




**STRENGTHENING
SOCIAL FORESTRY
IN PEATLANDS IN
INDONESIA:
EXPERIENCES FROM
CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANIZATIONS**



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Cover image: Village forest in Lanjak Deras, Kapuas Hulu, West Kalimantan (van der Ploeg 2026)

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The Strengthening Community-Based Peat Forest Management in Indonesia (COMPEAT) project conducts research on innovative approaches to support Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the protection and restoration of peat forests in Indonesia. The project is a joint effort of Universitas Tanjungpura, Tropenbos Indonesia, The Netherlands Committee of IUCN and three universities of applied sciences in the Netherlands: Aeres, InHolland and Van Hall Larenstein. The COMPEAT project is funded by the Taskforce for Applied Research SIA through the thematic program applied knowledge for Food and Green.

From 26 to 28 January 2026 the COMPEAT project organized a workshop at the campus of the Universitas Tanjungpura in Pontianak, West Kalimantan. David Simanjuntak from Tropenbos Indonesia was instrumental in the organization of the workshop. We also acknowledge the efforts of the Faculty of Forestry in hosting the participants. We specifically would like to thank Professors Gusti Hardiansyah and Emi Roslinda for moderating the sessions, and Ulfa Nauli for providing logistical support. We are also grateful for the support of Peter van der Meer, Mirthe Mitsel and Bas Louman.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has more than 200,000 km² of peatland areas. These peatlands are vital for rural livelihoods, support essential ecosystem services, and are of crucial importance for global climate change mitigation, as peatlands store large amounts of CO₂. Nonetheless, Indonesia's peatlands are severely threatened. Drainage and deforestation of peatlands has led to uncontrolled fires and transboundary haze pollution, which pose a major health risk to people in the region. Despite their importance, only 15% of the country's peatlands are within protected areas (Austin et al. 2025). Most peatlands are intensively used landscapes, with overlapping and sometimes conflicting land claims (Liswanti et al. 2025).

The Social Forestry Program of the Indonesian Government aims to secure the tenurial rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and thereby alleviate rural poverty and halt peatland degradation. In 2015 President Joko Widodo announced that 12.7 million ha of State-owned forest would be entrusted to local people. Over the past 10 years numerous civil society organizations (CSOs) have supported community-based organizations in the management of peatlands. But the results of these grassroots initiatives often remain elusive, and major challenges persist in the implementation of tenure reforms in peatlands (Santoso & Purwanto 2021; Sirimorok et al. 2024).

In 2015 Tropenbos Indonesia organized a workshop on the role of CSOs in the Social Forestry Program (Purwanto, 2017). Now, more than a decade later, it's time to reflect on CSO experiences with the Social Forestry Program, and discuss strategies to protect and restore peatland, improve rural livelihoods and the formalize land rights.

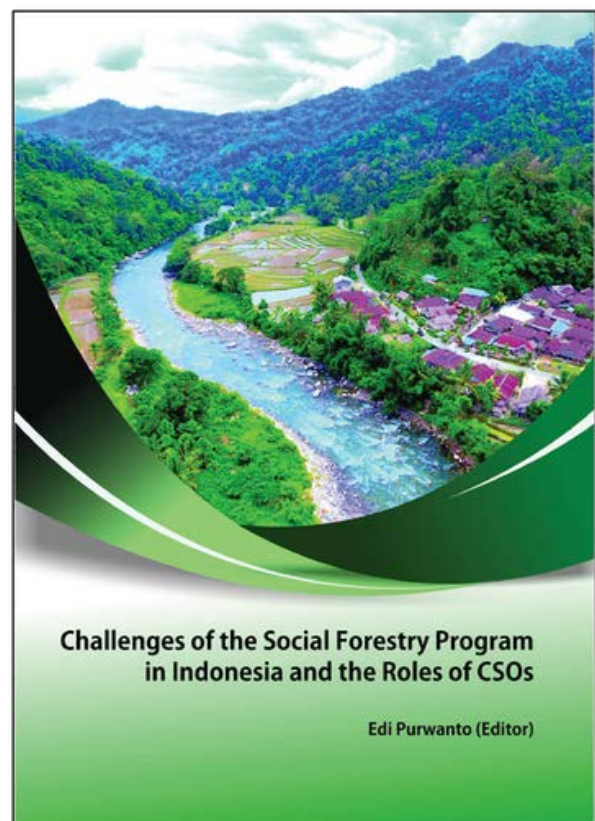
From 26 to 28 January 2026 Tropenbos Indonesia in collaboration with the Universitas Tanjungpura (UNTAN), the Netherlands Committee of IUCN (IUCN NL) and Van Hall Larenstein university of applied sciences (VHL) organized a follow-up workshop in Pontianak, West Kalimantan. CSOs, government officials and researchers working throughout the country discussed how the Social Forestry Program can contribute to biodiversity conservation, climate mitigation and rural development in peat forests. In this publication we summarize the presentations and discussions during this workshop on 'Strengthening social forestry in peatlands in Indonesia: experiences from civil society organizations.'

Dr. Emi Roslinda from the Universitas Tanjungpura beautifully captured the spirit of the workshop when she cited a patun, a traditional Malay poem:

*Kopi gambut harum semerbak
Rotan dan madu hasil hutan lestari
Perhutanan sosial membawah berkah
Rakyat maju, alam terjaga, abadi*

Freely translated as:

*Fragrant peatland coffee
Rattan and honey from sustainable forests
Social forestry brings blessings
People prosper, nature preserved, forever*



In 2015, Tropenbos Indonesia, IUCN NL and Ministry of Environment and Forestry organized a workshop on the "Challenges of the Social Forestry Program in Indonesia and the roles of CSOs".



Group picture of the workshop participants (UNTAN 2026)

OPENING

1. SOCIAL FORESTRY AND SUSTAINABLE PEATLAND MANAGEMENT IN INDONESIA

BAMBANG SUPRIYANTO

The Directorate General of Social Forestry and Environmental Partnership of Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) aims to empower local communities by granting them legal access to manage state forest lands. This initiative aims to reduce poverty, resolve land conflicts, and promote sustainable forest management.

Social forestry is a sustainable forest management system led by local and customary law communities in state and customary forests. Its main goal is to improve community welfare, protect the environment, and support socio-cultural dynamics through various collaborative forest management schemes. Social forestry management is crucial for ensuring forest sustainability and enhancing community welfare. Additionally, it aligns with national priorities by promoting environmental equilibrium, cultural vitality, and the security of food, energy, and water sources. Currently, 8.3 million ha of the 12.7 million ha social forestry target have been designated, benefiting 1.4 million families. Notably, 170 customary forests now support 90,000 families over 366,000 ha. By 2025, the program had facilitated economic transactions worth 5.16 trillion IDR and allocated 1.1 million ha for food and energy security in 3,169 villages.

Social forestry in Indonesia has achieved success through the active support of extension workers, including government facilitators, universities and CSOs. As of December 2025, a team of 3,052 extension workers collaborates with social forestry communities. These facilitators connect local community values and environmental norms with state regulations, fostering harmonious governance and sustainable resource management within social forestry institutions. According to Uphoff (2000) strong social capital enables government intervention in social forestry to promote collective action for both environmental protection and sustainable business management. Therefore social capital is crucial for achieving sustainable social forestry through a well-functioning social-ecological system.

The peatlands, which cover about 3% of the global land area, store about 30% of the world's soil carbon, equivalent to 550-650 billion tons of CO₂. In Indonesia, peatlands cover about 24 million ha, storing about 57 billion tons of CO₂, of which 16 million ha (66%) is located in forest areas. Peatland degradation significantly contributes to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, mainly through fires and drainage. In 2015, peatland fires alone emitted about 1.5 billion tons of CO₂. In response to this urgent issue, the government has implemented strong forest fire management and peat restoration programs, which have greatly reduced deforestation from 1.1 million ha in 2015 to 175,400 ha in 2024. These initiatives are vital to achieving Indonesia's climate mitigation targets.

Community participation is essential for conserving peatlands. In Indonesia, the Social Forestry Program has enabled local communities and Indigenous Peoples to manage peatlands sustainably. Over 608,000 ha are protected under the Social Forestry Scheme. Each Social Forestry Group, with assistance, is required to develop a Social Forestry Management Plan, a document delineating strategies for institutional strengthening, forest utilization, business operations, and monitoring and evaluation over a decade. In conducting utilization, social forestry holders must submit a statement of commitment to environmental management and monitoring. The use of peat ecosystems with a protective function may be limited to activities such as research, science, education, collection of non-timber forest products, and environmental services like tourism and/or carbon trading.

The utilization of peat ecosystems with a cultivation function can be carried out for all activities in accordance with the peat ecosystem protection and management plan. Social forestry holders and/or business partners are compelled to:

1. designate peat dome peaks as conservation areas for peat ecosystems;
2. undertake restoration efforts in cases of damage to peat dome peaks;
3. preserve the hydrological function of peat by constructing canal barriers with spillways.

Second, developing agroforestry and paludiculture is key in social forestry areas. The integration of annual tree crops, food crops, and bioenergy species into mixed agroforestry systems is vital for sustainable landscape intensification in Indonesia. This strategy simultaneously maximizes productivity and restores ecological functions, making it a fundamental element for addressing environmental challenges and achieving climate objectives. According to the Minister of Forestry Decree No. 657 of 2025 regarding Technical Guidelines for Food Agroforestry, the agrosilvofishery model can be used in shallow and medium swampy areas based on peat thickness and water depth. Furthermore, the Integrated Area Development (IAD) approach to peat forests, which involves several social forestry groups, enables economies of scale for the industry, thereby increasing added value to community income and the regional economy.

With benefits for both the community and the region, community-owned peat forests serve as a livelihood source protected by the community itself. With these benefits, forest fires and illegal activities such as logging and mining have been reduced by 90% through collective community efforts.

The nexus between food, energy, and climate security is at the heart of Indonesia's commitment under the NDC, which targets a 43.2% reduction in emissions by 2030. The forestry, agriculture and energy sectors contribute 97% of the national mitigation potential. A forest-positive approach redefines economic success as improved conditions in forest ecosystems. To achieve sustainability, production must simultaneously restore forest cover, enhance species diversity, and strengthen ecological functions. This shift away from continuous resource extraction toward holistic forest restoration is essential for achieving climate and development targets. In the revision of the second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), Indonesia explicitly prioritizes the use of degraded land for renewable energy as part of its economic resilience agenda.



Bambang Supriyanto and Farah Diba (UNTAN 2026)

The Ministry of Forestry is conducting demonstration plots for good peatland management practices with communities in Riau province. Currently, demonstration plots are also being designed in Central Kalimantan, covering Pulang Pisau Regency and West Waringin City, and in South Kalimantan in Sungai Hulu Utara Regency, in collaboration with the International Tropical Peatland Centre (ITPC). The ITPC, hosted by Indonesia, supports countries in managing peatlands sustainably. The ITPC collaborates with countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo, Peru, and incoming member countries like Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, and Uganda to share best practices and develop peatland management strategies. ITPC offers capacity-building programs for countries to learn from Indonesia's experience. For example, Peru is developing a national peatland management strategy, while Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are implementing community-led peatland management and conservation.

This international workshop, through productive discussions, can generate innovative contributions, alternative technologies, and collaboration plans for better peatland management with communities in the future!



