



Rimba Raya

BIODIVERSITY RESERVE

An InfiniteEARTH™ Project



InfiniteEARTH™
Beyond Carbon. Beyond Sustainability.

2019 | AUGUST REVIEW

Seeds
of Change



Working towards a better future

Rimba Raya is located in Central Kalimantan, one of the largest provinces in Indonesia. Central Kalimantan has over 2 Million inhabitants with approximately 70% living in rural areas with limited access to services such as sanitation, electricity, passable roads, hospitals and schooling, not to mention internet access or other 'luxuries' that dominate the modern world.

As a REDD+ project, Rimba Raya not only undertakes to Reduce Emissions caused by Deforestation & Degradation but we also have a certain responsibility to help indigenous people in our concession by improving their quality of life and assist them in initiating and establishing business opportunities that will ensure that they become financially independent.

Rimba Raya has 14 villages within the concession and we need to ensure that each village is provided with equal opportunities.



Rimba Raya Initiatives align to all 17 of the United Nations Development Goals (SDG's) which seek to address the root causes of poverty and provide a universal development model that works for all people. Learn more on Rimba-Raya.com

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PROTECTS

65,000ha

of High Conservation Value
(HCV) Tropical Peat Forest

An area almost the size of
Singapore

THE CARBON VALUE OF THE RIMBA RAYA BIODIVERSITY RESERVE:

130m tonnes
of total avoided emissions over 30 years

=

4.5m tonnes
of avoided emissions annually

THAT'S THE ANNUAL EQUIVALENT OF:



39,544,817,580

Miles driven by an average
passenger vehicle



218,429

Tanker trucks' worth
of gasoline



23,759,239,704

Miles flown in a
commercial airplane



2,436,503

Homes' electricity use
for one year



1,000,000

Cars removed from the
world's highways



1,856,644,537

Gallons of gasoline
consumed



87,870

Railcars' worth of
coal burned



4.8

Coal-fired power
plants in one year



38,200,988

Barrels of oil
consumed



5,236,375

Tons of waste recycled
instead of landfilled

AND THE SEQUESTRATION EQUIVALENT OF:



15,618,970

Acres of U.S. forests



427,616,379

Tree seedlings grown
for 10 years



Rimba-Raya.com



RimbaRayaForest



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MANGROVES & BLUE CARBON

As mentioned in our last update, Rimba Raya has been involved in Mangrove tree planting in the Seruyan District since 2016. In July 2019, we planted another 16,500 mangrove tree saplings! This brings the total of mangroves being planted this year to 25,000.

And that's just the beginning. We've signed contracts with corporate sponsors to plant another 100,000 in 2020 and 2021. This is no small achievement, particularly given that planting mangrove trees is no walk in the park. Imagine if you will, working in the blazing Bornean sun with 90% humidity, pulling crates of saplings along a 5 km stretch of isolated "beach", more accurately described as "mud flats". Then when you get the 16,500 young trees to the location, imagine dragging them at low tide out as far as you can go, 'walking' in mud that reaches your mid-thigh and each step requires a superhuman effort while the sticky mud claws at you, dragging you back and making progress slow and arduous.

But with each new plant that you place in its new home, you know that you really are making a difference because this will be the nursery to hundreds of species. It's this realization that gives you the strength to keep doing it for hours -days in fact. Once the task is complete, when you see the 16,500 new saplings listing in the gentle sea breeze, you release a deep sigh of great satisfaction (and thank your lucky stars that the ordeal is finally over!)

In all seriousness, this is an initiative that we are very proud of, we have partnered with the Seruyan Government who hopes to develop the area as a tourist destination and who also understand the value of a thriving mangrove ecosystem.

You may have heard of carbon, but have you heard of Blue Carbon? According to Science Daily; 'Mangroves store greater amounts of carbon than any other terrestrial ecosystem [except peat], which helps reduce carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.'

When carbon is stored in the ocean or coastal ecosystems, including mangrove forests, it is called blue carbon.'

This clearly makes this initiative perfect for a company whose main mission it is to keep the forest intact and help prevent forest destruction caused by agriculture.

