

UPKKL

Environmental Conflict and Crime Unit of Berbak Ecosystem

*'Unit Penanggulangan Konflik dan Kejahatan Lingkungan Wilayah
Ekosistem Berbak'*



Final report to 21st Century Tiger

Zoological Society of London, Indonesia Programme

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Executive Summary

It is clear that if threats to the tiger population in and around Berbak National Park such as poaching and conflict are not addressed immediately, then long term plans to protect and conserve the national park through REDD financing could potentially be for a forest empty of tigers. As a result of joint funding received from 21st Century Tiger and the USFWS, ZSL – working closely with Berbak National Park (Taman Nasional Berbak), the Nature Conservation Agency (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam (BKSDA)) and the Forestry Department of Jambi (Dinas Kehutanan Muaro Jambi) forest police– has established a wildlife crime unit to counter these threats.

The “Unit Penanggulangan Konflik dan Kejahatan Lingkungan” (UPKKL) wildlife crime unit was modelled on the highly successful Kerinci Seblat Sumatran Tiger Protection and Conservation Team (PHSKS), to deal with tiger poaching, illegal wildlife trading and crime, and human-wildlife conflict. The team is staffed with ranger police from the three key government agencies, who are seconded to the unit on a part time basis with postings staggered, allowing the unit to be continually staffed. The focus of the unit in the first year was to have a tangible and effective presence in the area, meeting the needs of the communities through socialisation events and human-wildlife conflict mitigation and those of the tiger population through anti-poaching patrols and crime detection.

To achieve this, the team underwent basic training in Kerinci National Park with the PHSKS. The training focused on crime detection and investigation and conflict mitigation protocols and models adopted by PHSKS. To date the UPKKL has established successful standard operating procedures for; rapid and effective responses to any wildlife crime or human-wildlife conflict; crime investigations; reporting and follow-up; ongoing community socialisation; and practical proactive field patrols and operations.

The unit has formed good links with communities, established by dealing with human-wildlife conflicts as and when they have occurred and by working closely with communities that have been affected in the past. There is a 24-hour hotline on which communities can call the unit if such incidents occur, and 12 community rangers have been selected and trained to provide continuous on the ground support for their communities, communities which have been affected the most frequently by conflicts. It is hoped that in the future these links will be reinforced so that they provide an informal, yet effective network of communication to prevent wildlife crime or at the very least act as a deterrent to potential poachers or illegal traders. Since the inception of the unit there has only been one tiger-related death in the unit’s area of operation, which occurred in March only a month after the unit was created.

UPKKL activities

Conflict activities

During the course of the year wildlife conflict issues were addressed both in the field and through community and stakeholder participatory events. These included meetings and consultations involving relevant institutions and law enforcement agencies as well as socialisations, workshops and a poster campaign in local communities. These activities have enabled the UPKKL team to establish an informal network for reporting wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflicts. A more formal network was put in place in areas known to have a high frequency of wildlife conflicts. The network to date includes 12 resident village rangers (community rangers) who have taken it in turns to join the team and participate in patrolling operations. One undercover informant has also been recruited by the team, with a view to obtaining sensitive information on wildlife poaching and illegal trafficking.

One of the first conflicts the team dealt with was in March 2010, when a man from the Sungai Aur village was attacked by a tiger in TN Berbak. He was attacked at 11pm while staying overnight in the forest with three other individuals, all engaged in collecting wood. The victim received wounds to his leg and neck but was saved from further injury when the tiger was scared off by his friends. He was interviewed in hospital by the team and the site of the attack was visited and patrolled by the unit, however the tiger did not return. A detailed report was submitted to the BKSDA chief and Head of TN Berbak.

A second, and fatal, incident occurred in late in March in a remote fishing hut. Earlier in the month the village of Seponjen had reported tiger attacks on village cattle, the latest in a series of attacks on the community's livestock. The Unit was deployed and decided, after a review of recent sustained conflicts in the area, to try to capture the tiger for translocation. Over the course of five days the unit worked with the village chief and other community members to try and trap the tiger, but although it was heard once by a member of the team the trapping was unsuccessful. The village was then trained in how to build and use scaring devices to prevent further attacks and villagers were advised to contact the team in the event of any tiger sightings. Two weeks later the team were called out by the villagers to investigate the death of a 25 year old fisherman who had been killed by a tiger 2 hours up stream. The team responded immediately and investigated the incident, again following up with the community to reduce the possibilities of reprisal attacks any tigers that may enter the vicinity of the village

The below image was from such a demonstration event in Rantau Rasau village where 28 goats and two cows had been eaten. A box trap was also placed near the area where cattle were kept in case the tiger did return, with the aim of translocating the tiger if caught.