“Community participation is essential for conserving peatlands”

Bambang Supriyanto



Group picture of the workshop participants (UNTAN 2026)

2. SOCIAL FORESTRY IN INDONESIA: EVOLUTION, CHALLENGES, AND ITS ROLE IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE FOREST GOVERNANCE

EDI PURWANTO & HERY SANTOSO

Tropenbos Indonesia strengthens governance for sustainable, productive landscapes, focusing on food security, responsible land and forest use, and climate adaptation. For over 30 years, Tropenbos Indonesia has served as a knowledge broker connecting research with on-the-ground forest governance. Tropenbos Indonesia now works in 23 villages across West Kalimantan with field offices in Ketapang, Simpang Du and Sandai. Its programs support community forest management and agroforestry through collaborative learning, farmer organization and better access to finance and markets. Tropenbos Indonesia also partners with communities, companies and government agencies to improve land-use planning and restore peatlands to reduce fire risks.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, the concept of social forestry was strongly promoted by Jack Westoby in the 1970s as a critical alternative to industrial forestry. The VIII World Forestry Congress held in Jakarta in 1978, with its theme "Forest for People" shifted the focus of international forestry towards rural development, non-timber forest products (NTFP), and social forestry. Social forestry was envisioned as an approach that emphasizes community participation, tenure security and sustainable livelihoods, positioning local people as central actors in forest management rather than passive beneficiaries.

In Indonesia, this discourse gained particular relevance due to longstanding structural tensions between forest-dependent communities and state-controlled forest governance. Historically, around 20% of Indonesia's population has lived in and around state forest areas, relying on forest resources for subsistence while facing restricted access, tenure insecurity, and persistent conflicts over forest use dating back to the colonial period.

Far before social forestry emerged, local people developed agroforestry systems. These systems did not only provide economic benefits, but also protected ecological, social and cultural values. Examples include:

- **(a)** tembawang, a rubber agroforestry management system of Dayak communities in West Kalimantan;
- **(b)** repong, resin (*Shorea javanica*) and fruit trees plantations of Krui communities of West Lampung, Sumatra;
- **(c)** simpukn, a rattan and fresh fruits agroforestry system of the Dayak Benuak community in East Kalimantan;
- **(d)** para, agroforestry model in West Sumatra;
- **(e)** talun, kebun, pekarangan agroforestry models in Java. These community forestry traditions has been contributed significantly to local livelihoods, biodiversity conservation, and regional economies despite lacking formal tenure recognition.

Following the decline of the timber boom era in the 1980s, which left substantial forest degradation and unresolved socio-economic tensions, social forestry increasingly came to be viewed as a promising alternative solution. It was introduced as an approach to simultaneously address forest degradation, improve community welfare, and create more equitable forest governance, with the expectation that communities living in and around forests could achieve greater prosperity while maintaining the forest.

This paper is highlighting the evolution and current problems of social forestry in Indonesia.

THREE GENERATIONS OF SOCIAL FORESTRY IN INDONESIA

The early phase of social forestry focused on technical assistance rather than tenure reform. Programs such as intercropping in state forests and provision of non-timber forest products for community were introduced in Java under Perhutani state-owned enterprise management. These initiatives aimed primarily to meet subsistence needs, to solve high population pressure, rather than empower communities through formal rights.

Following the Reformasi, social forestry in Indonesia increasingly incorporated tenure recognition and participatory governance, driven by civil society advocacy for democratization. Joint forest management schemes were introduced, community forestry permits began to be formalized, and community-based forestry business models started to emerge.

However, progress remained slow due to complex bureaucratic procedures, elite capture, overlapping land-use permits, and limited institutional capacity. Consequently, achievements during this period were modest, with only around 400,000 ha of social forestry permits allocated by 2015.

In response to the ambitious 12.7 million ha social forestry target of President Joko Widodo, Tropenbos Indonesia convened CSOs in 2015 in the 'Social Forestry Challenge and Role of CSOs' workshop, held in Bogor, 22–23 October 2015. The workshop fostered collaboration, strategy alignment, and collective action to accelerate social forestry implementation while strengthening community engagement, policy support, and field-level facilitation efforts.

Since 2016, social forestry has been elevated by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) to a national strategic priority, with an ambitious target of allocating 12.7 million ha to community-based forest management. The program, with a focus outside Java, aims to achieve twin goals: improving community livelihood and reducing forest degradation. Implementation at the district level is accelerated by simplifying licensing procedures from 28 to fewer than 15 procedural steps and by mobilizing CSOs. The establishment of the Indicative Social Forestry Area Map (PIAPS) integrated social forestry into broader rural development and livelihood improvement policies.

Social forestry models	Tenure form	Period	Target group
1. Community Forestry	Permit	35 years	Poor people in and around the forest
2. Village Forest	Permit	35 years	Forest village community
3. Community Plantation Forest	Permit	35 years	Forest village community business group
4. Partnership (Kemitraan)	Agreement	According to agreement	Poor groups in and around forest enterprises
5. Customary Forest	Recognition	No time limit	Indigenous group in and around the forest

Five social forestry models and their tenure forms

Indonesia's Social Forestry Program encompasses several tenure-based schemes designed to accommodate diverse community contexts. These include Community Forest (Hutan Kemasyarakatan), Village Forest (Hutan Desa), Community Plantation Forest (Hutan Tanaman Rakyat), Partnership schemes (Kemitraan), and Customary Forest recognition (Hutan Adat). Each model reflects different governance arrangements, ranging from community-managed forest utilization to collaborative partnerships with concession holders. Village forests have gained particular attention due to their collective governance structure and their potential to integrate conservation objectives with community livelihood development at the landscape scale.

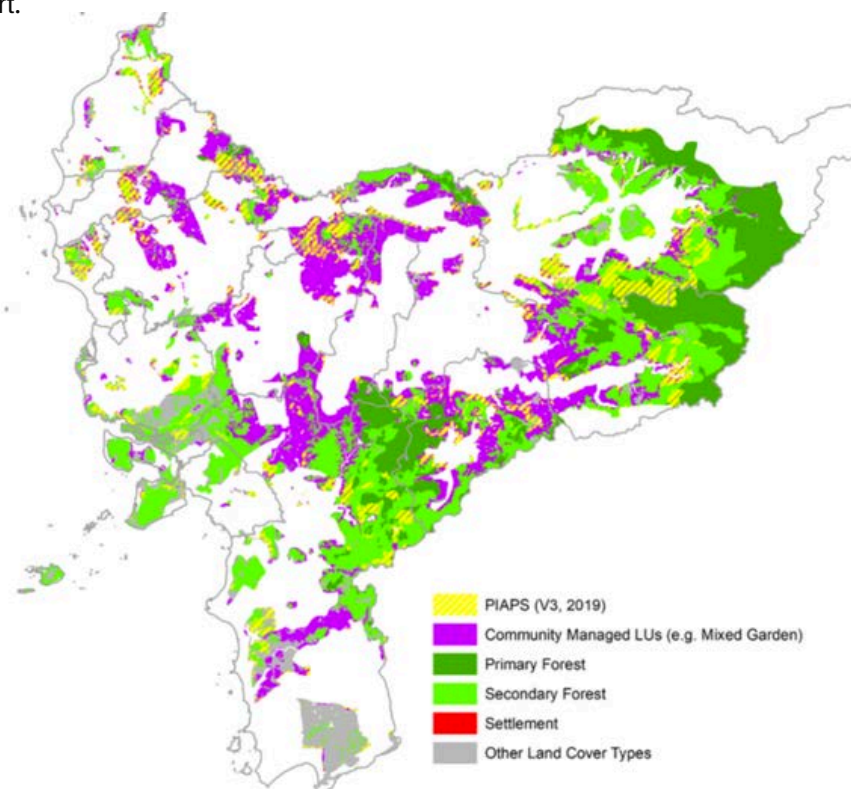
The program involves local stakeholders at province (Forest Management Unit -FMU) and district level. The Social Forestry Program is supported by CSO projects all over Indonesia. However, most of CSOs resources are allocated to support pre-licensing stage to meet the 12.7 million ha target.

Despite these significant policy advances, several challenges remain. Post-permit management is often weak, economic benefits are unevenly distributed, and many social forestry areas risk becoming underutilized, degraded, or even shifting toward open-access conditions without sustained institutional and economic support.

PROBLEMS

Despite the expansion of social forestry permits in recent years (currently 8 million ha, with of 1.8 million household beneficiaries), the scale remains relatively small compared with industrial forestry concessions. Village forest areas typically range from about 1,500 to 5,000 ha, whereas industrial plantation concessions often reach tens of thousands of ha. Furthermore, tenure allocation is not always aligned with long-established community forest traditions. In some cases, the PIAPS prioritize "clean and clear" areas rather than lands historically managed by communities, creating a mismatch between policy design and on-the-ground realities.

Communities often find the location of the social forestry areas unsuitable, because they are located on steep areas, often far away (until 20 km) from settlements. In response to this problem Tropenbos Indonesia developed policy brief entitled 'Improving the criteria for social forestry potential areas in Indonesia' (Widayati et. al, 2019). It included the following criteria: (a) state forest areas; (b) existence of traditional agroforestry systems (<20 years); (c) distance to village settlements (< 10 km).



A key problem is that KLHK remains focused on territorial control rather than fair land distribution. Tropenbos Indonesia documented that the PIAPS only covers 36% of the areas currently being used by communities. Legal criteria continue to inhibit social forestry in areas captured by other sectors, in effect leaving only marginal state forest areas for social forestry. The PIAPS reflects what is 'left-over' and not what communities actually use. As such state territorial control and private sector concessions continue to override communities' needs.

The performance of social forestry on the ground varies considerably. Only a small proportion of social forestry initiatives have successfully integrated market incentives and generated sustainable livelihoods, while others continue to depend heavily on project-based support. A significant proportion of social forestry areas remain underutilized or idle, reflecting insufficient economic incentives, limited institutional capacity and technical assistance, and poor market access. This suggests that tenure security alone is not sufficient; sustained economic viability requires institutional support, infrastructure development and integration with value chains.

Village forests represent a particularly promising pathway within the broader social forestry framework. Their collective governance model allows communities to manage forest landscapes in ways that combine ecological restoration, local economic development, and social cohesion. When supported by agroforestry systems, sustainable commodity development, and effective institutional facilitation, village forests can contribute both to conservation outcomes and rural economic resilience. However, achieving this potential requires consistent post-permit support and stronger integration with regional development strategies.

Looking ahead, strengthening post-licensing support should become a central policy priority by involving the role of local government. Formal tenure recognition must be complemented by extension services, access to financing, market facilitation, and institutional capacity building. Policies should also better recognize existing community forest traditions and prioritize their formalization where appropriate. Integrating social forestry into broader climate, restoration, and rural development agendas may further enhance its effectiveness and long-term sustainability.



Edi Purwanto (UNTAN 2026)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Social forestry in Indonesia has transitioned from a marginal forestry discourse into a major national policy instrument. Social forestry is now a key pillar of forestry development and poverty alleviation at the national level. At this stage, social forestry has experienced significant innovations compared to the previous era, both at the policy level, institutional level, implementation strategies in the field, and achievement orientation. There has been significant progress in terms of statistics on the achievement of target area and number of beneficiaries. Other issues remain to be resolved.

