



Interim Report

*From Data to Action:
Curbing Wildlife Crimes in Sumatra, Indonesia*



A Report by the
**Wildlife Conservation Society
Indonesia Program**

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SUMMARY LINE

In January 2003, a Wildlife Crime Unit (WCU) was established in Lampung, a province in Southern Sumatra where populations of tigers, elephants, and primates are under high hunting pressure. The unit is comprised of members from the Department of Forestry Species Protection and Nature Conservation (BKSDA), police, ALAS and WATALA (two local groups based in Lampung), Alliance of Indonesian Journalists, and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). The first three months since the establishment of WCU were spent on setting up a partnership framework, recruiting personnel, establishing a joint workplan, preparing logistical matters, and training fellow team members.

WCU collects information from key informants and monitors places of wildlife sales, and arrests violators. Once a violator is arrested, our team assists the police and state prosecutors to provide ample evidence and arguments for judges to decide on a ruling. This unit is coordinated by a wildlife law expert from WCS and is made up of a WCS biologist, local NGO members skilled in undercover investigations, PHKA staff, police, and a journalist. We work with the existing protection units who work inside the parks – Rhino Protection Units (managed by the International Rhino Foundation) and Tiger Protection Units (managed by WCS) – thereby providing a full set of law enforcement tools through protection units inside the park and WCU efforts outside the park.

Thus far, WCU assistance has led to the conviction of two tiger and rhino sellers with the sentences of 4 years and 3 months, and 3 years and 6 months, the *highest sentences for wildlife violations in Indonesian history*. It has also led to the investigation of over 33 other possible wildlife violations. The WCU program has confiscated over 232 animals (mostly primates and birds), all handed over to PHKA authorities.

A media campaign and heightened public awareness and is a key component of this program. With greater awareness of the sanctions against wildlife violations, we expect that poaching and trading pressure will decrease. Therefore, we have been working hand-in-hand with the media – as members of the WCU team and as well as providing them information on case development. This program has stimulated great media interest, generating over 20 articles in local and national newspapers and magazines. Also, recognizing the important role of community in wildlife protection and law enforcement, WCU has developed outreach and campaign strategies to gain their support. Target groups include policy makers, students, polices, judges, prosecutors, and general public. A recent discussion forum, jointly hosted by WCU, BKSDA, Wildlife Rescue Center (Pusat Penyelamatan Satwa/PPS sponsored by the Gibbon Foundation), was held to disseminate information on wildlife protected regulations to community around Lampung. To increase public awareness on wildlife protection and its associated regulations, WCU has also published leaflets and a simple guidebook on wildlife protection and protection laws, which have been distributed in Bandar Lampung and Metro, the two largest cities in the Lampung Province. Community support for WCU activities finally led to the formation of Lampung Wildlife Care Forum (Forum Peduli Satwa Liar Lampung/FPSLL) in Bandar Lampung

A. INTRODUCTION

The link between habitat loss and species extinction is well documented, and provides a basis for many conservation strategies. Although less appreciated, illegal hunting and wildlife trading also present direct threats, which can lead to the endangerment of many species. Being a top predator and wide ranging species, Sumatran tiger (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*) suffers from both the direct effects of poaching as well as indirect effects through prey depletion and habitat deterioration.

Across Sumatra, people are hunting tigers and prey species at unsustainable rates. Despite its protection status, tigers and their prey appear regularly in Sumatran city markets. It is clear that protection and monitoring efforts within protected areas are not adequate to sustain tiger population for the long term. A grim report revealed that not less than 32 tigers had been killed in Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park (BBSNP) alone in the last four years. Unless the sale of tiger parts cease through rigorous prosecution, all other efforts in the field may prove to be futile.

Crime against wildlife is not yet a conservation priority for the Government of Indonesia, and the majority of the law apparatus and Indonesian public are still unaware of the laws and value of conserving wildlife. These factors have allowed the continued poaching and illegal trading of Indonesia protected species on a massive scale. Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) are responding to this problem by: a) establishing a field unit that will work closely with law enforcement agencies in order to put an end to rampant tiger sales; 2) providing financial and legal support for the prosecution of poachers; and 3) working with the media and communities to heighten awareness of the public including decision-makers on wildlife protection.

The Wildlife Crime Unit (WCU) was established in January 2003 to curb hunting and trading of protected wildlife in Lampung Province. This unit carries out its activities based on sound ecological and conservation research conducted by WCS. Led by WCS in concert with KSDA, Alliance of Indonesian Journalists as media representative, and local NGOs (WATALA and ALAS Indonesia), the team will identify and monitor park access and trade points.

