lowland hill and hill forests bordering Kerinci Seblat National Park which have significant tiger and other biodiversity values and which will form an important buffer to the national park.

This is an area which continues to be seriously threatened by organised illegal forest conversion for coffee plantations farmed by settlers from southern Sumatra and was proposed, in 2009, to be converted to a pulp timber plantation by a subsidiary of the Sinar Mas group of companies.

Forest Patrols

Patrols and patrols supporting conflict mitigation or law enforcement actions were conducted in national park forests in eight districts and three of the four provinces bordering the national park but with the main focus to tiger and tiger habitat protection in five key districts of the provinces of Jambi and Bengkulu.

A total of 67 tiger records were made by patrol teams with a total walking distance, recorded by GPS way points, of 1475Km although actual distance walked was greater in practice. Frequency of encounter with tiger, park wide, was 1-22.01Km, almost identical to frequency of encounter recorded in the past two years (2009-2010 – 1-21.7Km and in 2008-2009 1- 23.75Km).

The number of patrols conducted was lower than planned due to combining patrol units on occasion and, in November, seconding four of the five TPCUs to provide support to the national park and KSDA in what was proposed to be a major habitat protection activity to remove encroachers from a core zone area of the national park.

Analysis of camera trapping records and other monitoring surveys by the NPA's monitoring team and other researchers advises that tiger populations in KSNP have risen from 136-144 in 2005-6 to at least 177 individuals over the period 2010-2011.

While Frequency of Encounter with tigers on patrol was stable park-wide, tiger records reduced in two sub-districts of KSNP, in particular in an area close to the provincial borders of Bengkulu and West Sumatra province in the western edges of the national park and in the extreme west of Merangin district in Jambi province.

Reduced or negative encounters with tiger in these two areas strongly correlates to snare seizures and information on tiger poaching by individuals who have mainly now been identified and whose activities remain the focus of active investigations by PHS staffers.



A total of only 9 active tiger snares were detected and destroyed by patrol units over the project period although 14 heavy-duty snare cables of the type generally used by tiger poachers were found and confiscated from farm sheds in or bordering national park forests.

Evidence of nine non-active tiger snare placements, at one of which sites a *felid* either an adult Sumatran clouded leopard or a juvenile tiger, had been caught, were also found in the course of patrols. The skeleton of a tiger which had died in a deer snare in a rarely patrolled and remote area in the foothills of Mt Seblat was recorded by a Bengkulu TPCU patrol unit.

A total of 201 active snares placed for sambar deer, muntjak or Sumatran serow were found and made safe and an additional 276 wild bird snares or 'liming' positions for ground or song birds destroyed, an indication of the growing pressure on wild bird populations in this area of Sumatra, in particular to supply an insatiable domestic market for song birds.

Four patrols were cut short due to actions against illegal logging within or bordering the national park and seizures of chainsaws by TPCU members and one patrol was aborted on the second day due to a close encounter with a tiger that showed excessive interest in the patrol team.

Given the policy directives issued by a senior policy maker in the national park regarding the inadvisability of national park rangers conducting law enforcement,

only one of the illegal logging actions proceeded through to formal arrest and prosecution and in the other incidents the illegal loggers 'escaped' but their chainsaws were confiscated as evidence.

While frequency of encounter with tiger on patrol was stable, the percentage of patrols recording tiger present in the course of patrols (50.6%) reduced slightly, this is likely to have been primarily a consequence of some patrols being aborted due to law enforcement action or seizures.

Investigations

Investigations into suspected tiger poaching and trade and to identify areas where threat to tiger and tiger prey was suspected active were conducted in 10 of the 13 local government districts and four provinces bordering Kerinci Seblat National Park.

Direct evidence of poaching and trade in Sumatran tiger, substantial enough to permit follow-up law enforcement action was secured in two cases by team investigators.