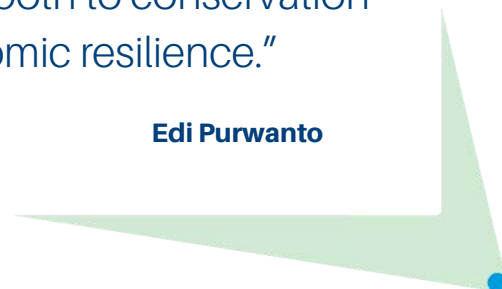
Social forestry has contributed to reducing tenure conflicts and enhancing community participation in forest management, yet its economic impact remains uneven. Various cases in the field show that most community forestry traditions are not facilitated by the Social Forestry Program because they are not accommodated in PIAPS. The Social Forestry Program has not been able to significantly generate productive economic activities. Village forests, in particular, offer a promising avenue for aligning conservation and livelihood goals, provided that institutional, economic, and policy support continue to strengthen. Ultimately, social forestry should be viewed not as a fixed solution but as a dynamic governance approach that must adapt continuously to changing ecological, social, and economic conditions.

- The Social Forestry Program needs to share their burdens to local government, linking the Social Forestry Business Groups (KUPS) with the 'Red and White' Cooperative which received high support from the central government and support from other ministerial programs.
- KLHK needs to make PIAPS an arena for preserving community forestry traditions that have been passed down through generations. Therefore, the ministry needs to focus on formalizing tenure.
- Restructuring timber administration models within the forestry sector, which are currently based on forestry industry timber administration.
- A snapshot of successes and shortcomings needs to be a modality for continuing the journey of the Social Forestry Program, which is leading to a major transformation process: encouraging the industrialization of community commodities. Advances in information and communication technology are both opportunities and modalities that must be utilized carefully.



“Village forests can contribute both to conservation outcomes and rural economic resilience.”

Edi Purwanto



3. GREEN LIVELIHOOD ALLIANCE

EVELIEN VAN DEN BROEK

IUCN NL is the Netherlands Committee of IUCN, the world’s largest and most diverse environmental network with over 1,400 member organizations and governments. Representing 41 Dutch members, it works closely with IUCN offices and partners worldwide. IUCN NL supports civil society organizations and environmental defenders in critical areas, builds broad multi-stakeholder coalitions, and manages donor funds through regranting to strengthen locally led nature initiatives. Over the past 25 years IUCN NL has worked with Indonesian civil society to strengthen sustainable and inclusive management of tropical forests that supports climate mitigation and adaptation, human rights, and the livelihoods of local communities.

IUCN NL is supporting CSOs in the Global South with projects in biodiversity hotspots. In 2011 a consortium led by IUCN NL developed a global five-year program, conform the conditions of the Dutch government. Partner CSOs in focus countries were asked to form an alliance and jointly develop projects in line with the global program. The first global alliance was the Ecosystem Alliance, followed by two phases of the Green Livelihood Alliance (GLA).

In the past five years, the second GLA program, *Forests for a Just Future*, covered eleven countries in Africa, Southeast Asia and South America. This program contributed to more sustainable and inclusive governance of tropical forests, in a way that promotes climate mitigation & adaptation, biodiversity, human rights, and the rights and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

In Indonesia, the GLA alliance of CSOs developed projects under the Social Forestry Program, securing permits for community forest management, developing community enterprises and advocating against the drivers of deforestation. Indonesian partners included NTFP-EP Indonesia, Sawit Watch, Tropenbos Indonesia, WALHI, WARSI, WGII (working group ICCAs Indonesia), Aksi, Solidaritas Perempuan and Yakkum.



Evelien van den Broek (UNTAN 2026)

IUCN NL hoped to continue with the GLA consortium with a third 5-year program, starting in 2026. Achmad Surambo, director of Sawit Watch, formulated this as follows: *“The GLA is like a journey. We are in the middle, not in the final. As an alliance we have our policies, and we have good connections. I can’t imagine that we will not continue. So, for us and for the communities, the GLA must continue.”* However, in 2024, the Dutch government announced sharp ODA budget cuts and a shift away from supporting CSO alliances. Therefore, the GLA will not see a soon follow-up.

Worldwide, civic space is under pressure. Critical voices are labelled as ‘woke’, ‘subversive’ or ‘undermining the state’. However, CSOs are essential for a healthy democracy. IUCN NL will continue to support CSOs in the Global South because these organizations are experts in their own countries, knowing best how to develop conservation projects that are tailored to the social, cultural, political and economic contexts.



“CSOs are essential for a healthy democracy.”

Evelien van den Broek



Evelien van den Broek (UNTAN 2026)



GOVERNANCE AND RIGHTS

4. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND PEATLAND PROTECTION

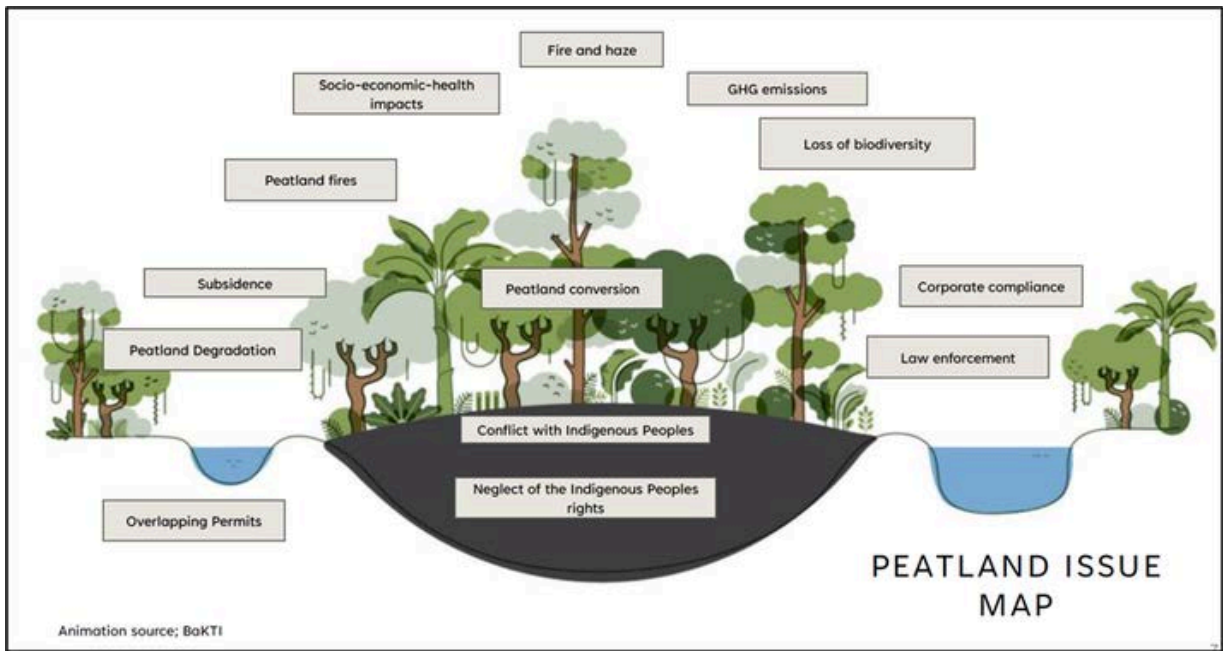
OSLAN PURBA

The Tifa Foundation was founded in 2000 by thirteen civil society leaders to advance an open society grounded in diversity, equality, and justice. Since its early role as grant maker, it has worked to strengthen civil society, protect minority and marginalized groups, expand freedom of expression, promote good governance and uphold human rights. Today, Tifa implements development programs and supports social movements. It focuses on expanding access to justice, securing natural resource and environmental rights for marginalized communities, deepening democratic innovation, and strengthening transparency in the digital data ecosystem, and protection of human rights defenders. Named after the tifa drum used in eastern Indonesia to call communities together, the foundation continues to champion openness, accountability, and collective action.

Indonesia has about 15.4 million ha of peatland across eight provinces. These peatlands play a vital role in the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. People actively manage peatlands through controlled burning, agroforestry, and the use of non-timber forest products. These practices can guide peatland restoration. Legally, customary forests were affirmed as belonging to Indigenous Peoples, yet recognition remains limited. Of 23.2 million ha of potential customary forests, only 265,250 ha are legally recognized. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry aims to recognize 1.4 million ha between 2025–2029. Despite constitutional protections and regulations, progress is slow due to bureaucratic complexity, overlapping laws, weak enforcement and corporate interests. A positive example is the To Cerekang Indigenous People in Malili District, South Sulawesi, who successfully defended their sacred forest. This case highlights the importance of grassroots organizing and the collaboration between local and national CSOs to secure Indigenous Peoples land rights and support sustainable peatland protection.



Oslan Purba ((UNTAN 2026)



Peatlands under threat (Tifa Foundation 2026)



“Indigenous communities have a close relationship with and rely heavily on peatlands as a source of livelihood, knowledge and culture.”

Oslan Purba



Oslan Purba ((UNTAN 2026)

5. RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC PROJECT

DORTHEA WABISER

Yayasan Pusaka Bentala Rakyat is an Indonesian CSO dedicated to defending the rights, lands and cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples and marginalised communities. PUSAKA promotes and fights for the recognition, respect and protection of the knowledge and abilities of Indigenous Papuans to manage customary lands, territories and forests. Its work responds to ongoing pressures such as land grabbing, environmental destruction, violence, displacement and discrimination linked to unjust legal, political, and economic structures in Papua. PUSAKA supports communities facing these threats through participatory mapping, legal empowerment and advocacy to secure customary territories, protect forests, and strengthen community-based natural resource governance. The organization also amplifies Indigenous voices in national and international forums and conducts investigations to expose environmental crimes.

The National Strategic Project (NSP) in Merauke, South Papua aims to convert more than two million ha into industrial food estates and plantations. The project threatens the customary land of the Yei Indigenous People ecosystems. This area is vital for the livelihoods, food security, culture and identity of these Indigenous People. The *'All Eyes On Papua'* campaign has drawn national and international attention to this issue, demanding recognition of customary lands and an end to corporate land grabbing. Demonstrations in Jakarta and reports to the United Nations Special Rapporteurs emphasize that the NSP violates basic human rights principles. Specific concerns include:

1. Lack of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC): companies and authorities have proceeded without genuine consultation with affected communities.
2. Limited access to public information: project details, land status, and environmental impacts remain opaque.
3. Human rights violations: intimidation and restrictions on peaceful protest have been reported.

While the Indonesian government asserts that the NSP follows legal frameworks, CSOs argue that law enforcement and community participation are deeply flawed, endangering both Indigenous People and forests in West Papua.



“West Papua is not an empty land”

Dorthea Wabiser



Mural depicting the impact of deforestation in Merauke (Wabiser 2026)



Community protest against plantations in Merauke, Papua (Wabiser 2026)
'We can live without palm oil and sugarcane, but we cannot live without land and forest'

6. FROM CONFLICT TO COLLABORATION: ANALYSING LEGAL AND SOCIAL BARRIERS TO SECURING COMMUNITY TENURE RIGHTS IN INDONESIAN PEATLANDS

NINING LISWANTI

CIFOR-ICRAF is a global research organization with its headquarters in Bogor, Indonesia, where it has worked since signing an MoU with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in 1993. Bringing together expertise in forestry and agroforestry, it partners with national and local governments, communities, universities, NGOs and the private sector to generate evidence that supports sustainable land use and stronger livelihoods. Its work in Indonesia focuses on priorities such as landscape restoration, climate change and REDD+, agroforestry for improved incomes, sustainable value chains, peatland and wetland management, biodiversity conservation, fire and haze prevention, low-emission land-use planning, and tenure and gender equity. Through long-term research and policy engagement, CIFOR-ICRAF helps Indonesia advance its national development goals and international commitments, such as the Paris Agreement.