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WCU collects information from key informants and monitors places of wildlife sales, and arrests violators. Long-term data on the volume, composition, price, and consumers allow the team to develop a finer-scale analysis of tiger persistence, both in BBSNP and across the range of the tiger. The unit also serves as a rapid response unit, which assists park rangers on their call with arresting process, gathering evidence, and later, providing expert testimony during court proceedings. Once a violator is arrested, our team assists the police and state prosecutors to provide ample evidence and arguments for judges to decide on a ruling. This unit is coordinated by a wildlife law expert from WCS and is made up of a WCS biologist, local NGO members skilled in undercover investigations, PHKA staff, police, and a journalist. We work with the existing protection units who work inside the parks – Rhino Protection Units (managed by the International Rhino Foundation) and Tiger Protection Units (managed by WCS) – thereby

providing a full set of law enforcement tools through protection units inside the park and WCU efforts outside the park.

B. METHODOLOGY

Establish a ‘Wildlife Crimes Unit’ to serve as an independent unit to monitor, patrol, and facilitate law enforcement against Protected Wildlife poaches and trade.

The unit is comprised of one WCS staff, two PHKA officer, one media personnel, and two local NGO members. The team was provided with training on species identification, wildlife crime concepts, issues and techniques related to advocacy and law enforcement to combat hunting and wildlife trade. The unit is coordinated and managed by a WCU coordinator to ensure all operation performed well and smoothly. The main activities include monitoring, undercover investigations (intelligence), market and other access/trade points patrolling, technical and legal assistance, and media coverage strategy.

1. Patrolling

Patrolling activities were conducted undercover because the target species (tigers, rhinos, and elephants) are not traded openly. The WCU team is divided into 2 divisions: the investigation and response team. Target sites including pet markets, bus stations, and seaports around Lampung are visited and investigated covertly by the investigation team. When target species are identified during the visit, the team alerts the response team, who then prepare to cover these sites. Patrolling is conducted 3 days/week (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) on an average of 10 hours/day at each site. However, given the high wildlife trade at the Bakauheni seaport, which connects Sumatra and Java, patrolling there will probably increase to 24 hour periods.

2. Investigations

The investigation team works undercover to investigate target persons and sites. Once target persons and their holdings are clearly identified, BKSDA forest rangers and police officers who are part of the response team are called in. Arrests and confiscations are carried out in a complete and timely manner. WCU also conducts investigations on those that keep wildlife pets and products (e.g., stuffed tigers) to check on their legal permits to keep these items.

3. Technical and Legal Assistance in Due Legal Process

WCU works closely with forest rangers, police investigators, prosecutors and judges in order to provide legal documents, collecting evidence develop legal precedence, and to ensure that due legal process is proper and timely. Once an arrest is made, WCU in consultation with WCS-IP Director and staff and law enforcement agencies select high profile cases with the highest probability of a successful prosecution. Our target at the project onset was five such cases within this year to help build a strong portfolio of legal precedents that could later be used for future cases.

4. Public Awareness and Media Coverage Strategy

Newspaper reporters from the Indonesia Journalist Association (AJI) are central members of WCU, participating in undercover investigations as well as reporting on the developments of cases. This increases the likelihood of greater media coverage which contribute to the ultimate aim of reducing poaching and trading pressure through a heightened public awareness. Furthermore, the media serves as watchdogs for legal proceedings to ensure minimal level of corruption, as these journalists are independent. WCU intensively facilitates consultative meetings with regency and provincial government, central government, and the members of

Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) to promote and 'socialize' conservation laws. To reach a wider audience, WCU employs different means of communication through a series of TV and radio programs.

C. RESULTS

1. Patrolling

During June-August 2003, WCU has spent a total of 145 man-hours patrolling in Bandar Lampung. WCU team targeted their investigation at the Tanjung Karang train station, where target species are transported. This station is also connected to a large bus station that provides a connection between Bandar Lampung and Jakarta. Patrols were also carried out at wildlife market in Bandar Lampung. From 7 patrol operations, the WCU team, in collaboration with BKSDA, have succeeded in capturing 5 main suspects at this site. All of the suspects were caught red handed for carrying primates or birds. From those operation a total of 232 individuals of primate and bird were confiscated.