The destruction of eight active tiger snares in forest on the border between Kerinci and Muko Muko district, Bengkulu came as a direct result of a TPCU investigation into a poaching syndicate operating out of Pesisir Selatan district of West Sumatra on the north-western flanks of the national park.

TPCU rangers also worked undercover to record the illegal upgrading of a footpath from Lempur in the south of the Kerinci valley to the traditional Renah Kemumu enclave with funds disbursed by a staffer of a Jambi city-based NGO who cited the need, to villagers, for an evacuation route to Kerinci in the event of a volcanic eruption of Mt Sumbing.

The source of funds for the upgrade (which was conducted by labourers from another park-edge sub-district is unconfirmed, at present, although there are grounds to suspect a connection with proposals for a network of roads through core zones of the national park under the auspices of 'disaster evacuation'. Unfortunately no instructions have been issued by the park management authority to proceed to a formal investigation of this case which clearly breaches protected area law and the spirit of the St Petersburg tiger conservation declaration.

Subsequent to the upgrading of this trail, which may now be used by motor cycles, there is strong reason to believe three poached tigers from the Jangkat area of Merangin district were transported to Lempur in the south of the Kerinci valley for onward sale to a dealer in an eastern Sumatra seaboard city.

From the second quarter of 2011, investigations were primarily focused on securing information on areas at threat from poaching so that a patrol intervention could be launched and to collecting information on poacher and dealer activities rather than to securing evidence to support subsequent law enforcement.

This was due to lack of positive support for protection actions, a core program activity since 2000 by the senior policy maker at National Park Headquarters and

criticism of the team's field manager, by this senior officer, for organising and leading a successful law enforcement action to arrest a semi-professional tiger poacher in May 2011.

Two key trends emerged during the reporting period and are almost certainly linked:

- (i) the re-emergence of 'closed' syndicates of poachers from one particular district in the west of the national park who are hunting Sumatran tiger with the financial support of a local 'boss' providing capital for their activities. Poached tigers are strongly believed to then be shipped on, using a courier system, to a neighbouring province and then to an eastern seaboard city of Sumatran where the onward destination is suspected to be an ASEAN country.
- (ii) Startling increases in the price of tiger body parts, in particular tiger skins with prices increasing by approximately 100 per cent for an adult tiger between the period (roughly) November-March 2011. This dangerously changes the Risk-Reward Ratio for poachers and others involved in the illegal wildlife trade and is strongly suspected to be closely related to (i) above..

Investigation of 'closed' syndicates with the purpose of securing subsequent law enforcement action poses some difficulties since, once the tiger skin and bones enters the network, the evidence is not marketed locally and so difficult to secure visual or other evidence to permit subsequent action. To deal with this issue, the program in 2011-12 hopes to identify and implement new methodologies to secure enough evidence to permit subsequent action.

In early 2011, team investigators began to report some highly aberrant prices claimed to have been secured or offered for tiger pelts.

Initially these claims were dismissed as being related to 'barang antik' fraudsters who habitually inflate prices for (frequently) non-existent 'curiosity' items however by early March 2011, with similar and consistent reports being secured from sites in all four provinces bordering the national park, concern began to mount. Not least since almost identical prices were being cited and the normal price differential between districts around the national park was not recorded.

The FFI team leader contacted colleagues from WWF Riau and WCS tiger conservation teams who confirmed that they too had started to receive reports of 'extraordinary' (one comment) prices being secured for tiger pelts.

Discussions with these two programs advised that, as in the Kerinci landscape area, price differentials had essentially evaporated and had been 'standardised' not only at local (tiger landscape) level but, apparently, across Sumatra.

The FFI team leader then contacted tiger protection and conservation programs overseas with extensive experience in anti-poaching and trafficking and was advised that similar unprecedented increases in black market prices appeared to have also occurred in Nepal and some areas of India.

