



### Hutan Harapan Fights COVID-19

In late March 2020, Hutan Harapan management established a Task Force for the Prevention and Handling of COVID-19 to ensure policies and procedures are in place to prevent the spread of the virus to the Hutan Harapan working area. The Task Force is in charge of ensuring that all staff follow the protocols that are based on directives from the central government and the regional governments of South Sumatra and Jambi. For example the Task Force provides information on the prevention of Covid-19, promotes healthy living behaviors, conducts regular body temperature checks for all employees, the Batin Sembilan Indigenous Peoples and the other communities in Hutan Harapan, distributes masks and vitamins, provides soap to wash hands in each office room and enforces social distancing.

“Protection of employees and communities in Hutan Harapan is a priority because the corona virus can spread so fast. Hence, it was necessary to issue a policy restricting the movement of employees, community groups and guests. Meetings in Hutan Harapan with guests from outside are not allowed,” explained Director of Operations PT Restorasi Ekosistem Indonesia Adam Aziz. Adam added that employees who were forced to travel outside Harapan would immediately be asked to self-isolate upon reaching their destination and those visiting parts of Indonesia that are “hotspots” for the virus, to work at home.

Although the origins of COVID-19 are still being hotly debated, evidence is pointing to it originating in wild animals and jumping to humans (zoonosis disease). Consumption of bush meat and wildlife are often the source of zoonotic diseases. Protecting and conserving healthy forests is a critical step in preventing the spread of viruses from animals to humans. Hutan Harapan is a habitat for many kind of wild animals, such as Sumatran tigers, tapirs, anteaters, bats, reptiles, birds, and amphibians that play a key-role in maintaining the remaining lowland forest ecosystem in Sumatra. Hutan Harapan needs support from all sectors of society so the forest can continue to be a habitat for a diverse range of wildlife. (HOS)

### PLANTING 1500 TREES AFTER FOREST FIRES IN HUTAN HARAPAN

About 1,500 trees were planted by 200 participants consisting of students, communities, government, police, military, and NGOs on March 14, 2020 in the Sungai Jerat area of Hutan Harapan. This area was extensively damaged by forest fires in September-October 2019. The tree planting event was initiated by the Biology Student Association from Jambi University (IMABIO UNJA) and Hutan Harapan. The participants planted 1,500 seedlings from trees such as Ironwood (bulian), Agarwood, Keruing, Meranti, Jelutung, and fruit species such as Durian and Dogfruit (Jengkol). In addition to the native wood species, these fruit species will have economic benefits for the Batin Sembilan community in the future.

The participants left the city of Jambi in a convoy of 30 cars on March 13 and arrived at the planting site just before midnight. Special participants among these communities were those from outside Jambi, the Riau Terrano Owner (TOS) community in Riau. “We were very pleased to receive the invitation by the community coordinator Pak Tedjo to take part in the tree planting activity. We hope to be invited again to activities like this. Let’s protect the forest so that it will protect us,” said Didin, a representative from TOS Riau.

Jambi’s community coordinator Dr.Tedjo Sukmono highlighted the presence of a number of communities in Jambi and Riau because these communities had previously been involved in fighting the forest fires in 2019. “They acted promptly in helping to reduce the impact of last year’s forest fires in Jambi and now they also want to be involved in the recovery of the forest”, said Tedjo Sukmono. Tedjo hopes that the 1,500 planted tree seedlings will turn into a healthy forest.

The tree planting event was inaugurated by Pak Asraf, representing the governor of Jambi. Pak Asraf stated that he hoped that the tree planting can be carried out in other areas that need to be restored as well. “We, who are present here, still have a conscience to protect the forest,” he said. Other participants in the opening ceremony were Mang Rusman, Batin Sembilan’s representative, President Director of PT REKI Mangarah Silalahi and Director of Operations PT REKI Adam Aziz, Tedjo Sukmono, representatives of Batang Hari Regional Police Station Iptu Kasidu, KPHP Batang Hari, and Independent Monitoring Team Husni Thamrin (Pinang Sebatang).