Over the course of the grant period the team were called out to 12 separate direct human-wildlife conflicts.

| No. | Village | REGENCY | WILD ANIMAL CONFLICT |
|-----|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Teluk rendah | Tebo | Sumatran Tiger |
| 2 | Muara Imat | Kerinci | Sumatran Tiger |
| 3 | Sungai Gelam | Muara Jambi | Sumatran Tiger |
| 4 | Sungai Aur | Muara Jambi | Sumatran Tiger |
| 5 | Jebus | Muara Jambi | Sumatran Tiger |
| 6 | Gedong Karya | Muara Jambi | Sumatran Tiger |
| 7 | Rantau Rasau | Tanjung Jabung Timur | Sumatran Tiger |
| 8 | Sungai Toman | Tanjung Jabung Barat | Sun Bear |
| 9 | Pematang Lumut | Tanjung Jabung Barat | Sun Bear |
| 10 | Pandan Lagan | Tanjung Jabung Timur | Sun Bear |
| 11 | Dusun Kebun | Tanjung Jabung Barat | Sun Bear |
| 12 | Sepucuk Jambi | Tebo | Sumatran Elephant |

Sungai Gelem was targeted as one of the key villages for socialisation and training, because it was the home to eight of the nine victims of tiger attacks in the Jambi area in 2009. However, the victims were all undertaking illegal logging activities in the area at the time of the attacks. Observations carried out by the team during 2010 uncovered evidence that showed illegal logging activities were still occurring, further reducing key habitat and increasing the likelihood of human wildlife conflict. Information was passed onto the relevant part of the BKSDA agency that deals directly with illegal logging.



The team have also dealt with indirect conflicts where evidence of tiger presence such as footprints or scrapings was found. In incidents such as these the team demonstrates to villagers how to construct and use tiger scaring devices to prevent any further attacks.

Patrolling TN Berbak



The unit conducts regular monthly patrols within TN Berbak, and varies the routes to take in as much of the Berbak ecosystem as possible. This reduces the possibility of poachers being forewarned and so increases the chance of the team encountering poachers, whilst at the same time maximising the amount of ground covered overall within the park boundaries. During the course of these patrols any snares the team comes across are removed and the locations recorded. On one occasion the unit came across a known poacher's temporary accommodation or 'pondok'. As this hut was erected illegally in the park the patrol team dismantled the hut and removed

any materials that could have been used as snares or traps, thus hampering the poacher's efforts and deterring him and others from operating further.

Once the unit has finished the patrol, they pay an informal visit to the nearest village to discuss the danger of snares to tigers, the laws against poaching and the removal of wildlife from the national park. The team also discusses tiger conflicts with local communities and shares constructive ideas on mitigating such conflicts effectively.

Informant network

During the course of the year wildlife conflict issues were addressed both in the field and through community and stakeholder participatory events, including meetings and consultations involving relevant institutions and law enforcement agencies as well as socialisations, workshops and a poster campaign in local communities. As a result of these activities the UPKKL team has established an informal network for reporting wildlife crime and human-wildlife conflicts, while a more formal network was established by selecting 12 individuals living in target communities to be trained as community rangers. The purpose of these community rangers has been to provide a more formal communication network, immediate support to the community should a wildlife crime or conflict occur and, where needed, 'first on the scene' trained rapid response, assessment and securing of the area until the UPKKL team arrives.

Outreach and stakeholder participation

In May 2010 the team organised a Sumatran tiger conflict handling team road show, to promote the role and activities of the UPKKL to government departments and agencies that may have to deal with wildlife, wildlife crime and wildlife human-conflict. The aim of the road show was to raise the profile of the team, highlighting the work they team had been doing to date, answering any questions the various departments may have about the team and areas in which they may have suggestions of improving the team and or give support. It was hope that this would also facilitate and open lines of communication so the team would be contacted in the event any wildlife incidents observed by the various agencies. The team with a ZSL facilitator visited the Forest Department Jambi, TN Berbak, BKSDA Jambi, Police Department Jambi, Forestry Department Muaro Jambi and Korem (Military Command) 042 'Garuda Putih'.

A follow up governmental level meeting was held in August, attended by the team, the Country Coordinator of ZSL Indonesia Dolly Priatna and Laura D'Arcy, the Head of the National Park, Head of BKSDA Jambi, representative from the head of DINAS Maura Jambi Forestry, and a representative from DINAS Kehutan Provinsi. Future activities of the unit were discussed including identifying ways in which the unit could act as a conduit to improve communications between the departments through regular reporting. Continuing official support for the unit was agreed, with a long term commitment of these agencies to continue to provide staff to be seconded to the UPKKL team and BKSDA maintaining the co-ordinating role through Pak Nurazman.

Wildlife crime poster

A poster campaign was devised as a method to raise awareness in communities of the protected status of the Sumatra tiger and to raise the profile of the UPKKL. The poster included details of the 24-hour emergency phone line of the unit, and villagers were informed that they could call at anytime in the event they had any information regarding wildlife crime or conflict. Calls made to the hotline have been few in number so far but are slowly increasing as the unit continues to make informal visits to the communities around the park and answering the calls of communities in distress.

Several unit members unit attended a training event held by the WCS wildlife crime detection unit, attended by representatives working in wildlife crime throughout Sumatra. This gave them further crime detection skills including identifying tiger parts preserved for traditional Chinese medicine.