Discussion with colleagues from other programs in Sumatra advises that the escalation in black market prices commenced towards the end of the third quarter of 2010, appearing to commence in northern Sumatra (pers.com. WCU WCS) and then to feed through, south, to tiger landscapes (including Kerinci) in the fourth quarter of 2010. Senior police officers representing the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (WEN) at Indonesia National Police headquarters advised the program that what has occurred is a 'classic' example of structured, organised crime.

The trigger for this dangerous phenomena, which we believe has resulted in a increase in direct threat to Sumatran tiger is unclear and it is probably coincidental that the first indications of this surge in black market prices coincided with the final preparations for the St Petersburg tiger summit in Russia in November 2010 which secured agreement from tiger range states on a variety of actions to secure wild tiger populations including actions against poaching and trade in tiger products.

Human tiger and other human-wildlife conflict

A total of only 17 human-wildlife conflicts were mitigated directed by TPCU rangers, 15 relating to Sumatran tiger, one which, upon investigation was found to relate to predation of dogs and a goat by a pair of Asiatic golden cat and one incident relating to Sumatran elephant.

Additionally the program facilitated low-grade (tiger moving in forest-edge farmland and rubber gardens) mitigation and counselling actions on three occasions in 2011 in two sub-districts of Merangin district through a former TPCU Leader who resigned from the program in August 2010.

Predation of livestock (a water buffalo calf, dogs, goats) occurred in five of the 15 human-tiger conflicts to which the program was able to respond, other cases related to tigers moving in and through farmland, on occasion far from national park forest edge

The number of direct field interventions conducted reduced in comparison with previous years after the National Park director instructed the program to 'report' conflicts occurring outside national park forests to the relevant provincial KSDA unit

This instruction was treated with some flexibility, in particular where an urgent intervention was considered necessary and in sites bordering priority areas for tiger conservation.

This instruction was based on the formal jurisdictions established by the department of forestry where different agencies hold jurisdiction according to forest or land status and under which KSDA is responsible for nature conservation and management activities, including human wildlife conflict outside national parks.

To resolve this issue, the program in 2011-2012, hopes to facilitate an agreement between the National Park Authority and KSDA divisions in provinces bordering the national park which will allow both KSDA, NPA staff and TPCUs to implement

a more flexible and practical approach to human-wildlife conflict mitigation which is not primarily based on areas of jurisdiction

In November 2010, with all TPCUs in the field supporting the national park and the Jambi SPORC teams in an ultimately disappointing (see Law Enforcement) action to resolve illegal forest clearance, information was received regarding a Sumatran tiger caught in a pit trap set for pigtail macaques in forest-edge farmland in Pesisir Selatan district, West Sumatra to the north-west of the national park.

The PHS team leader was able to organize anesthetics through the kind support of another program donor and these were dispatched by courier to the KSDA West Sumatra tiger emergency team and their vet, who then were able to 'dart' and evacuate the tiger, a sub-adult male aged 15-16 months old..

The tiger, nicknamed Bujang (Bachelor Boy) by the rescue team was held in isolation at a facility in Sawahlunto, West Sumatra while Zoological Society of London's tiger monitoring specialist, Dolly Priatno organized and calibrated a GPS radio collar and then traveled to West Sumatra to fit the collar.

He was subsequently relocated to forest in the north-west quadrant of the national park in a joint exercise between the program and KSDA West Sumatra. The tiger was monitored through its GPS radio collar through until August 2011 when the collar began to malfunction and then finally failed. Local information advises that 'Bujang' is still within the range he began to establish in the second quarter of 2011 however it is disappointing that mechanical failure means that detailed information on this relocation and the animal's ongoing movements ceased after only nine months.

Law enforcement

Law enforcement action, under the management of seconded National Park officers is a key program activity where evidence of crime is secured to support the program goal of reducing threat to tiger and so allowing tiger populations to stabilise and recover.

Law enforcement against tiger poachers and traders, to date, has always occurred outside national park forest borders following investigations by TPCU members.