“Hutan Harapan management would like to thank the enthusiasm and aid of all the participants from various communities for their efforts in restoring and protecting Hutan Harapan. Hopefully what we plant today grows well so that future generations can see the beauty of the forest and the biodiversity in it”, concluded Mangarah. (HOS)



# HUTAN HARAPAN FOR CITIZEN SCIENCE

The concept of Citizen Science comes along with the rapid development of technology. This idea arose when researchers and observers of flora and fauna assessed the need for cooperation with non-research communities in terms of collecting, archiving, analyzing and sharing information on Indonesia's biodiversity wealth, through technology or web applications. Non-research communities are expected to share information on flora and fauna in their respective regions.

As we know, Indonesia is one of the countries with 'mega biodiversity' spread across several islands including Sumatra. Hutan Harapan, which is located on the border of Jambi-South Sumatra, is a representation of Sumatra's biodiversity because it is one of the 34 global biodiversity hotspots. Researchers have identified 1311 flora species, 307 bird species, 64 mammal species, 121 fish species and 126 herpetofauna species (of which 71 reptile species and 55 amphibian species). Of the total flora and fauna in Harapan, 24 species are categorized as endangered by IUCN and 12 species as critically endangered on the CITES appendix I list.

Researchers from various institutions and students or ordinary people can collaborate with Hutan Harapan to identify and collect information and even take action to protect flora and fauna in Hutan Harapan. This was conveyed by the President Director of PT Restorasi Ekosistem Indonesia Mangarah Silalahi in front of 600 participants of the national seminar "The Role of Citizen Science Realizing Millennial Generation in Improving Quality of Education and Healthy Environment in the Digital Era", which was organized by the Biology Stu-



**President Director PT Restorasi Ekosistem Indonesia, Mangarah Silalahi.**

dent Association of Jambi University on March 15, 2020.

"Hutan Harapan has worked closely with national and international educational and research institutions, including UNJA, IPB, Goettingen University, LIPI, CIFOR and others. We hope that young people who are interested in fauna, such as birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish, can participate as citizen scientists to help Hutan Harapan", Mangarah said.

"We invite millennials to collect, take pictures and upload fauna or flora in Hutan Harapan on the web and in social media so that the love for flora and fauna among the society is higher and at the same time useful as a database for many people and future generations," explained Mangarah.(HOS)



## Kick-off of the Non-Timber Forest Product Partnership

Hutan Harapan management is developing a Forestry Partnership for Non-Timber Forest Product (NTFP) collection with groups in the villages of Sepintun and Lamban Sigatal, Pau, Sarolangun.

Even though the two villages are located outside of Hutan Harapan, groups from those villages have been collecting NTFPs in Hutan Harapan. This initiative to develop a partnership is in line with the Minister of Forestry Decree P.83 / 2016 concerning social forestry and the goal of restoration of ecosystems specifically for improving the community's economy.

In order to avoid conflicts between these groups and the Batin Sembilan Indigenous Peoples and to reduce the risk of human-animal incidents, the Jambi Provincial Forest Official held a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) at the Forest Office on March 3, 2020. M. Sanggo, Assistant Manager of Community Partnerships Hutan Harapan, hopes that the partnership would reconcile the often conflicting needs for the different groups while not disturbing the elephant and wildlife home range as well. "We hope that with signing of the forestry partnership agreement any problems can be resolved," he concluded.

In the FGD, representatives of the community groups, regional governments and companies around Sarolangun District gave input into the Cooperation Agreement (NKK) draft with Sipintun and Lamban Sigatal communities. By paying attention to the principles of restoration and justice, it is hoped that the forestry partnership for the collection of NTFPs which will be signed by Hutan Harapan management and Lamban Sigatal and Sipintun community groups will benefit all parties. "The most important thing is the commitment of the parties to protect the forest area," said the Head of Jambi Provincial Forestry and Indigenous Community Empowerment Extension Service (PPMHA).

The FDG was also attended by representatives of Sepintun and Lamban Sigatal communities, Community Partnership Hutan Harapan, BKSDA Jambi, Jambi Region IV BPHP, BPDAS, Sarolangun Unit VIII KPHP, Assistant II of Sarolangun District Government, Cappa Foundation, Perkumpulan Hijau, Batin Sembilan community group Kandang Rebo, PT AAS and SAMHUTANI. (M.Sanggo)