Indonesia's 24 million ha of peatlands provide critical environmental services but are severely threatened by exploitation, drainage and fires driven by overlapping land claims and insecure tenure. In theory legal frameworks governing peatlands, such as Law 32/2009 on Environmental Protection, Government Regulation 57/2016 and Presidential Regulation 120/2020 establishing the Peatland and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM), offer strong protection standards. But in practice weak local institutional capacity, inconsistent mapping, contradictory policies and mismatches between state law and Adat systems inhibit the recognition of customary tenure and undermine sustainable forest management.

The Social Forestry Program grants local communities legal management rights over forests through five schemes: Village Forests, Community Forestry, Forestry Partnerships, Community Timber Estates, and Customary Forests. However, incomplete operational guidelines, unclear zoning and post-licensing challenges limit the effectiveness of the Social Forestry Program. Communities often lack financial and technical capacity for peatland restoration. Shifting to peat-friendly crops is challenging for many farmers due to long harvest times and limited market access.

“For social forestry to be effective, secure land tenure is critical.”

Nining Liswanti



The five tenure instruments of the Social Forestry Program (KLHK 2018)

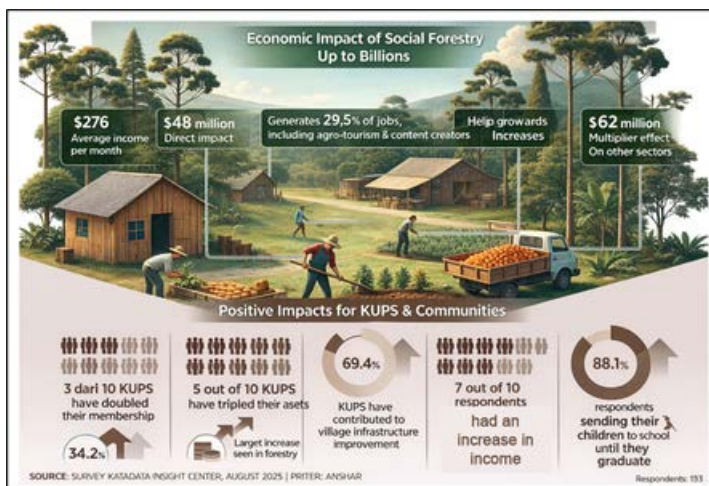
7. FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE: ADVANCING SOCIAL FORESTRY AS A PILLAR OF INDONESIA'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

SANTO

The Regional Office for Social Forestry and Environmental Partnerships for Kalimantan (BPSKL) is a unit under the Directorate General of Social Forestry and Environmental Partnerships of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK). Its core mission is to facilitate sustainable forest management by local communities and develop business enterprises based on social forestry across Kalimantan.

The Social Forestry Program is central to Indonesia's vision of 'Indonesia Maju', contributing to food security, poverty reduction and a green economy. Between 2015 and 2025, over 8.32 million ha were granted under social forestry schemes, involving 1.42 million households and establishing 15,849 Social Forestry Business Groups (KUPS). Presidential Decree No. 12/2025 promotes agroforestry to increase the productivity of social forestry lands. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, TNI, and POLRI supports KUPS to develop agroforestry farms through training, certification, financing, and partnerships with industry.

Products include coconut, coffee, cocoa, nutmeg, pepper, cashew, palm, and vanilla. Successful examples include candle nut oil production in Lampung and damar resin and nutmeg exports from Maluku. The Social Forestry Program has produced measurable socioeconomic and environmental benefits. Surveys show increased income, job creation, women's participation, and reduced illegal logging and forest fires. The program also helps achieve climate goals through carbon storage and forest restoration. The Social Forestry Program has grown from a policy idea into a real pathway for sustainable development across Indonesia.



“Social forestry is not just a program, but a pathway to sustainable prosperity.”

Santo

The economic impact of the Social Forestry Program (Katadata Insight Centre 2025)

8. INTEGRATING COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT, CONSERVATION AND GREEN ECONOMY IN PEATLANDS AND SWAMP FOREST

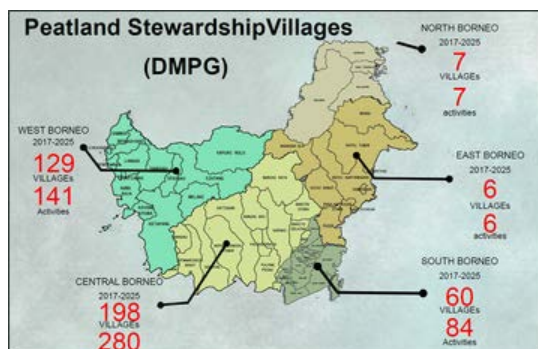
YUNUS SUDARYANTI

The Pontianak Peat and Mangrove Ecosystem Management Centre (BPEGM) operates under the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. The centre was established in 2026 following the expiration of the national Peat and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM) mandate. It's institutional responsibilities include: (1) designing local and regional strategies for the protection, conservation and sustainable management of peatlands and mangroves; (2) gathering spatial data and environmental information to verify regional peat and mangrove inventories; (3) planning and supervising the rehabilitation of degraded coastal mangroves and hydrological peat networks; and (4) tracking environmental quality indices, water tables and regeneration progress to prevent peat fires and coastal erosion.

The Indonesian Ministry of Environment manages approximately 8.4 million ha of peatland across Kalimantan. Peatland degradation stems from drainage, fires and forest conversion, driven by land tenure conflicts and poor management practices. Indonesia has developed an extensive regulatory framework consisting of at least six acts, five government regulations, two presidential decrees and 21 ministerial decrees. The government promotes the 3R strategy for peatland restoration, consisting of:

1. Rewetting: preserving water through canal blocking
2. Revegetation: restoring native vegetation;
3. Revitalization: improving community livelihoods through sustainable economic activities

The Peatland Stewardship Villages (DMPG) program operates in 400 villages across Kalimantan. More than 2,000 canal blocking structures were built across Kalimantan between 2016 and 2025. Peatland-friendly agriculture has generated over 64 million rupiah for communities from peat-friendly crops such as ginger, chili and tomatoes. The 3R approach combines environmental protection with community economic development, creating sustainable livelihoods while preserving critical peatland ecosystems essential for carbon storage and biodiversity conservation.



Peatland Stewardship Villages in Kalimantan by province (Sudaryanti 2026)



“The basic concept of peatland restoration is to bring back the water, preserve the vegetation and improve local livelihoods.”

Yunus Sudaryanti



Hans Jong (UNTAN 2026)

FOREST MANAGEMENT

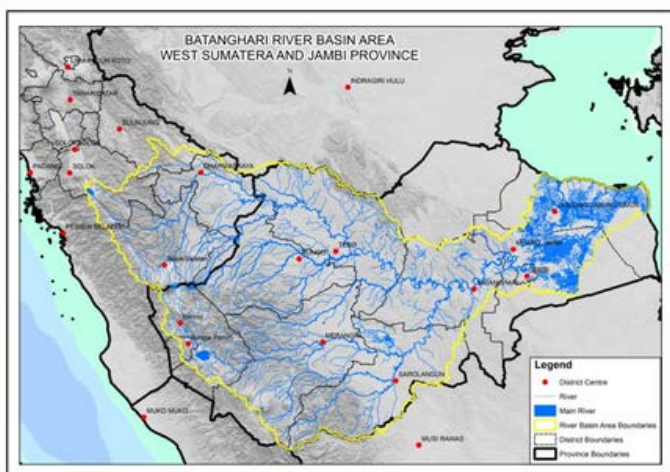
9. WATERSHED PROTECTION EFFORTS IN THE BATANGHARI RIVER BASIN

RUDI SYAF

Komunitas Konservasi Warsi is an Indonesian civil society organization dedicated to strengthening IPLC rights and protecting the country's forest ecosystems. Founded in 1992, Warsi works closely with Indigenous communities, especially in Sumatra and Kalimantan, to secure land tenure, preserve traditional knowledge and promote sustainable livelihoods rooted in local culture and ecological stewardship. Through participatory mapping, community organizing and policy advocacy, Warsi has helped Indigenous groups gain legal recognition of their customary forests and manage them sustainably. The organization also supports community-based conservation, climate-resilient livelihoods and biodiversity protection, positioning Indigenous peoples as key actors in safeguarding Indonesia's remaining natural forests.

The Batanghari River Basin in Sumatra spans about 4.4 million ha across West Sumatra and Jambi provinces and supports around 7 million people. Local communities depend on the watershed for agriculture and fishing. These livelihoods are threatened by deforestation, mining, and the expansion of plantations. Pressures from logging concessions, oil palm, coal mining, and illegal gold mining have severely degraded the watershed. Currently, only about 218,000 ha (roughly 4.9% of the basin) are under social forestry schemes, which limits their impact on disaster mitigation. Forest loss between 2020 and 2025 reached nearly 396,000 ha, with natural forests reduced to about 900,000 ha. This deforestation has led to floods, landslides, and declining water quality.

Cyclone Sari highlighted the vulnerability of the watershed. Governance challenges hinder progress: the basin consists of two provinces and eleven districts, each with inconsistent policies and weak enforcement of spatial planning regulations. Despite these challenges, local communities demonstrate resilience and develop sustainable practices, such as micro-hydropower systems and agroforestry. Strengthening Indigenous Peoples rights, expanding social forestry, and improving policy coordination across administrative boundaries are crucial for restoring the Batanghari River Basin.



The Batanghari River Basin in Sumatra (WARSI 2026)



“Partnerships between government, communities and the private sector are essential to manage resources sustainably, reduce disaster risk and support community-based climate initiatives.”

Rudi Syaf

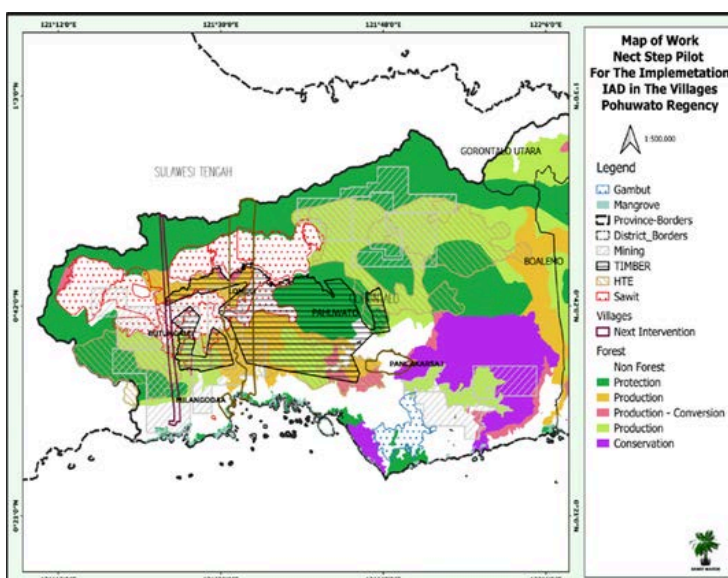
10. DRIVERS OF FOREST AND PEATLAND DESTRUCTION AND INTEGRATED AREA DEVELOPMENT

NURHIDAYAT MOENIR

Sawit Watch is an Indonesian civil society organization established in 1998 that works to monitor, research and advocate around the social, economic and environmental impacts of the palm oil industry, focusing especially on the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities and plantation workers. Through policy advocacy, community assistance, and collaborative campaigns, it seeks to address land conflicts, labour exploitation, and ecological degradation linked to large-scale plantations while promoting more just and sustainable governance of natural resources.