Such actions are conducted in partnership with the government agency holding legal jurisdiction over the area where law enforcement is conducted, usually the relevant district Police division as this generally facilitates the subsequent legal process and builds experience in wildlife crime issues among park-edge police divisions. In such cases, the program co-ordinates with KSDA and that agency subsequently takes the leading role in the subsequent legal process.

This results in an integrated approach to serious wildlife crime whereby institutional jurisdictions are respected but the TPCU teams are able to launch and command a rapid, effective and flexible response to tiger crime as and where required.

Unfortunately, during the program period the current NPA director advised the team's field manager and the program manager that formal established procedures should be followed in future and that suspected or confirmed tiger crime outside national park borders should be reported to the relevant provincial KSDA division.

Only one tiger related law enforcement action was conducted during the project period and this resulted in the arrest, in February 2011, of a 53-year old man from

Bungo district on the eastern edges of Kerinci Seblat National Park who is believed to have previously hunted and traded 23 tigers before his arrest following a TPCU investigation.

In line with the park director's instruction, this law enforcement action was conducted in coordination with KSDA Jambi and in partnership with rangers from the SPORC Brigade. Two of the SPORC rangers seconded to join this action were former TPCU Leaders who had been instructed to stand-by with SPORC in Jambi City in early 2010 by the National Park director and so were highly experienced in wildlife law enforcement and the poacher was arrested in possession of the skin of an adult Sumatran tiger.

SPORC legal officers then took over the preparation of the prosecution case which was heard, not at Muara Bungo district court as would have occurred had the program conducted the action in co-ordination with district police but in Jambi city.

A custodial sentence of only three months was made against the poacher by the Jambi City court. It is possible that this very light sentence was a consequence of legal arguments by a lawyer retained, by an unknown individual, to act on behalf of the poacher.

Also in February 2011, a TPCU ranger secured evidence of tiger crime relating to the poaching of two Sumatran tigers in park-edge forests in North Bengkulu district.

In line with the instructions of the Park director, the Bengkulu team co-ordinator, who previously has successfully led five actions to arrest poachers and traders of Sumatran tiger, reported this case to the relevant KSDA division. The case was then reported to Provincial police headquarters with a request for assistance and then referred from provincial police headquarters first, to district police headquarters and then to sub-district police.

During this process, the poachers or their associates appear to have learned of the planned action - almost certainly due to an accidental leak – and the suspects withdrew and the evidence was lost. Information was subsequently secured advising that the two tiger pelts were transferred to a town on the Bengkulu-West Sumatra borders and thence to a town to the east of Kerinci Seblat National Park in Jambi province.

Following these two cases, the program prioritised collection of information on at least two organised poaching syndicates now known to be actively threatening Sumatran tiger in and around KSNP and their methods and routes rather than securing evidence for immediate law enforcement. It is anticipated that a policy review at NPA will subsequently permit the program to return to using flexible and appropriate partnerships when conducting species law enforcement actions.

In June, TPCU rangers on a patrol, accompanied by two officers of Indonesian Special Forces who were taking part in the 'Bukit Barisan Expedition' approached a farm shed within national park borders in the south of the Kerinci valley. The farmer, a known deer poacher immediately ran away. The patrol unit, accompanied by the Kopassus officers, searched the shed and found it was being used as a workshop to construct muzzle-loader guns for sale. Four complete or under-construction firearms were seized.

Only one illegal logging law enforcement operation proceeded through the legal process due to policy advisories issued by the national park authority director and was a response to illegal logging made by a TPCU on a routine patrol.

Patrol teams also seized a total of seven chainsaws from illegal loggers in the course of three patrols but the perpetrators 'ran away' so that units were able to respond to threat to tiger habitat even though a full response to forest crime could not be launched

Program rangers also took part in what was proposed as a major law enforcement operation to resolve extensive and organized conversion of national park and adjoining protected buffer zone forests by coffee farming syndicates in November 2010

The action, led not by the national park but by the Jambi-based SPORC brigade was proposed to secure more than 1400ha of national park forests cleared, illegally, since 2006 and up to 8000ha of adjacent protected state forests and TPCUs were requested to take part on the basis of their local knowledge of the area.