By planting mangroves, we will help sequester even more carbon which would otherwise be in our atmosphere and we provide vital habitat for juvenile species, as well as protect inland forests and soils from being eroded. This compound services component of mangroves makes them one of the most important ecosystems on the planet.





WORKING TOGETHER

We always team up with local suppliers, buying our saplings from them and working with them on the enormous job of planting all these beautiful young trees. This means that the community receives a large injection of income when we introduce an initiative like the mangrove tree planting. We all benefit; the community gains economically, Rimba Raya and InfiniteEARTH are fulfilling our promises to help improve the lives of the local stakeholders and the environment certainly gains.

Mangrovealliance.org: 'Mangrove forests are among the most productive ecosystems on earth, and serve many important functions, including water filtration, prevention of coastal erosion, coastal protection from storms, carbon storage, food, timber, and livelihood provision, and biodiversity protection, among others. It is estimated that mangrove ecosystem services are worth US\$33-57 thousand per hectare per year to the national economies of developing countries that host mangroves.'

I am pleased to share a few photos of some of the hardy individuals who have helped make this initiative possible, we are most grateful to them all for their hard work.



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



13 CLIMATE
ACTION



14 LIFE
BELOW WATER



15 LIFE
ON LAND





Peat Swamp & Oil Palm

We protect a large peat forest which would have become an oil palm plantation had our managing company InfiniteEARTH not stepped in. On my recent visit to the project in July 2019, we drove through miles and miles of oil palm trees.

The realisation that our efforts have prevented almost 65,000 hectares of land from this same terrible fate, was a huge awakening and I am grateful to our corporate clients who help us to not only provide some financial support to a community of 14 villages, but have also helped us protect a valuable piece of land for the people and wildlife of future generations.

Peat formation is an ideal carbon sink, the carbon is sequestered and converted into peat through biological activity. Peat swamp forests originally represented major ecosystems in Indonesia and ranged between 16.5 – 27 million hectares. In their original state, Indonesian peat swamp forests sequestered between 0.01 – 0.03 Gigatonnes of carbon annually.



Peat forests are important ecosystems, however in recent years, they have been drastically reduced through drainage and conversion to agricultural lands and other activities, with an estimated 50% of all mangroves lost in just the past 25 years.

Their present status as carbon sequestering systems have thus also been reduced significantly, making a project like Rimba Raya Biodiversity Reserve, all that much more important.

Our project with its initiatives, has significant impact which would not be possible were it not for the income gained through the sale of Carbon Credits.



Tree planting & REDD+

I think that children know more about our fragile environment than we do.

We've forgotten some important facts- as we learned in third grade biology, trees are essential to life. In fact they create the very air we breathe and filter air pollution- something that has increased to danger levels over the years.

Trees build soil and help soak up water, preventing flooding and landslides. Not to mention that they provide shade on our planet that helps to reduce global warming while creating habitat for thousands of plant and animal species.

But one of the most valuable benefits of trees is that they sequester (store) carbon, helping to remove carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from the air, which cools the earth.

We continue to work towards creating a greater understanding of the global importance of peat (and thus the urgency of maintaining peat swamp forests such as ours) while we try to identify ways of making these areas productive in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner.



Our team at the Natai Kopi Village Nursery in the Northern part of our concession, take care of the seedlings and young trees, ensuring they are healthy enough for replanting.

We use a water pump to draw water from a small pond near the post where there is sufficient water supply available for the whole year. We aren't allowed to use fertilizer in our concession, which means that the production of the pineapples we have tried to grow is sporadic.

There is a small forest surrounding the nursery and wild animals, like monkey, boar and orangutans happily eat the pineapples.





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FLOATING CLINIC OUTREACH PROGRAM

We recently ran a Medical Outreach program to seven villages bordering the Rimba Raya concession. These are the villages most in need of medical attention as they don't have local clinics, resident doctors or medications and are required to travel long distances, usually by boat and at great expense, in order to get necessary but basic medical attention.

Very often illnesses go undiagnosed and the elderly, women and children suffer illnesses that would, in most circumstances, be easily treatable. During this pilot outreach program, we were able to provide medical attention to 35 individuals per village. Naturally we would prefer to be able to treat all people requiring medical attention, which is the long term goal.