Sawit Watch and local partners focus on strategies to curb forest and peatland destruction in Pohuwato Regency (Gorontalo Province) through social forestry. Forest degradation in the region is driven by illegal logging and the conversion of wetlands into palm oil plantations. Only about 1,500 ha in the area are classified as peatland. Sawit Watch works together with local communities, government agencies and CSOs to protect these ecosystems and develop sustainable income alternatives. The Social Forestry Program grants communities access to manage over 15 existing and eight proposed forest areas, covering around 15,600 ha. Activities include participatory mapping and capacity building.

These initiatives encourage responsible land management. Integrated area development with the Pohuwato local government and watershed management units links upstream and downstream areas. In the Papayato and Randangan watersheds, Sawit Watch is combining conservation with community-based economic activities such as bioenergy and sustainable timber. Challenges include overlapping land authority, weak regional coordination, and competition from palm oil and mining interests. Sawit Watch proposes integrated area development as a replicable model to prevent palm oil expansion and promote rural development.



Land classification in Pohuwato district, Gorontalo Province, Sulawesi (SAWIT Watch 2026)

“The Social Forestry Program guarantees legal access to forest areas for communities and reduces the rate of palm oil expansion.”

Nurhidayat Moenir

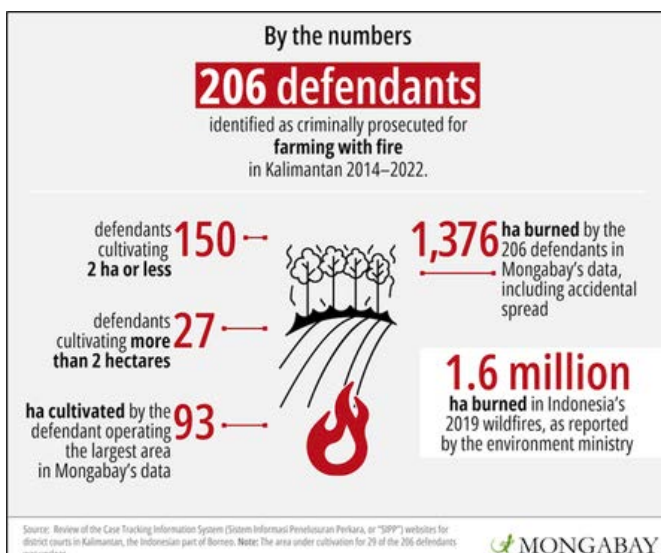
11. RULES WITHOUT CONSEQUENCES: PEATLAND PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT GAPS IN INDONESIA

HANS NICHOLAS JONG

Mongabay Indonesia is the Indonesian-language branch of Mongabay, a global nonprofit environmental media organization. It produces independent, data-driven reporting on deforestation, biodiversity, climate policy, marine ecosystems and the social impacts of natural-resource extraction across the archipelago. With a network of local journalists, it fills a critical gap in Indonesia’s media landscape by providing credible, accessible coverage that informs the public, supports transparency and amplifies the voices of communities affected by environmental degradation.

Following the devastating peatland fires in 2015, the Indonesian government established the Peatland and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM), enforced a moratorium on new palm oil permits, and directed local police to prosecute those responsible for fires. Mongabay’s investigation showed how these fire-related laws have disproportionately affected small farmers. Based on 206 official court cases from 2014–2022 across Kalimantan, the research revealed that enforcement efforts targeted subsistence farmers and not large corporations. The data showed that 96% of defendants were convicted, and most spent around ten months in prison, with some serving up to five years. In one case an elderly illiterate farmer was jailed for burning less than a quarter ha.

In another case an older farmer was allegedly extorted by prosecutors despite burning a tiny plot for livelihood farming. Most prosecutions relied on the Penal Code and Plantation Law, which overlook Indigenous slash-and-burn practices. This legal framing criminalized subsistence farmers, and ignored customary land-use traditions. By contrast, companies responsible for large-scale burning have faced limited consequences. Although over 20 corporate cases have resulted in legally binding verdicts, fines totalling 21 trillion IDR remain largely uncollected. The study concludes that Indonesia’s fire-related law enforcement remains deeply unequal and ineffective in addressing the root causes of peatland destruction.



“The law is sharp at the bottom and blunt at the top”

Hans Jong

12. LEVERAGING SOCIAL FORESTRY TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION IN GUNUNG NANING PROTECTION FOREST

MUHAMMAD FAUZI & PAUL HASSAN THUNG

Yayasan Planet Indonesia is an Indonesian nonprofit organization operating primarily in West Kalimantan that focuses on community-led natural-resource management. Planet Indonesia adopts a holistic rights-based approach to conserve at-risk ecosystems together with communities. Its core model focusses on the four pillars: inclusive governance, rights and access, participatory management and regenerative livelihoods. With this approach Planet Indonesia aims to reduce threats to biodiversity, improve economic opportunity and increase access to basic services for local communities living within valuable biodiverse ecosystems.

Planet Indonesia's social forestry activities in West Kalimantan are based on four core pillars:

1. Rights: supporting communities to secure legal access to forest resources.
2. Community-led management: promoting sustainable agriculture and fisheries.
3. Inclusive governance: empowering communities to make conservation decisions by strengthening administrative, planning, and reporting capacities.
4. Regenerative livelihoods: improving income through access to finance, education, and literacy programs.

Currently, Planet Indonesia supports over 50 communities, including eight village forests. In Sintang and Sekadau Regencies, five villages are participating in social forestry: three with existing permits and two pursuing customary forest status. These areas encompass several thousand ha within the Gunung Naning Protection Forest, which harbors a rich biodiversity including orangutans, hornbills, and pangolins. Planet Indonesia builds the capacity of local communities through training in forest and business management, establishing community patrol teams, and securing funding and donations for agroforestry.

However, major challenges persist, including limited administrative skills, poor infrastructure, remote access, natural disasters, and external threats like illegal logging and mining. Social forestry is an essential component of a broader vision of sustainable, inclusive landscape management driven by local communities.



Helmeted Hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*) in Gunung Naning Protection Forest, West Kalimantan (Planet Indonesia 2026)



“Social forestry is neither the start point nor the end point, but a useful part of a broader journey towards community-led conservation”

Muhammad Fauzi



Muhammad Fauzi and Paul Hassan Thung (UNTAN 2026)

13. LANDSCAPE APPROACH ON PEATLAND RESTORATION

ATIEK WIDAYATI

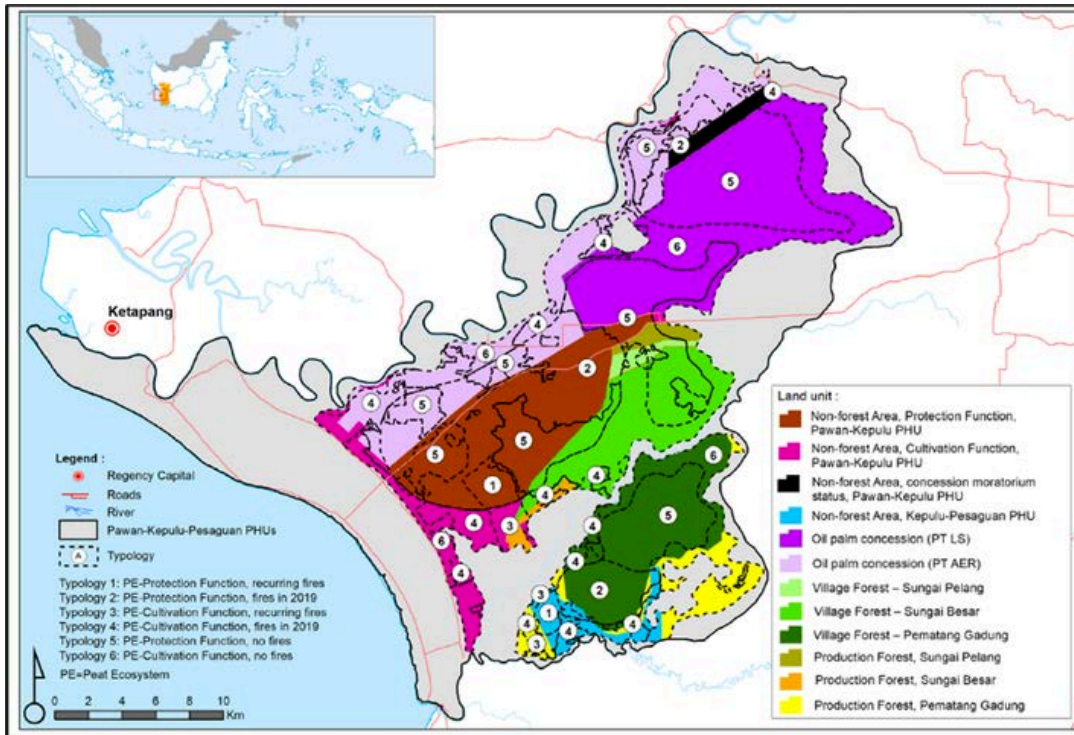
Tropenbos Indonesia strengthens governance for sustainable, productive landscapes, focusing on food security, responsible land and forest use, and climate adaptation. For over 30 years, it has served as a knowledge broker connecting research with on the ground forest governance. Tropenbos Indonesia now works in 23 villages across West Kalimantan. Most efforts centre on Ketapang Regency, a landscape of Dayak managed upland forests and heavily converted lowland peatlands dominated by oil palm. The region faces recurring fires, floods, and biodiversity loss, making integrated landscape approaches essential.

In Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan, Tropenbos Indonesia focuses on peatland restoration and fire prevention, covering around 80,000 ha of which 60% are deep peat areas. Despite its ecological importance, much of the peatland is drained for oil palm plantations and agriculture, making it fire-prone. Tropenbos Indonesia and partners adopted a multistakeholder approach aimed at restoring peatland while supporting community livelihoods.

The core strategy focused on improving governance by working together with local government, communities, CSOs, companies and the national Peatland and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM). This multistakeholder approach led to the development of a Master Plan for Fire

Prevention, which was adopted by the Regency and incorporated in village budgets (Widayati et al. 2023). The multistakeholder approach effectively fostered collective learning, inclusion and policy innovation. Challenges included power imbalances, overlapping jurisdictions and dependence on project-based funding.

Research confirmed broad public support for no-burning practices and multifunctional peatland use, but varying views on issues like restoration and land protection within non-forest zones (Widayati et al 2026). Overall, the initiative demonstrated that multistakeholder peatland governance can generate practical, locally-owned solutions for reducing fires and sustaining ecosystem functions.