Unfortunately the results of the action, which involved more than 100 forest rangers from KSNP and SPORC rapid response unit under the command of Jambi KSDA were disappointing, not least due to the activities of three rogue Jambi NGOs who successfully lobbied provincial police to withdraw support for the action, repeatedly sought to provoke violent confrontations with rangers and conducted a deeply dishonest and misleading campaign through the internet and press.

Numerous encroachers did leave the area, however due to lack of any practical subsequent follow-up action by either the national park or by SPORC, any benefits gained have been lost and local conservation NGOs and villagers who sought to support forest protection in this area have subsequently been subjected to threats and intimidation and smear campaigns by organizations supporting the coffee syndicates while information secured advises that TPCUs should not enter this area.

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Other Activities

Training and capacity raising:

- Plans to extend conflict imitation capacity through supporting a former TPCU leader in training key village partners in initial conflict mitigation and prevention procedures and development of a conflict reporting structure and to provide back up support to teams when in the field could not be implemented due to delays in funding disbursement by other program donors.
- Field Manager Dian Risdianto was proposed, by the program and subsequently attended a month long MIST and SMART training for trainers program in Thailand organised by the Smithsonian Institute in partnership with the GTI. Software issues which, we hope will shortly be resolved, delayed training of TPCU personnel in use of MIST-based patrol systems however we hope, in early 2012, to implement training both for PHS personnel and some key national park officers in provincial and section offices as well as key park headquarters staff.

Other activities

Support development of the Indonesia National Tiger Recovery Plan:-

With colleagues from the Harimaukita Sumatran tiger conservation forum, the FFI team leader continued to provide technical advice for development of the Indonesia National Tiger Recovery Plan which was formally presented at the St Petersburg tiger summit in November 2010.

Under the Indonesia NTRP, Kerinci Seblat National Park and the surrounding Tiger landscape forms one of five tiger priority intervention areas for tiger conservation under the NTRP.

The Indonesia NTRP also proposes to replicate this program's Tiger Protection & Conservation Units model to spearhead field protection and conservation actions in other target landscapes in Sumatra and the FFI team leader provided input to draft planning for replication and extension of units to other tiger landscapes prioritised under the NTRP.

Operational Issues encountered in 2010-2011 advise that the Indonesia NTRP needs to address jurisdictional problems at local institutional level, in particular regarding human-tiger conflict and poaching and trade so that a more landscape-level approach is taken to key conservation issues and not restricted to individual forestry agency's areas of legal jurisdiction.

Provide technical advice to the NPA to support ongoing development of a tiger management strategy and human wildlife conflict mitigation capacity at park officer level.

Kerinci Seblat National Park has now been formally confirmed by the Department of Forestry as a national priority area for conservation of wild tigers and securing the objectives of the Indonesia NTRP while in late 2009, the NPA was also tasked with development of strategies and activities for species protection and conservation to provide an example to other protected areas in Indonesia.

During the project period camera trap monitoring for Sumatran tiger was re-launched after the NPA secured funding from the Department of Forestry under the management of a young NPA officer who has worked closely with the FFI and FFI/DICE team since 2004.

The project team worked closely with the NPA monitoring team during the project period, sharing information on results of both patrols and monitoring activities so that detailed input on subsequent management strategies could be given to senior park management.

Policy advisories issued regarding areas where the PHS team could freely operate and delayed funding disbursement by counterpart donors for some planned activities meant that plans to extend conflict mitigation capacity in some key areas could not be conducted as hoped.

