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Friends of the National Parks Foundation (FNPF) - Pesalat Reforestation Project

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with Dr Bayu Wirayudha

CONSERVATION efforts at Tanjung Puting National Park (Taman Nasional Tanjung Puting or TNTP) have long occurred among institutions and associations working in conservation. Conservation activities in TNTP are not only to protect and conserve the park's wildlife such as the charismatic orangutan, but to also preserve and rehabilitate the habitat of these species. The latest estimation of the extent of the forest's destruction is that about 70% of Tanjung Puting's forests have already been degraded. As one of the largest protected areas in South East Asia (415,040 hectares), the park is home to approximately 6000 orangutans and boasts various ecosystems including heath forest, peat swamp forest, mangrove and dry tropical lowland forest.



These forests have all been subject to various stresses, and there is an urgent need to find solutions to rehabilitate the various types of habitat that have become degraded. One way to undertake rehabilitation of orangutan habitat is to undertake reforestation focusing on replanting endemic tree species while selecting and give the priority on those trees that act as food and other resources (e.g. provision of nesting material) for orangutan.



Any reforestation activities carried out should also be accompanied by other activities such as information campaigns, alternative income generation and forest protection targeted at the local population in an effort to reduce, and hopefully, eventually eliminate those actions taken by the local communities which have a negative impact on orangutan habitat.

In May 2003 and July 2004, Friends of The National Parks Foundation (FNPF) received funding from the US Fish & Wildlife Service to support a Reforestation Project in areas of important orangutan habitat, Pesalat – Tanjung Puting National Park.

For more than five years, FNPF's Reforestation team have been working at the Pesalat site independently. The Ministry of Forestry as the authority of Tanjung Puting National Park have working together with FNPF under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work in this site.



FNPF's Reforestation Team has conduct the tree planting using various method of reforestation to restore the wildlife habitat in 53 hectares of degraded forest in the Pesalat area. More than 15,000 of seedlings from various exotic trees such as Iron Wood (*Eusideroxylon swagerii*) and Eagle Wood (*Aquilaria malacensis*) have been planted and are growing to be young generation of the next forest.

The success of Pesalat Reforestation Project has become FNPF's highest achievement in reforestation work along the first decade from we have established in 1997. Considering this high achievement, FNPF's Reforestation Team has also started another similar project in another location with a different type of forest. Right now, we have planted more than 100,000 of seedlings on more than 150 hectares of land and peat

swamp area at Beguruh.

The Park Authority has established the Pesalat Area as the Centre of Conservation Education at Tanjung Puting National Park. After the expiration of the US Fish & Wildlife Services Funding, FNPF is still committed to continue the work on this site. The work is supported by the Humane Society International – Australia, Department of Environment and Heritage – Australia through the Regional Nature & Heritage Program (RNHP) and also from all FNPF's supporters.

For the last two years, FNPF has created the Tourism Community Group in Sekonyer Village which is using the Pesalat area for its main activities such as camping, trekking and planting under the community-based ecotourism concept to maintain awareness of the forest preservation sustainability.

FNPF's Project Sites at Tanjung Puting National Park – Borneo are:

1. Pesalat Reforestation Project of 53 hectares of degraded forest caused by burning and farming areas of some local people.
2. Tanjung Harapan Reforestation Project of 11 hectares of degraded peat swamp forest - caused by illegal logging.
3. Beguruh Reforestation Project of 150 hectares of degraded Forest. Ex-burnt and farming areas of some local people. Some area is also Peat swamp forest.
4. Jerumbun Sekonyer Village area accros Tanjung Puting National Park, Socio Forestry (Forest Farming) Project of 15 hectares of local people (indigenous) land that is just beside a Palm Oil Plantation and Mining Area.
5. Sungai Sekonyer Village - Agroforestry and other Community Projects which aim to support the ability and sustainability of the forest community to life in harmony with their environment.

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