Land classification in the Pawan-Kepulu-Pesaguan Peat Hydrological Unit in Ketapang district, West Kalimantan (Tropenbos Indonesia 2026)



“Civil society organizations play a key role in multi-stakeholder processes as connectors and facilitators.”

Atiek Widayati



Atiek Widayati (UNTAN 2026)

14. MONITORING BIODIVERSITY ON PEATLANDS BASED ON ULIN RAJUT TO STRENGTHEN THE SOCIAL FORESTRY PROGRAM

FARAH DIBA, MARWANTO, SOFWAN ANWARI, KIKI PRIO UTOMO & NOVI SAFTRIADI

The Faculty of Forestry at Universitas Tanjungpura (UNTAN) is an academic department in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, focused on education, research and community service regarding forestry, environmental conservation, and tropical ecosystems. The faculty focuses on the ecology, management and conservation of tropical forests, with a particular emphasis on peatlands and mangroves. Key research areas include forest management, forest conservation, community forestry, and forest biotechnology.

Peatlands are critical ecosystems supporting biodiversity, climate regulation and human well-being. However, community management efforts are often limited by scarce biodiversity data and low monitoring capacity. To address these issues, the Ulin Rajut app enables communities to document and monitor flora and fauna with their smartphones. Users can take photos, add local species names and record GPS coordinates. The Ulin Rajut mobile application was developed by Tanjungpura University, as a community-based digital tool for monitoring biodiversity in peatland areas. The name of the app name is derived from the Indonesian phrase *'pengumpulan informasi masyarakat'* (community information gathering).

The app aims to enable participatory data collection for sustainable forest management. The app has been tested in villages near the Danau Sentarum National Park in Sanggau Regency, where both students and older residents were trained to use it. The app simplifies ecological monitoring, and strengthens cultural and ecological knowledge. It enables comparison over time to detect environmental change. The app also enhances community capacity and ecological literacy. Ulin Rajut empowers local communities through digital biodiversity monitoring, and thereby advances inclusive peatland management.



The Ulin Rajut app (UNTAN 2026)



“Social forestry contributes directly to inclusive, resilient and sustainable peatland management.”

Farah Diba



Riche Dewita (UNTAN 2026)

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

15. LOCALLY-LED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

FEMKE SCHOUTEN

IUCN NL is the Netherlands Committee of IUCN. Representing 41 Dutch members, IUCN NL works closely with IUCN offices and partners worldwide. IUCN NL supports civil society organizations and environmental defenders in critical areas, builds broad multi-stakeholder coalitions and manages donor funds through regranteeing to strengthen locally led nature initiatives. Over the past 25 years IUCN NL has worked with Indonesian civil society to strengthen sustainable and inclusive management of tropical forests that supports climate mitigation and adaptation, human rights, and the livelihoods of local communities.

IUCN NL in partnership with Tropenbos International facilitated a two-year learning process involving 39 CSOs from eleven countries working with Indigenous Peoples and local communities to protect forests and livelihoods. This led to the publication of a report on locally-led sustainable development (Schouten & van der Laan 2025). Research shows that locally-led efforts produce better social and ecological results than externally controlled initiatives. Locally-led initiatives are defined by four elements: (1) they address local needs and aspirations, (2) they are designed by communities themselves, (3) they remain locally governed throughout the project cycle, and (4) they have context-specific definitions of what 'local' actually means. The report makes seven recommendations:

1. Value local knowledge and wisdom.
2. Prioritize basic needs and secure livelihoods.
3. Advance inclusion of women and youth, through creating safe spaces and flexible engagement.
4. Adapt to local contexts and changing conditions like climate or economic crises.
5. Support communities in negotiations with companies and governments, ensuring security and rights.
6. Build resilient networks through intergenerational leadership and solidarity exchanges.
7. Rethink funding mechanisms toward long-term, flexible and accessible financing that genuinely enables local leadership.

Supporting locally-led development requires humility, flexibility and restructured donor systems that trust and invest directly in communities.



Cover of the Green Livelihoods Alliance report (Schouten & van der Laan 2025)



“Locally-led initiatives aim to shift power, agency and ownership of initiatives to local actors and communities.”

Femke Schouten

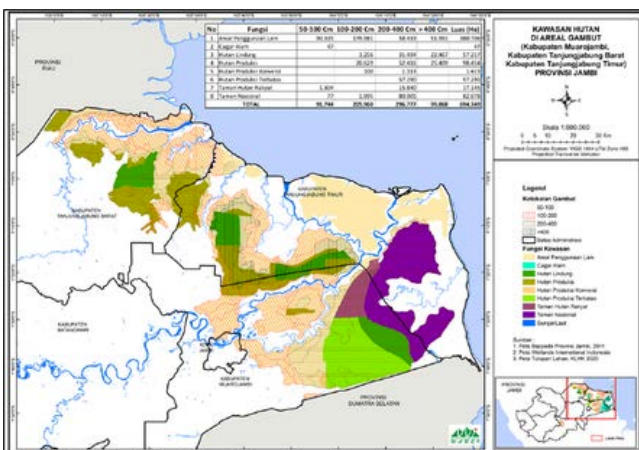
16. SOCIAL FORESTRY PROJECTS ON PEAT AND COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES IN JAMBI

RICHE DEWITA

Kommunitas Konservasi Indonesia Warsi is dedicated to strengthening Indigenous Peoples' rights and protecting Indonesia's rich forest ecosystems. Founded in 1992, Warsi works closely with Indigenous communities, especially in Sumatra and Kalimantan, to secure land tenure, preserve traditional knowledge and promote sustainable livelihoods rooted in local culture and ecological stewardship. Through participatory mapping, community organizing and policy advocacy, Warsi has helped Indigenous groups gain legal recognition of their customary forests and manage them sustainably. The organization also supports community-based conservation, climate-resilient livelihoods and biodiversity protection, positioning Indigenous Peoples as key actors in safeguarding Indonesia's remaining natural forests.

Warsi has worked with local communities in Jambi Province since 2012 to protect forests while improving sustainable livelihoods. Peatlands in Jambi span over 617,000 ha, of which half is exploited by logging, oil palm and industrial tree plantations. These activities degrade the peatland causing fires during dry seasons and floods during rainy seasons, harming both the environment and local communities. Warsi aims to empower communities in peatlands and restore peatland hydrology through the Social Forestry Program. Three villages, Sinar Wajo, Pematang Rahim and Sungai Beras, obtained social forestry permits between 2014 and 2017, enabling community-based management. Local leaders were identified and trained, ensuring active participation from planning to implementation. Key initiatives include peatland protection, livelihood diversification and community empowerment.

The community blocked canals to restore water balance and reduce fire risk. Fire Community Groups were formed to monitor water levels and respond to fire threats. Warsi supported peat-friendly agriculture and agroforestry, promoting native crops and non-timber forest products such as honey. Warsi also collaborates with government and private stakeholders through the Sungai Buluh Landscape Forum to influence policies on peatland protection and community welfare. Gender and youth inclusion are emphasized via participatory action research, organizing women's and young people's groups to ensure their voices and roles in forest management. Overall, Warsi's approach integrates environmental restoration, economic sustainability and social inclusion to strengthen local stewardship of Indonesia's peatlands.



“Collaboration is the foundation of ecological resilience and community prosperity.”

Riche Dewita

17. SUSTAINABILITY OF RATTAN HARVEST THROUGH PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM ROTAN LESTARI (PGS ROLES)

MARNI MARDHATY

Perkumpulan Imunitas is a community-based organization in Central Sulawesi that works to strengthen social, economic and environmental resilience by supporting sustainable natural-resource management, disaster-risk reduction and community development initiatives. Rooted in local knowledge and partnerships, it focuses on empowering villages to manage their landscapes, improve preparedness for natural hazards, and build equitable access to livelihoods and essential services. Imunitas integrates environmental stewardship with social empowerment to help communities secure their rights, protect their ecosystems and enhance long-term wellbeing across the region.

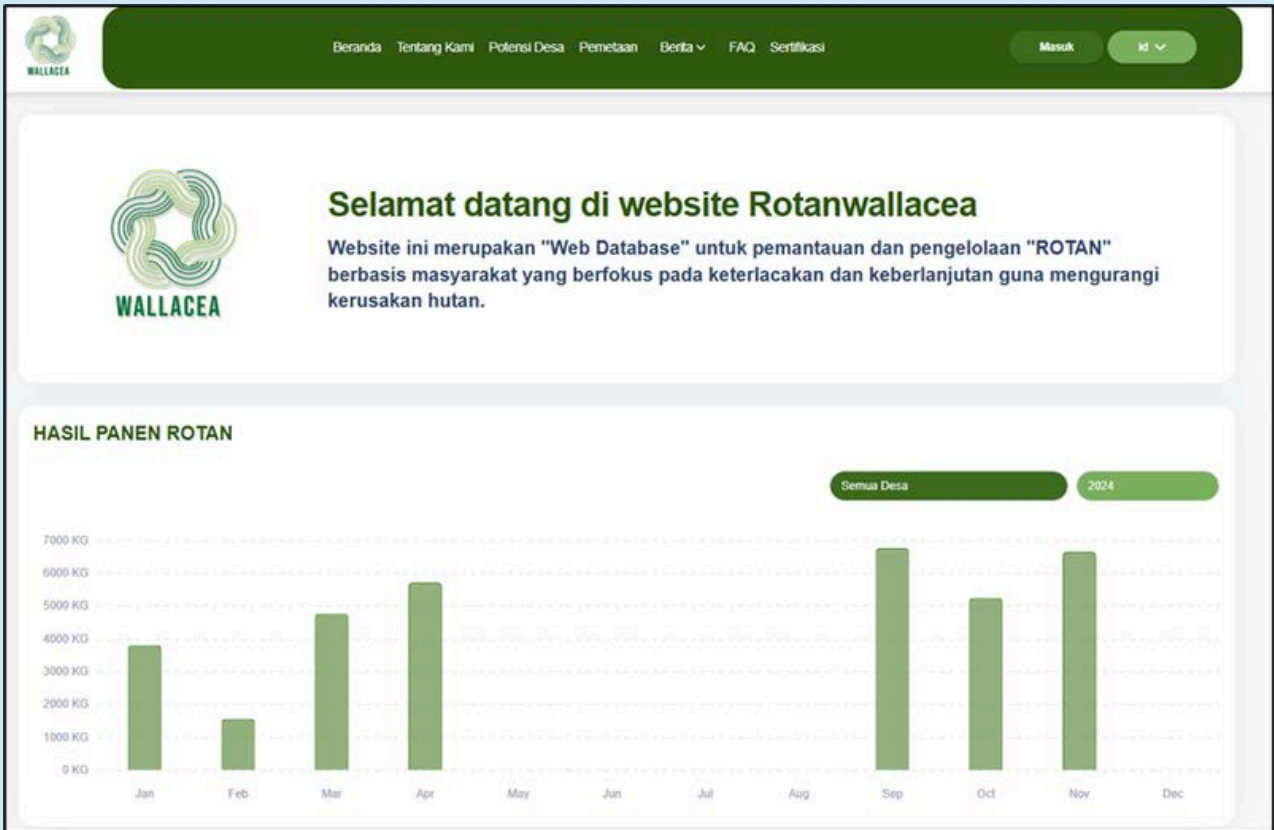
Perkumpulan Imunitas supports the community of Namo village, located in the Kulawi subdistrict near Lore Lindu National Park. Here, Imunitas focuses on community development, disaster management and sustainable forest management. Namo village covers approximately 49,000 ha, including a 490 ha Village Forest, officially designated by the Ministry of Forestry in 2011. Through the Village Forest Management Agency (LPHD) Topolingkuata Ngata, villagers manage the forest. This includes drafting forest regulations, developing management plans, mapping land potential and strengthening community enterprise capacity. Rattan (rotan) is the main non-timber forest product (NTFP) in Namo village. In the past rattan harvesting was carried out without clear rules, posing a risk to sustainability. Nowadays, rattan is actively managed by selecting species, harvesting only mature rattan, determining harvest locations to avoid excessive pressure on a single area, regulating working periods to minimize ecosystem disturbance and ensuring that no trees are cut.