Investigations

The unit is currently investigating a possible wildlife crime case using surveillance, interviews and evidence collection, however conflicting reports have been identified in interviews carried out and one of the informants in the case has gone to ground. The team are still pursuing the case with the view to identify further potential witnesses. However due to the innate nature of the illegal wildlife trade, the intimidation and bribery of informants and witnesses are rife, therefore unless the perpetrator is caught red-handed, securing sufficient evidence to bring a case to court for a successful conviction, such investigations are a long and delicate process.

BKSDA Jambi stated

'The role of the UPKKL is strongly needed and has been key in handling wildlife conflict in the province of Muaro Jambi, assisting in the regions of Batanghari Regency and Merangin. We hope the team can increase this performance in the future with more facilities, recruitment of more members and law protection'

Unit review

A review of the impact of the unit was carried out in the agencies from which team members were recruited and communities in which they have worked. The response was resoundingly positive. Areas identified as strengths of the team were;

- Quick response time to wildlife crime and conflict in communities; communities felt supported
- Strong relationships with communities, from consistent visits /follow ups after conflict events
- Training community members and leaders in using mitigation advice
- Increased awareness in communities of the protected status of the Sumatran tiger

Areas where it was felt that the team needed to improve were;

- Time management balancing work commitments and commitment to the UPKKL
- Target further communities in potential areas of wildlife crime to strengthen relationships and trust as there is still reluctance to contact, or work with team.
- Area and frequency of patrols within the national park boundaries

Future progress of the Unit

The UPKKL Wildlife Crime Unit aims in future to reinforce the foundations that it has established within the community and with stakeholders, and to begin to extend the capabilities of the unit's members. The key objectives building upon the successes of this unit to date are:

1. Identify other members of Berbak National Park forest police and BKSDA forest police for training to further support the core of the Berbak wildlife crime unit
2. Further training exercise with the PHSTKS in Kerinci, to focus specifically on the processing of a wildlife investigation until conviction – a specialised and difficult area
3. Strengthen and extend the information network across the Berbak region, specifically:
 - a. Provide the volunteer Community Rangers, of whom there is now one in each major settlement within the area of interest, with further training and a stipend allowing them the opportunity to join the unit during its activities at least once in the year.
 - b. have at least one informant in each major settlement of the area of interest
 - c. establish good relationships with local police offices
4. Maintain the wildlife conflict/crime hotline, respond to all calls, and continue with wildlife crime prevention and detection

Overall both the stakeholder and community responses to the UPKKL unit have been very positive, the goals which were set out during the grant period have to the best of the unit's capabilities have been achieved. The capacity and skills to deal with wildlife detection and conviction is one that is steadily being built on as the trust between the communities and the unit are built on further. The UPKKL team has begun to be widely respected by public in Jambi for its dedication in resolving wildlife conflicts and crime a reputation which the unit it is hoped will have the opportunity to build upon.

Expenditure breakdown

| | Grant allocation | Qtr 1 (Jan-Mar) | Qtr 2 (Apr-Jun) | Qtr 3 (Jul-Aug) | Qtr 4 (Oct -Dec) | Total spend | Variance |
|--|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Training | | | | | | | |
| Coordination meetings TNKS, TNB, BKSDA | 69.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 73.00 | 73.00 | -4.00 |
| Training fees | 828.00 | 414.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 414.00 | 828.00 | 0.00 |
| Honorarium | 414.00 | 207.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 207.00 | 414.00 | 0.00 |
| Food | 1,034.00 | 517.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 517.00 | 1,034.00 | 0.00 |
| Transport | 138.00 | 69.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 69.00 | 138.00 | 0.00 |
| Investigation practice | 517.00 | 0.00 | 134.00 | 144.00 | 227.00 | 505.00 | 12.00 |
| Support visits by PHSTKS rangers | 552.00 | 0.00 | 294.00 | 0.00 | 230.00 | 524.00 | 28.00 |
| | | | | | | | |
| Salaries | | | | | | | |
| UPKKL honorarium & Performance bonuses | 2,331.00 | 237.00 | 711.00 | 711.00 | 711.00 | 2,370.00 | -39.00 |
| | | | | | | | |
| Information network | | | | | | | |
| Intelligence and information network costs | 1,241.00 | 134.00 | 340.00 | 330.00 | 418.00 | 1,222.00 | 18.00 |
| Trialling Community Ranger candidates | 345.00 | 115.00 | 230.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 345.00 | 0.00 |
| Coordination and institutional lobbying | 186.00 | 72.00 | 0.00 | 103.00 | 20.00 | 195.00 | -9.00 |
| | 1,772.00 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Field responses | | | | | | | |
| Field responses to information received | 1,324.00 | 166.00 | 296.00 | 166.00 | 697.00 | 1,325.00 | -1.00 |
| Investigation costs | 690.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 680.00 | 680.00 | 10.00 |
| Field equipment | 390.00 | 256.00 | 65.00 | 42.00 | 45.00 | 408.00 | -18.00 |
| | | | | | | | |
| Total in GBP | 10,059.00 | 2,187.00 | 2,070.00 | 1,496.00 | 4,308.00 | 10,061.00 | -2.00 |