2. Monitoring and Investigation

During May-August 2003, the WCU spent approximately 790 man-hours conducting monitoring and investigation. Monitoring and investigation were targeted at several different locations in Bandar Lampung known as hotspots for trade including Tanjung Karang train station, Pasir Gintung market; and Way Kambas National Park. Monitoring at the train station was conducted concurrently with the patrolling activities. Monitoring at Pasir Gintung was conducted 2 days/week whereas the others were conducted ad libitum. During May-August 2003, WCU was successful in detecting an illegal trade networking in Bandar Lampung (Figure 1), and elephant parts trade network in Way Kambas National Park (Figure 2). Monitoring and investigation carried out at WKNP 7-15 June 2003 identified several people living in the vicinity of the park involved in hunting and wildlife trading. Although there were some general perceived patterns of this trade according to the Rhino Protection Units, our results seemed to show a new pattern emerging (Figure 3).



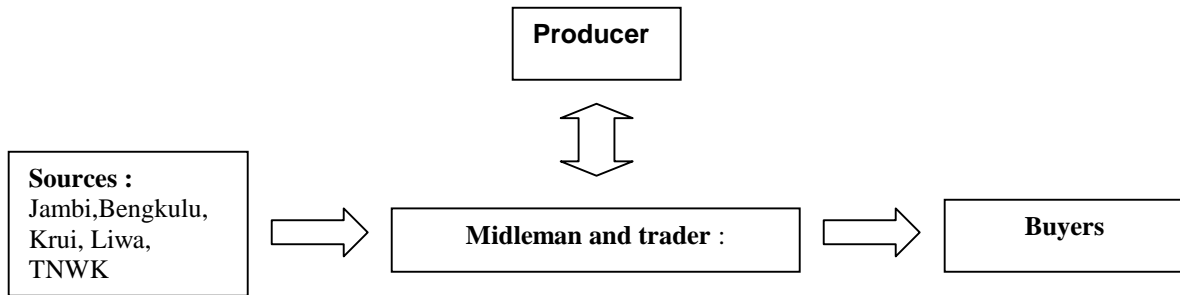


Figure 1. Illegal trade networking in Bandar Lampung. Excluding sources, all the three network components occur in Bandar Lampung where the middleman and traders play the most important role.