As a result, the forest remains intact, and rattan can continue to grow and regenerate naturally. Violations are subject to traditional sanctions, such as fines in the form of livestock or goods. The community also applies the 'Participatory Guarantee System Rotan Lestari' (PGS ROLES) model, where farmers and processors declare compliance with Indonesia's sustainable rattan standards and the ISO/IEC 17050 standard. The system is affordable, accessible and suited to small producers. Transparency and traceability are enhanced through the website www.rotanwallacea.com/, developed with NTFP-EP Indonesia. It documents rattan characteristics and harvesting practices, improving market trust and efficiency. Overall, these initiatives aim to strengthen community livelihoods, preserve forest ecosystems and ensure that sustainable resource management in Namo village becomes a model for balancing ecology and economy.



"ROLES is a participatory guarantee system for sustainable rattan products developed with communities"

Marni Mardhaty



Website of RotanWallacea (RotanWallacea 2026)



Marni Mardhaty (UNTAN 2026)

18. CHAINSAW BUYBACK PROGRAM: AN ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION FOR LIVELIHOOD TRANSITIONS IN FOREST- ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

MUHAMAD RUSDA YAKIN

Yayasan ASRI (Alam Sehat Lestari) with communities around Gunung Palung National Park in West Kalimantan to protect forests through a model that links healthcare with forest conservation. By reducing barriers to medical services and offering incentives, such as discounted care for villages that reduce illegal logging, ASRI aims to address environmental degradation while improving community wellbeing.

Alam Sehat Lestari (ASRI) combines healthcare and forest conservation based in Sukadana, West Kalimantan. The 'Chainsaw Buyback Program' launched in 2017 supports livelihood transitions of former illegal loggers around Gunung Palung National Park. The program identifies loggers through forest monitoring and ranger patrol data, and offers them alternative business opportunities such as stingless bee honey, livestock, fisheries or grocery stores. Instead of giving cash, ASRI provides tools, materials and training. So far, ASRI has purchased over 343 chainsaws, benefiting communities in Kayong Utara and Ketapang Regencies. The program distinguishes between active loggers, who rely on logging, and inactive loggers, who no longer log but rent their chainsaws.

ASRI integrates this initiative with its 'Sustainable Agriculture Program', which supports over 20 farmer groups. Around 96% of former loggers have not returned to logging, and over 600 new businesses have been established, with about 38 registered enterprises. A study assessing the program's effectiveness reported significant declines in logging and forest disturbance since the program began (Pahlevie et al. 2024). The initiative has also repurposed confiscated chainsaws into cultivators, compost choppers, machetes and a chainsaw monument commemorating forest conservation.



"ASRI's Chainsaw Buyback Program demonstrates how linking healthcare incentives, livelihood alternatives and conservation partnerships can sustainably reduce illegal logging and improve community well-being."

Muhamad Rusda Yakin



What to do with the chainsaws?



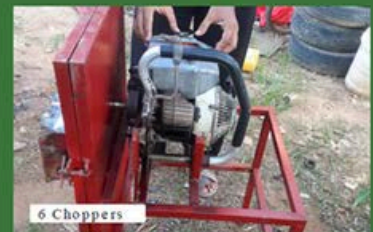
353 chainsaw in the storage room

Cultivator



7 cultivators

Chopper



6 Choppers

Monument



Machetes



68 Machetes

Chainsaw buyback program (ASRI 2026)



Muhamad Rusda Yakin (UNTAN 2026)

19. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY-BASED FOREST STEWARDSHIP AND LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT IN KETAPANG DISTRICT

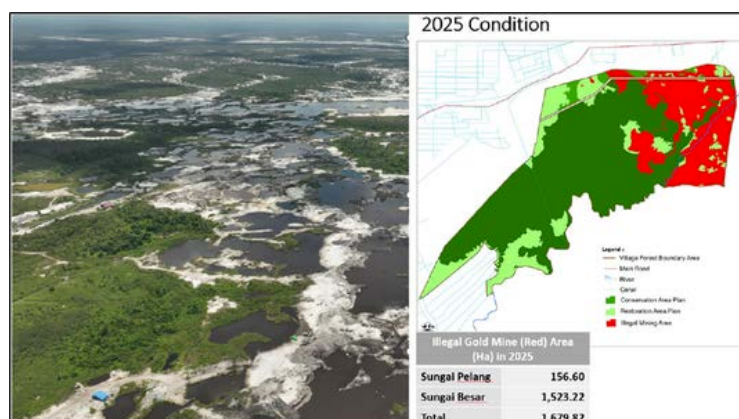
EDI PURWANTO & UJANG SUSEP IRAWAN

Tropenbos Indonesia strengthens governance for sustainable, productive landscapes, focusing on food security, responsible land and forest use, and climate adaptation. Tropenbos Indonesia produces and shares practical knowledge, for example on community-based peatland fire prevention and smallholder readiness for the EU Deforestation Regulation.

Tropenbos Indonesia is facilitating the implementation of the Social Forestry Program in Ketapang District, West Kalimantan. The project is funded by Lestari Capital through the Rimba Collective. This initiative is part of the Remediation and Compensation Procedure of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) framework, which enables oil palm companies to compensate forest loss by financing community-based conservation. The project in Ketapang manages around 26,000 ha of Village Forest. Five objectives guide the initiative:

1. Institutional strengthening of Village Forest Management Agencies (LPHD) and local cooperatives through training, infrastructure and governance tools;
2. Forest protection from deforestation, illegal mining and fire through patrols, boundary marking and law enforcement with local authorities;
3. Ecosystem restoration via nurseries, replanting, hydrological recovery and soil reclamation using compost blocks;
4. Livelihood improvement, including freshwater fishponds, honey production and sustainable forest-based enterprises;
5. Community awareness, through education programs, school outreach and festivals.

The project aims to sustain operations under a 25-year funding cycle. But illegal gold mining, overlapping land claims and weak law enforcement undermine conservation efforts.



Illegal gold mining is a major threat for peatlands in Ketapang district (Tropenbos 2026)



“Illegal gold mining is a major threat for peatland areas in West Kalimantan, and is undermining social forestry initiatives.”

Edi Purwanto

20. AGROBIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT BY THE DAYAK COMMUNITIES IN LABIAN AND LABIAN IRA'ANG: A PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

AGASTA ADHIGUNA

NTPF-EP Indonesia, or Yayasan Pengembangan Sumberdaya Hutan Indonesia (YaPSHI), is a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth to steward forests and natural resources sustainably while strengthening traditional livelihoods and resilience to climate change. Through community-led programs, policy engagement and capacity building, NTPF-EP Indonesia supports locally rooted solutions that protect ecosystems and uphold cultural heritage. As the Indonesian chapter of the regional NTPF-EP Asia network, it contributes to a broader movement advancing rights-based, people-centred forest management across the region.

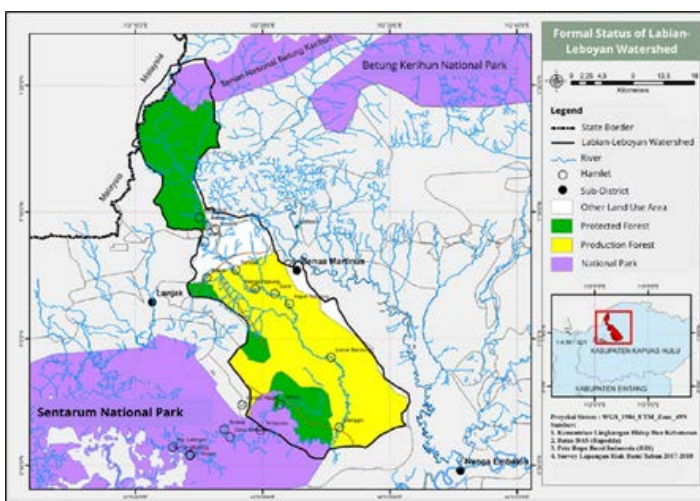
NTPF Indonesia works together with local CSOs such as Yayasan Sandriumi and Riak Bumi to assist Indigenous Peoples in managing community forests. The Labian–Leboyan area in Kapuas Hulu, West Kalimantan, serves as an ecological corridor between the Betung Kerihun National Park and the Danau Sentarum National Park. The Menua Ngaung Keruh Customary Forest was officially recognized in 2023 (591 ha). The forest is governed by traditional leaders (*temenggung, tuai rumah*) under customary laws. *Tengkawang* (illipe nut) for example is sustainably harvested, with 20% of the fruits left for natural regeneration. The land-use system of the Dayak Iban and Dayak Embaloh combines agroforestry (*tembawang gardens*) with swidden farming, integrating crops like rice, rubber, durian, kratom and tengkawang.

Women play an important role in seed saving, home garden biodiversity, post-harvest processing and local trade. Men tend to focus on labor-intensive cash crops and fishing. Two forest and farm producer organizations, Restorasi Ngaung Keruh Lestari and Tengkawang Labian Farmers Group, engage in nursery management, farmer-to-farmer training and collective marketing. Price fluctuations, climate variability and oil palm expansion inhibit these initiatives. The Labian communities exemplify a pathway toward sustainable livelihoods.



“Women are vital for community development and sustainable livelihoods. Income earned by women is reinvested in nutrition, education and health, and creates long-term social benefits.”

Agasta Adhiguna



Land classification of the Labian-Leboyan Watershed in Kapuas Hulu district, West Kalimantan (NTPF EP Indonesia 2026)

21. STRENGTHENING THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE COMMUNITY IN PEATLAND BY THE DESA MANDIRI PEDULI GAMBUT PROGRAM

HERLINA DARWATI

The Faculty of Forestry at Universitas Tanjungpura (UNTAN) in Pontianak, delivers academic programs to cultivate professional graduates specialized in managing tropical forest resources, executes research focused on tropical forestry to contribute directly to national development, conducts community outreach programs that utilize and apply tropical forest resource knowledge for public benefit, and works together with a broad spectrum of multi-stakeholders, including international research bodies, state forestry departments and non-profits.

The Desa Mandiri Peduli Gambut (Peatland Stewardship Villages - DMPG) program aims to strengthen community livelihoods in peatland areas in West Kalimantan. Universitas Tanjungpura acts as a facilitator for the DMPG program under the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK). Since 2022, the initiative has worked with 31 villages.