Although the park was, as always, very supportive of the program, some problems were also encountered regarding selection and secondment of NPA personnel to key leadership positions in the programme, not least as a consequence of the NPA director's decision, in early 2010, to transfer almost half the National Park's 109 rangers to the SPORC Brigade in Jambi City, 475Km to the east of the park followed by the sudden, and quite unexpected transfer of the team's Jambi coordinator to SPORC in October 2010.

In mid 2011, the national park confirmed there is a strong probability that nine of the program's most experienced community team members may be absorbed into the national park as fully-recognised, as opposed to honorary, park staff in early 2012.

It is planned that three and possibly four of these long-serving and highly experienced personnel will be seconded back to the program as TPCU leaders so resolving growing problems in identification and selection of TPCU leaders as a consequence of the loss of park ranger staff to SPORC.

Those long-serving staffers not seconded back to the program will be in a position to make a strong contribution to developing park capacity to conserve and protect species at local level through their long experience of working with this program.

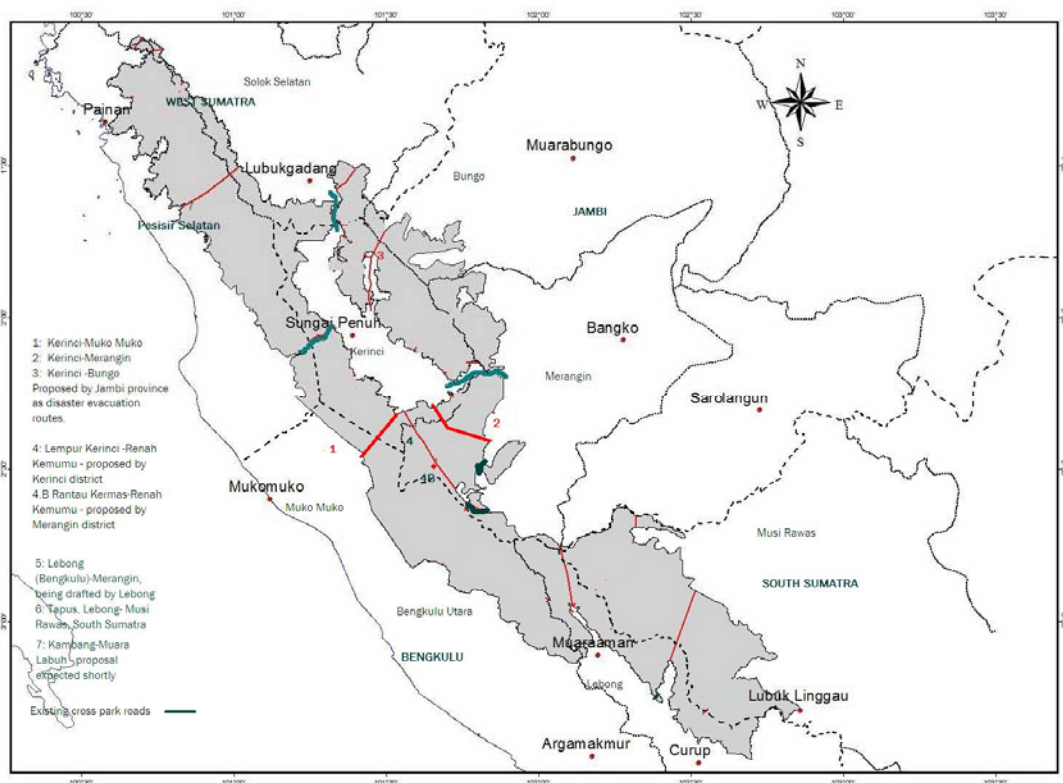
Work with Harimaukita Sumatran tiger conservation forum, other tiger conservation programs and with local NGOs

The program liaised and worked closely with colleagues within the Sumatra-wide Harimaukita Sumatran tiger conservation forum on a number of activities, in particular to give technical input to development of the Indonesia National Tiger Recovery Plan which was presented to the St Petersburg tiger summit in November 2010.

