

## COURSE REPORT

# CONSERVATION OF PROBOSCIS MONKEYS AND THEIR HABITAT IN THE SUNGAI HITAM MANGROVE FOREST

November 27-28, 2018

Samboja, East Kalimantan, Indonesia

A field training organized by:

Environmental Leadership & Training Initiative (ELTI),

Tropenbos Indonesia Program (TBI), and

Research & Development Institute for Natural Resource Conservation Technology (BALITEK-KSDA)



Course participants and organizers

**Background:** A population of Proboscis or Long-Nosed Monkeys (*Nasalis larvatus*) lives in the Sungai Hitam mangrove forest in Samboja, East Kalimantan. Endemic to the island of Borneo, Proboscis monkeys are currently classified as endangered due to habitat loss. The habitat of the Sungai Hitam population is heavily fragmented, having been interspersed with plantations, small-scale agricultural plots, livestock grazing

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MR. Tri Atmoko presenting about Proboscis monkeys

areas, mine sites, and an area owned by a waste management company. Nevertheless, the Sungai Hitam forest has significant ecotourism value with a local NGO taking tourists on boat rides to see the monkeys. Proactive steps, however, need to be taken to gain additional local support for the ecotourism project and begin reversing the degradation of the monkeys' habitat.

In August 2018, ELTI and Blue Forest Foundation conducted a social and ecological site assessment of Sungai Hitam to determine the current situation and map out a process of engagement. This follow-up training was designed by ELTI, TBI and BALITEK-KSDA to increase local knowledge and understanding of mangrove ecology, mangrove rehabilitation techniques, and the ecology of Proboscis monkeys. Mr. Ardiyanto W. Nugroho (BALITEK-KSDA staff) and Mr. Kusnadi (Sungai Hitam Lestari), both of whom are ELTI training program alumni based in Sungai Hitam, played an important role in organizing the event with assistance from Dr. Arbainsyah (ELTI Indonesia Program Coordinator) and Mr. Sulton Afiffudin (ELTI Indonesia Research Assistant).

### Objectives:

1. Provide background information about the conservation of Proboscis monkeys and their habitat.
2. Introduce the skills needed to begin planning mangrove rehabilitation in accordance with ecological, economic, and social principles.





Opening ceremony with Mr. Ahmad Junaidi and Mr. Taufiqurrahman



Mr. Rio Ahmad asking participants their names using a game method



Tree planting by course participants

## Program

### Day 1

The training started with an opening ceremony, including a prayer and opening remarks by Mr. Taufiqurrahman (representative of the Head of the BALITEK-KSDA) and Mr. Ahmad Junaidi (Head of Samboja Sub-District). Mr. Tri Atmoko (Senior Researcher of BALITEK-KSDA) then gave an introductory presentation on the ecology of Proboscis monkeys and laid out a strategy for their conservation. After lunch, Mr. Rio Ahmad and Mr. Yusran Nurdin Massa (Blue Forest Foundation) used a game to introduce and discuss interesting and worrying facts related to the conservation of Proboscis monkeys and their habitat. After the afternoon prayer, everyone went to the river to plant trees in the the Sungai Hitam riparian zone. Participants were then divided into three groups, with each group travelling by boat to a different area of the river to observe Proboscis monkeys. Everyone was instructed to observe what the Proboscis monkeys were eating, what tree species the monkeys were found in, how many monkeys were found in a single group, and how many babies and juveniles could be found in a single group. Participants were also invited to identify the main problems facing Proboscis monkeys on Sungai Hitam and develop personal and institutional follow-up plans for protection efforts. The observations continued until late afternoon.





Participant working groups

Sulthon Afifudin



Course participants presenting their group results

Sulthon Afifudin



Dr. Arbainsyah handing out certificates to the participants

Sulthon Afifudin

## Day 2

Mr. Rio Ahmad and Mr. Yusran Nurdin Massa started the morning session with a game to introduce additional key concepts related to the conservation of Proboscis monkeys and their habitat. Participants then reassembled in their groups to discuss their findings from the previous day's observations, which they then shared with the rest of the group through PowerPoint presentations. Based on these findings, the participants made a number of suggestions for follow-up action, including the following:

- Hold a public education campaign to improve waste disposal along the river.
- Use signage and other methods to make clear the legally protected status of the riparian zone.
- Coordinate with local stakeholders to start rehabilitating the Proboscis monkeys' habitat.
- Install information boards and take other steps to underline the importance of protecting the monkeys' habitat.
- Strengthen supervision to reduce logging of trees along the river.

Mr. Ahmad Junaidi then gave his own recommendations and support for the initiative. After lunch, Mr. Yusran Nurdin Massa gave a presentation about the problems and challenges involved in the conservation of Proboscis monkeys and their habitat in the Sungai Hitam, Samboja. Afterwards, Dr. Arbainsyah gave a short presentation introducing ELTI's Leadership Program. The training ended with a course evaluation, distribution of certificates, and closing remarks.



Sulthon Affudin

Participants observing the Proboscis monkeys

### **Participants:**

The training was attended by twenty-one participants consisting of representatives from community groups, PT. Inhutani I, Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation, PT. Pengelola Limbah Kutai Kartanegara, Pengelola Sungai Hitam Lestari, and Kader Pemberdayaan Masyarakat (KPM) as well as staff from the Sub-District of Samboja.

### **Follow-up:**

Participants remained very active throughout the training. During the training, one of the participants, H. Wiwit, offered to sign over control of the portion of his land along the riparian corridor for habitat restoration so ELTI will take steps to help secure that commitment and see if other local residents are willing to follow his example. Some participants expressed the need for additional follow-up training, for example, on the creation and marketing of products made from mangrove trees, so ELTI will explore the possibility of providing that type of training at a later date. A WhatsApp group was also established so that participants could communicate with each other as well as the organizers.

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