Peatland communities face environmental threats such as fires and land degradation. The DMPG program seeks to balance economic, social, and ecological sustainability through community-based actions, emphasizing local potential and knowledge rather than external technologies. The core strategies of DMPG include:

1. Business diversification: promoting paludiculture, agroforestry, fisheries and small-scale livestock such as goats and poultry.
2. Capacity building: providing technical training, forming Peat Ecosystem Protection and Management Working Teams (TKPPEG) and improving financial literacy and entrepreneurship.
3. Value addition and market access: assisting communities in improving product quality, packaging and branding.

DMPG has recorded positive impacts, including alternative income sources, peat-friendly livelihood practices and enhanced community participation in land protection. For four years, no fires were reported in DMPG areas. Strong local institutions are crucial for long-term success.



Education poster on fire prevention (BPBD Kabupaten Kotawaringin Timur 2025)



“Sustainable peatland restoration depends on livelihood support and multi-stakeholder collaboration”

Herlina Darwati



Cantika Dewi

STUDENTS

22. KOPI LIBERICA AS AN ALTERNATIVE FOR PALM OIL IN KETAPANG

PIM WELVAARTS

Pim Welvaarts, an International Development Management student from VHL conducted an internship with the COMPEAT project in Ketapang Regency. He looked at coffee liberica as a more sustainable alternative to palm oil on peat soils. Through interviews with farmers, roasters and officials he found that coffee liberica can retain more carbon and requires less drainage than palm oil. Using data from Kopi Koja in Pontianak, he estimated that coffee liberica can generate 7 million IDR/ha/month versus 3 million IDR/ha/month for palm oil. However, when looking at income per labor-day the revenue is roughly equal. The distribution of coffee liberica seedlings faces major challenges: of about 2,000 government-supplied liberica seedlings in Ketapang, an estimated 62% died, often from flooding and poor handling. Farmers lack training and market access. Plants suffer from high humidity and disease. Institutional and supply chain factors strongly favor palm oil.



Comparison between coffee liberica and palm oil on peatlands



Pim Welvaarts



"The market for kopi liberica is very difficult to enter. Compare that with palm oil: when you harvest palm oil you just drive to a middle man or a local processing mill nearby which is hassle-free."

Pim Welvaarts

23. INTERNSHIP AT TROPENBOS INDONESIA

CANTIKA DEWI

Cantika, a forestry student from UNTAN, shared her experiences in the peatland-forest villages of Sungai Pelang and Sungai Besar, Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan. She focused on three topics: governance (policies and stakeholder coordination for sustainable forest and peatland management), restoration (community participation in peatland ecosystem recovery), and livelihoods (supporting sustainable community development). Peat swamp forests should be managed sustainably and inclusively, as these ecosystems are vital for biodiversity, livelihoods and culture.



"We just like to learn together. The Dutch students learn how to speak Indonesian, and the Indonesian students learn how to speak Dutch. That's really fun."

Cantika Dewi

ZAHWA

Zahwa, a forestry student from UNTAN, conducted village-based field research on alternative livelihoods beyond oil palm, including fish farming, medicinal plants, and agarwood. She worked with the Village Forest Management Institution (LPHD), attending meetings, doing field monitoring and joining patrols with local community members. These activities highlighted the critical role of community participation in forest protection and fire prevention.



"From this internship I learned that forestry is not only related to technical aspects but also closely connected to human interactions and collaboration."

Zahwa



Zahwa

ANTONIUS TOLANG

Antonius, a student of forest product technology at UNTAN, conducted research on galam, sago and asam paya. Activities included nursery maintenance in Sungai Besar Village, plot cleaning, and producing compost blocks from organic materials. He participated in environmental education at elementary schools in Ketapang on climate change, supported social forestry business groups (KUPS) and joined the activities of the Women Agents of Change. Restoration work in Sungai Pelang involved tree planting, groundwater monitoring and wildlife observation. In his view education is essential to combat threats like illegal logging.



Antonius Tolang



"This internship allowed me to gain knowledge; not just learning theories but also practicing them directly on the ground"

Antonius Tolang

MUHAMMAD GERHAN

Gerhan investigated how forest households can diversify income beyond palm oil through local non-timber forest products. He emphasized that forest management extends beyond ecology to supporting forest-dependent communities' livelihoods while sustaining forests, fostering local ownership and stewardship. Looking ahead, he warned that deforestation and forest degradation pressures will rise due to human needs, and called for solutions that enable people to sustain livelihoods while preserving forests.



Muhammad Gerhan



"This internship changed the way how I see forest and people."

Muhammad Gerhan

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE AT TROPENBOS INDONESIA

International Collaboration for Sustainable Forestry

The internship was conducted at Tropenbos Indonesia together with students from the Netherlands under the COMPEAT Project. This program focused on assisting research activities of Dutch students while strengthening community-based and sustainable forestry practices.

INTERNSHIP ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES

- **Tree Nursery Sungai Besar Village**
Maintenance and cleaning of the nursery to support the availability of high-quality seedlings.
- **Block Compost Production**
Processing organic materials into environmentally friendly compost.
- **Environmental Education Outreach**
Integrating local content with environmental education in elementary schools in Ketapang.
- **Social Forestry Business Groups**
Assisting stingless bee honey (*Trigona*) and freshwater fish business groups to strengthen community-based livelihoods.
- **Women as Agents of Change**
Establishing a learning plot for no-burn organic farming with various food crops.
- **Non-Timber Forest Product Processing**
Processing bananas, cassava, and breadfruit into snack products such as chips.
- **Forest Restoration Sungai Pelang Village Forest**
Tree planting and monitoring activities in restoration areas.
- **Water Table Monitoring**
Monitoring groundwater levels to maintain ecosystem balance.
- **Wildlife Observation**
Observation and identification of wildlife in the Sungai Besar Village Forest.



Perspective on the Future of Forestry

Based on these internship experiences, the future of forestry is viewed as an integrated system combining ecological, social, and economic aspects. Forests are not only protected through restoration and monitoring, but also managed collaboratively with local communities through social forestry, livelihood development, and environmental education. International collaboration and knowledge-based approaches are key to ensuring forest sustainability and addressing climate change challenges.

Name : Antonius Pramda Julianto Tolang || Student ID : G1011251167 || Study Program / Faculty : Forestry || Tanjungpura University



Dean Farah Diba (UNTAN 2026)

CLOSING

24. SOCIAL FORESTRY IN A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

JAN VAN DER PLOEG

Van Hall Larenstein (VHL) is a university of applied sciences in the Netherlands, with locations in Leeuwarden and Velp. As a 'green university', VHL offers Bachelor's and Master's programs focused on forestry, agriculture and environmental management. The lectorate Inclusive Nature Conservation conducts practice-oriented research aimed at conserving biodiversity and strengthening the livelihoods and rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Throughout Southeast Asia national governments implement social forestry programs to reduce deforestation, alleviate poverty and secure land rights. Experiences from the Philippines can be useful to better understand the challenges surrounding the Social Forestry Program in Indonesia. In the Philippines, we can distinguish four generations of social forestry.

Generation	Period	Key developments	Challenges
1st: 'Land for the landless'	1950s	Progressive land redistribution programs aimed at countering Communist influence by granting homestead rights to upland farmers under Magsaysay.	Land reforms halted after elite resistance.
2nd: 'Stewards of the forest'	1986-2009	Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) redefined upland farmers as forest stewards under Aquino and Ramos.	Misuse of permits led to the suspension of the CBFM program in 2009.
3rd: Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act	1997-2022	Recognition of ancestral domains through the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act, implemented by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples.	Overlapping claims, bureaucratic delays maintained the status quo.
4th: A resurgence of authoritarian rule?	2016-present	Emphasis on corporate-led tree planting (through the National Greening Program). Shrinking civic space, boom in extractive industries and militarization under Duterte and Marcos Jr.	Corruption and tenure conflicts

Four generations of social forestry in the Philippines

The Philippines' experience shows that unresolved tenure conflicts and uneven enforcement continue to challenge tenure reforms. The role of CSOs in the Social Forestry Program should not be limited to service providers and facilitators. In fact, CSOs are an essential countervailing power that hold government and corporations to account.

During the workshop six cross-cutting themes were highlighted:

1. **Inclusion:** women and youth remain underrepresented in social forestry initiatives, reflecting persistent power asymmetries. The participation of women and youth must become a practical reality rather than rhetorical commitment. Intergenerational engagement in forest management is essential for continuity.
2. **Empowerment:** Many social forestry initiatives remain highly centralized. To initiate community-based management it is important to devolve decision-making to the village level.
3. **Sustainable financing:** Reliance on volatile climate finance and external aid undermines local agency. Experiences with climate finance mechanisms such as REDD+ reveal persistent inequities and unreliable benefit-sharing. Long-term sustainability depends on localized resource mobilization. Integrated approaches linking conservation with livelihood security are critical for resilience. Social forestry initiatives should support livelihoods directly linked to forest ecosystems. Policymakers must reconsider restrictions on timber use, which exclude communities from benefiting from the most valuable forest resource

4. **Scaling:** most social forestry initiatives remain relatively small. Strategies to achieve impact at scale include replication of successful models (scaling out), policy reforms (scaling up) and transforming sociocultural values and mindsets toward stewardship (scaling deep).
5. **Environmental justice:** Law enforcement remains highly selective, protecting elite interests while marginalizing vulnerable populations. Weak accountability and corporate impunity undermine social forestry initiatives. Enhanced transparency, litigation and civic oversight are essential to restore legitimacy.
6. **'The bigger picture':** communities alone cannot address structural threats such as state-sponsored resource extraction, corruption and weak law enforcement. CSOs remain vital to ensure that social forestry contributes meaningfully to both ecological sustainability and social equity.



“The colonial government saw shifting cultivation as primitive and wasteful, banned the use of fire and classified farmers in the uplands as illegal squatters. Social forestry aims to correct this historical injustice.”

Jan van der Ploeg



Communal working party on a swidden in Gunung Lumut Protection Forest, East Kalimantan (van der Ploeg 2005)

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ABBREVIATIONS

3R	Rewetting, revegetation, revitalization
BPBD	Regional Agency for Disaster Management
BPSKL	Regional Office for Social Forestry and Environmental Partnerships
BRGM	Peatland and Mangrove Restoration Agency
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
COMPEAT	Strengthening Community-Based Peat Forest Management project
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DMPG	Peatland Stewardship Villages
EUDR	European Union Deforestation Regulation
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GHG	greenhouse gas
GLA	Green Livelihoods Alliance
IAD	Integrated Area Development
IDR	Indonesian rupiah
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and local communities
ITPC	International Tropical Peatland Centre
IUCN NL	Netherlands Committee for IUCN
KHDPK	Social Forestry in Forest Areas with Special Management
KHG	Peat Hydrological Unit (PHU)
KLHK	Ministry Of Environment and Forestry
KUPS	Social Forestry Business Groups
LPHD	Village Forest Management Agency
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NSP	National Strategic Project
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PGS ROLES	Participatory Guarantee System Rotan Lestari'
PIAPS	Indicative Social Forestry Area Map
POLRI	Indonesian National Police
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RSPO	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
TKPPEG	Peat Ecosystem Protection and Management Working Team
TNI	Indonesian National Armed Forces
UNTAN	Universitas Tanjungpura
VHL	Van Hall Larenstein university of applied science



The participants dance after the workshop (UNTAN 2026)