We also worked closely with the Harimaukita forum and with local conservation NGO members of the AKAR network to build a national campaign strategy to secure rejection, by the Ministry of Forestry, of proposals for a network of inter-district and inter provincial highways through core zones of the national park as 'disaster evacuation' routes.

These proposals were lodged with the Department of Forestry in April 2011 just five months after Indonesia became a signatory to the St Petersburg Accord which states that core zones of national parks should be inviolate from infrastructure and other development activities.

The program collected extensive and detailed information for the campaign against roads building both for our campaign partners and for the national park including detailed geological data on risks posed by volcanic eruption risks and tectonic fault lines which clearly showed that the basis for the proposed roads building were not based on sound data.



Map of Kerinci Seblat National Park showing cross-park road routes proposed by Kerinci and other park-edge districts in early-mid 2011.

Unfortunately it rapidly became clear that these proposals had and continue to have strong political support from certain political parties and business interests and, to date, remain active and have not been rejected by the Minister of Forestry who is a member of a party with a strong powerbase in central, western Sumatra

Albeit with deep foreboding, the program and local NGO partners did not oppose upgrading of a traditional footpath to a two-metres wide hard surfaced road in the far west of Merangin district from Rantau Kermas village to the Renah Kemumu enclave settlement, a village with a history dating back more than 500 years.

This road was approved formally by the Minister of Forestry early in 2011 after de-facto upgrading of the footpath to allow disaster relief materials to reach the settlement following a major earthquake centred on Renah Kemumu in late 2009.

However the upgraded road does not enter national park core zones and, unlike Kerinci district, the local government authority has been generally very supportive of conservation of the national park and the program's field manager, who is also the Section leader for the national park in this area, negotiated an MoU with local villages and the district government regarding establishment of guard posts, portals to limit traffic and pledges regarding joint protection patrols and monitoring to ensure the upgraded road did not result in encroachment and conversion of national park forest.

In April 2011, the PHS program secured information and subsequently documented activities to widen a traditional footpath through core zones of the national park from Renah Kemumu village to Lempur in the south of the Kerinci valley . Photographic evidence was secured and passed to the NPA and Department of Forestry but unfortunately no follow-up action was taken.

Subsequently FFI Kerinci secured detailed information advising that funds for upgrading of the footpath had been disbursed by a Jambi-city based NGO briefed with monitoring post disaster reconstruction efforts in the Renah Kemumu area.

This data was passed on to members of the AKAR NGO network who continue to investigate the source of funds (approximately \$10,700) so that the AKAR network may subsequently press for action from either police (depending upon ultimate source of funds) or the forestry department regarding this clear breach of protected areas law

In addition to frequent meetings and discussion with AKAR NGO members on a wide range of issues relating to species and habitat conservation in three provinces of the national park, the FFI team leader also provided technical support to a local NGO partner focusing on a key block of the national park which forms a corridor through to the neighbouring Batang Hari Protected Forest previously identified as protecting a significant tiger population.

ICS conducted field surveys to identify and record threat (primarily forest conversion by small holder farmers and an oil palm plantation, illegal logging and gold mining) and secure data on tiger presence in a critically-threatened area of the national park. Field surveys reported the presence of four adult tigers resident or primarily resident in these highly disturbed forests and secured one breeding record and developed communications between the local national park section and a village which has become established in the area since 1985.

Our local NGO partner also secured extensive and detailed data and documentation on illegal forest conversion and illegal logging in the national park and the individuals responsible. Unfortunately, local park officers were not supported by park headquarters in making an effective response to these threats. However ICS was able to facilitate law enforcement against illegal loggers on one occasion with the support of special forces officers accompanying the Bukit Barisan Expedition to Kerinci Seblat National Park who arrested four illegal loggers in what is believed to be the first ever law enforcement action conducted in this district against illegal logging.