The challenges surrounding this initiative have been varied; obtaining all the material to build the boat in this remote area, was no easy feat. The main challenge has been to secure an alliance with the Seruyan Government who have a limited budget and aren't sure how they can support this initiative. We have finally managed to extract a promise that they would help find the staff for the outreach programs, however the cost of medications, staffing, maintenance and all running costs will fall squarely on the shoulders of InfiniteEARTH and Rimba Raya.

In order for this initiative to have the necessary, far reaching benefits we know it can have, we need more companies to help finance it through the purchase of carbon credits. Medical equipment and medications will be the main expenses, but having qualified medical staff is vital, especially if we would like to run the program at least once a month.

Contact me if you would like to get involved in this worthy cause.

Orangutans at Camp Rimba

I've just returned from another amazing visit to our Project and of course it would not have been complete without a visit to Camp Rimba, our newest orangutan release station. What a magical place.

Twenty-five rehabilitated, wild-born orangutans were released in the camp in 2017. The Orangutan Foundation International Care Givers were not sure whether we would see any orangutans at the platform as it was raining and orangutans avoid getting wet- just as we do!

Additionally, all the orangutans are now able to fend for themselves, they don't need the tasty snacks left out for them. This is of course good news; it means that the release was a resounding success...but I REALLY wanted to see one of these magnificent creatures.

Finally a young mother arrived with her beautiful boy. The snacks left on the platform were just too tempting to pass up. I was overjoyed at this miraculous gift, a beautiful healthy female and her infant son too....what more could I ask for!?

Camp Rimba is not open to the public, so the orangutans aren't exposed to many people, making this experience that much more incredible. Having a Conservation partnership with Orangutan Foundation International (OFI) means that we are able to contribute to the conservation of orangutans, especially those that live in our concession.

Rimba Raya is a forest almost the size of Singapore that provides sanctuary to all manner of wildlife and plants, the forest was abuzz with the sounds of insects and other animal calls and it was evident that the forest is healthy and the animals who live there, are thriving.





CHICKEN FARM MICRO ENTERPRISE



It's easy to want to judge people in developing countries by our westernised ideals or standards. However, it's important to remember that people living far below the poverty line, have a limited means of income and if they are innovative enough to be able to start a small business, they are all competing for a limited market.

Small businesses contribute to local economies by stimulating economic growth and providing employment opportunities to people who may not be employable by larger corporations.



Women in Borneo have a particularly hard time earning an income and we make every effort to support these women.

One of the micro-enterprise initiatives we support are two chicken farms developed and controlled by women in two villages that border our concession. These women turn a small profit through the sale of chickens to local agricultural employees and villagers.

They have learned from hard experience to not have an over-supply of product and to not sell on credit- although the latter isn't always possible as people receive their wage packages weekly and don't always have cash on hand to pay for goods and services.



The women are pleased that they are able to contribute to the income, and therefore the welfare, of their families through these small enterprises and are researching ways in which they can improve their marketing and distribution in order to reach a larger market.



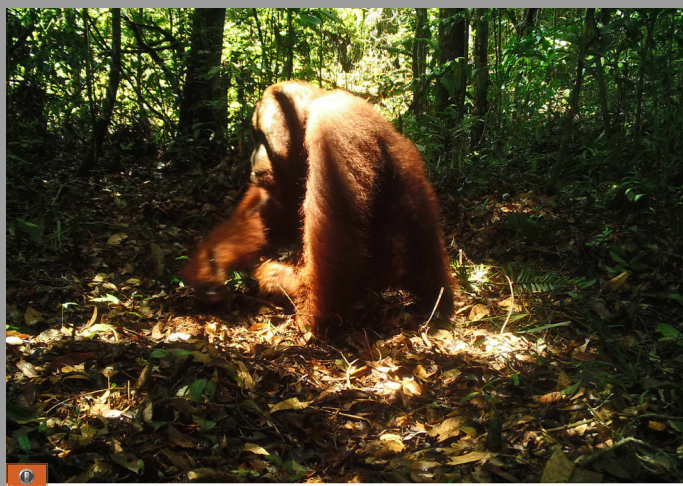
CAMERA TRAPS



We mentioned in our last update that we have installed several camera traps in our concession through a carbon purchase from Microsoft. We are delighted to report that several protected and endangered species have been spotted! These include Red-leaf Monkeys, Lesser mouse-deer, Tupai (tree shrew) and a few orangutans of course.