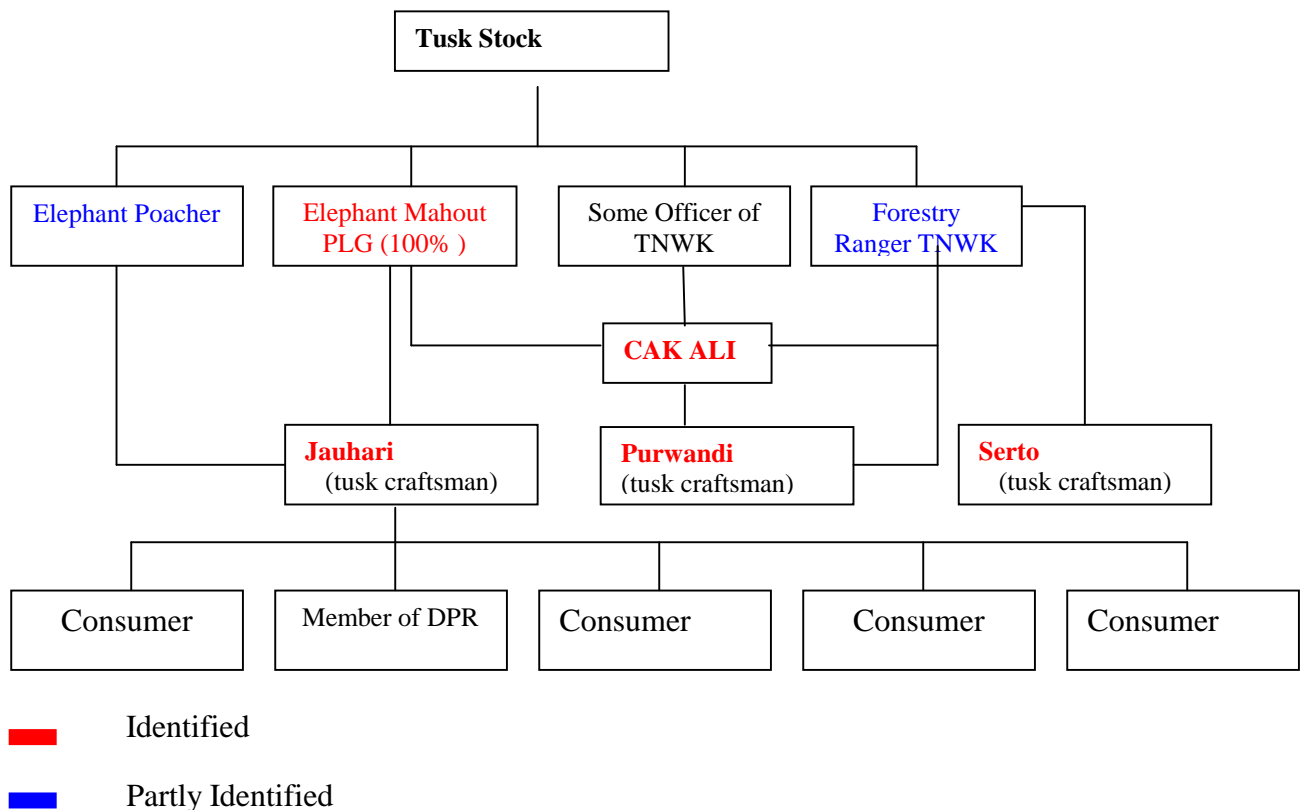


Figure 2. Elephant body parts trade networking identified by WCU. The investigation indicated that certain people at the WKNP involved in the illegal activities.

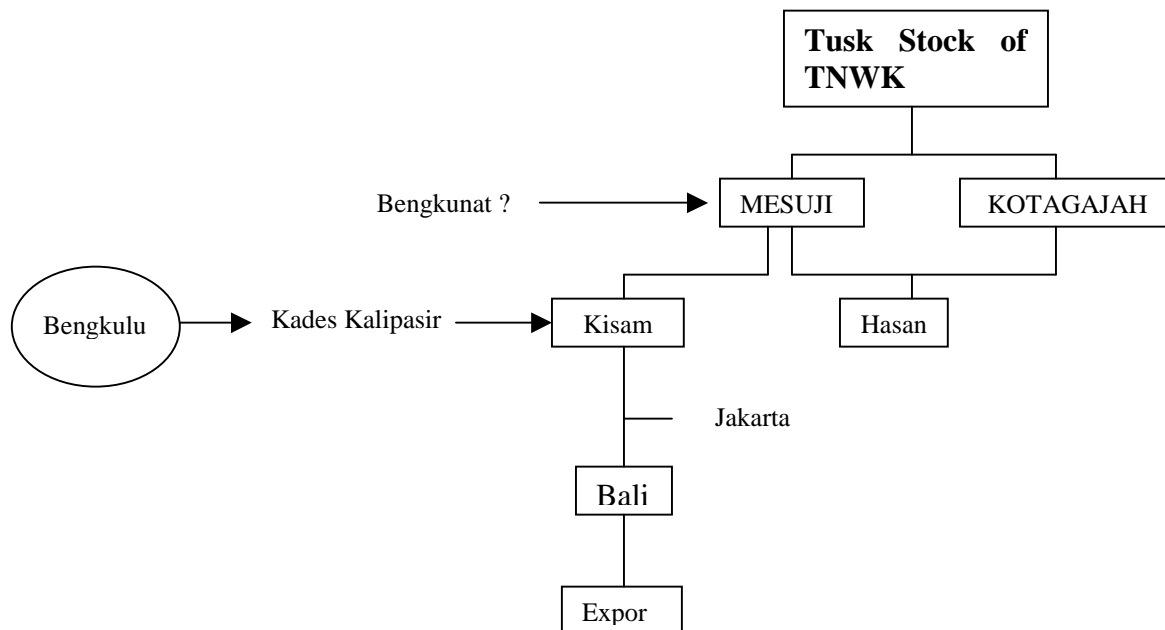


Figure 3. Networking scheme proposed by the Rhino Protection Unit. The scheme presents more detailed information on the trading routes than the relationship between suppliers and costumers.

3. SURVEYS OF PRESERVED WILDLIFE PRODUCT

We carried out a brief survey of households in Bandar Lampung to see to what extent traders keep wildlife products in their homes for storage. We did this in realization that uncovering these items in their private property could provide stronger evidence of their involvement in the wildlife trade. Between May-August 2003, we recorded a total of 74 preserved wildlife products, which comprised of 35% cats (including tigers), 0.04% sun bear, 17.6% deer, 0.22% birds of paradise, and 20.3% ivory.