By the end of 2019, we plan to have all 30 traps installed, placing two cameras in each location in an effort to obtain more data on the passing wildlife.

The monitoring will take place over a year and we are still hoping to spot the Asian Sun Bear, Clouded Leopard and the severely endangered Pangolin. We are holding our breath for those!



You may have noticed that the image quality isn't going to win us any photography awards! However, the information we are gathering about the wildlife activity in our concession is extremely valuable.

As we learn which areas have the most activity, the collection of data will become more efficient and effective and will help us determine what additional steps we need to take in order to protect our vulnerable biodiversity





LITERACY-LIBRARY

The villagers in the Muara Dua Village simply love the library. It is regularly used, teachers encourage the children to take a new book every day before school starts and the kids are enthusiastic readers.

This has much to do with the local head teacher, Mrs Ari Muriyan, who is encouraging and proud of her student's high literacy levels. In July, Rimba Raya delivered a box filled with new books. There were very few kids in the village as it was school holidays and most were with family in other parts of the region. However, the kids who remained, were waiting eagerly at the library to receive the books and their eyes spoke with genuine glee when it was finally opened.

It was requested that we provide more 'how to' books, romance novels and other books for adults who like to use the library too.

While we were at the library, I interviewed the ex-headmaster Mr Jumeri, who was delighted to see the books and asked that Rimba Raya take all the children on a tree planting expedition as he felt that the experience was invaluable to them.





EDUCATION- SCHOLARSHIP

Last year we gave 24 children a three-year scholarship covering all their expenses for the final 3 years of their schooling. It was lovely to be able to catch up with Upik and Febryanti, two young people who are well deserving of the scholarship and are making us very proud to have the opportunity to support them in their vital goal of achieving an education.

Upik, a proud young man of 15, is the son of a very poor fisherman. We had visited his home on my last visit and it was apparent that the father was slightly bewildered that his son didn't want to follow family tradition and become a fisherman. Upik, is a high achiever, both academically and artistically. He was thrilled that the scholarship is allowing him to pursue the 'lofty' goal of finishing high school, giving him the opportunity to continue on to university.

The young lady, Febryanti, was equally happy to have the opportunity to study. She is focused and determined, receiving top grades and excelling in music. She too has long term goals that will help pull her out of extreme poverty, she dreams of being a doctor.

I asked them to write a few words for me, you will note that the main benefit of the scholarship is something as simple as books. Something we all take for granted, showing us that small contributions, make a big difference.

Upik

“Before I got a scholarship from Rimba Raya it was very hard to study, because I didn't have enough reference books for learning, including the workbooks from school. Usually teachers give assignments from these workbooks and I have to borrow it from my friends after they've finished the assignment which isn't optimal as I felt rushed and unable to do the work to a higher standard. You may ask why I didn't just buy workbooks. The obvious answer is that I don't want to be a burden on my parents. One of the scholarship's benefit for me is it has helped reduce the burden of my education on my parents who work hard to support their family. The scholarship provide me books, school supplies and has also paid for the tuition fee. I feel greatly helped and it has motivated me to want to study harder and harder. ,,

Febryanti

“I used to lack in reference books for learning so that I had to borrow from my friends to complete assignments. I have to save my pocket money to be able to join in school activities because I don't want to make my parents pay extra, it isn't easy for them to support the whole family. However, after I get this scholarship from Rimba Raya, I no longer lack books for my learning. When I want to follow another school's activities (extracurricular) like music, which is my passion, I can use the spare money from the scholarship and I will no longer have to burden my parents. My goals are to become a Pharmacist, doctor or even a foreign language interpreter. This scholarship has motivated me to continue learning to prove that I am deserving. ,,



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Rimba Raya initiatives are funded by
InfiniteEARTH's sale of carbon credits.

We focus on helping local communities
embrace the positive aspects of being
part of a REDD+ project.