4. Technical and Legal Assistance in Due Legal Process

WCU succeeded in assisting 9 cases of protected wildlife poaching and trading during May-August 2003 in Liwa and Tanggamus courts. In collaboration with RPU, several cases have been successfully led to the execution of penalty, with the lowest sentence of 1 year and 6 month in prison and the highest two sentences with 3 years and 6 month in prison in addition to Rp.



300.000 fine, and 4 years and 3 months in prison and Rp. 300,000 fine. These have been the highest sentences given out for wildlife violations in Indonesian history. Although these sentences were less than requested by the State General Prosecutor, Suwono, they have set a national legal precedence for wildlife violations. These sentences have also sent a message to other law enforcement officers about the seriousness of these crimes. “We are serious about enforcing environmental laws, particularly of species that represent our natural heritage, and we will

make sure that violators do not escape justice,” stated Gatot Susanto, the judge who decided on these cases.

5. Public Awareness and Media Coverage Strategy

In September 2003 WCU in collaboration with BKSDA, Wildlife Rescue Center (PPS who is funded by the Gibbon Foundation), with support from government agencies at both provincial and national level, held a discussion forum and press conference to raise public awareness on the conservation of protected wildlife. The forum succeeded in gaining people’s commitment to legally register their wildlife pets and wildlife products. To push the process, WCU with the help from media has published good practices by high-ranking officials who handed over their wildlife willingly.

To reach wider audience WCU also arranged several campaign programs to high school students in Bandar Lampung and Metro. During the activities, leaflets and a simple booklet containing information on protected wildlife and related regulations were distributed. Wildlife pictures were included in the campaign packages to attract students and people attention.

Through these efforts, WCU has developed strong relationships with major media agencies in Lampung and Jakarta. To date, more than 20 articles on WCU activities and achievements have been published in national and local media. The list of articles published in newspaper and magazine are as follow:

- 1) *Menjerat Para Penjerat Satwa Liar* by Idi Dimyati. Akar (a Lampung based newspaper). June 9, 2003.
- 2) *Poaching in National Park* by Harry Alexander. Jakarta Post. April 11, 2003.
- 3) *Memburu SindikaT pemburu Satwa Liar* by WCU team. Akar. April 14, 2003
- 4) *Animal rescue* by WCU. Lampung Post. May 29, 2003
- 5) *LSM: Itu sudah dari Dulu, Bukan Rahasia Lagi. Lampung.* RADAR Lampung. April 29, 2003.
- 6) *Law Enforcement Lingkungan Dimulai* by WCU. Lampung Post. 24 Juni 2003
- 7) *Perdagangan Satwa Liar Gunakan Wanita Renta* by WCU. Lampung Post. 2 Agustus 2003

- 8) Poaching and illegal trading of wildlife. Talk show on Trans TV (National Television). Jakarta, May, 2003.
- 9) Hunting And Illegal Trading Of Tiger Rhino And Elephant. Seputar Indonesia. (A News Program At RCTI, A Television Station With National Network). Jakarta. May 15, 2003.
- 10) Poaching And Illegal Trading Of Wildlife. Talk Show On Local Radio (RRI Lampung). June, 2003.
- 11) Suharto (Regent) possess a lot of wildlife by WCU. Lampung Post. 16 August 2003.
- 12) Rhino horns value is 10 month jail by WCU. Akar. 20 August 2003.
- 13) Forest Rangers arrest illegal trader of 327 eagles by WCU. Akar. 20 August 2003
- 14) Illegal protected wildlife traders raid by forest rangers by WCU. Lampung Post. 20 August 2003
- 15) Suharto (Regent) liberated 8 birds by WCU. Radar Lampung. 24 August 2003.
- 16) BKSDA returned 250 wildlife to their habitat by WCU. Lampung Post. 28 August 2003.
- 17) . BKSDA accepted 80 wildlife by WCU. Lampung Post. 9 September 2003.
- 18) . Prohibit extinct of wildlife by WCU. Radar Lampung. 12 September 2003.
- 19) . Wildlife discussion by WCU. Lampung Post. 12 August 2003.
- 20) Policy and Law on Protection of wildlife in Indonesia by Harry Alexander (in preparation).
- 21) Pocket book of Environment Rules (UU 5 Tahun 1990, PP. 7 Tahun 1999, PP.8 Tahun 1999) by WCS (draft distributed but in prep for a more comprehensive version)
- 22) Field Guide book of Protected Indonesian Wildlife by WCS (in prep)

6. Others

WCU, in collaboration with other local NGOs, has initiated Lampung Wildlife Care Forum (FPSLL). This forum will act as a WCU counterpart in its campaign and advocacy programs.

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