

Forest

Forest Restoration

Orang Utan Habitat Restoration in Bukit Piton Class I Forest Reserve, Lahad Datu Sabah



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WWF-Malaysia strives to restore and expand orang-utan's habitat and increase the value of standing forests

Current project site for WWF-Malaysia's reforestation work is located in North Ulu Segama (NUS) or also known as Bukit Piton Class I Forest Reserve. Bukit Piton is located in the northern part of Ulu Segama-Malua forest reserve. Since 2007 to August 2015, WWF-Malaysia has restored approximately 2,099 hectares (ha) of the targeted 2,400 ha of degraded forests in North Ulu Segama (NUS), Sabah.

One of WWF-Malaysia's conservation targets is restoring degraded orang-utan forest habitats in Sabah. Poor logging practices in the past from 1980s until 2007 together with drought-induced forest fires in 1983 and 1997-98 has resulted in a very badly degraded landscape at the project site. It rendered some parts of the area treeless with much of the rest with poor tree cover and depletion of wildlife habitat especially for orang-utans.

NUS was estimated to have about 170 (2007 estimate, HUTAN, unpublished report) or 300 (2008 estimate, WWF-Malaysia, unpublished report) of orang-utans. This population is totally isolated due to vast expanses of oil palm plantations

bordering NUS to the north and east. On the southern part, Segama River acts as a physical barrier separating the orangutan population in NUS from the larger population in Ulu Segama Forest Reserve.

WWF-Malaysia in collaboration with Sabah Forestry Department initiated the forest restoration programme in NUS (North Ulu-Segama Class II forest reserve) in 2007. NUS was later reclassified by the State Government of Sabah to a Class I Forest Reserve and renamed to Bukit Piton Class I Forest Reserve in March 2012.

Areas for reforestation can be identified by:

- Forest canopy cover analysis through satellite imagery on a targeted area. This process is to assess existing tree canopy cover on the targeted area. Areas are classified as degraded when the tree canopy cover is less than 30%.
- A follow-up ground truthing and/or helicopter survey is recommended to be done to confirm the degradation of the area. A helicopter survey is also useful to confirm orang utan nests distribution in the selected area.

"As an advocate for credibly certified well-managed forests, WWF-Malaysia looks forward to seeing more forests in Sabah protected and managed according to the FSC standards, ensuring that forests, along with their products and services, will continue to benefit everyone."

Dato' Dr Dionysius S.K. Sharma, WWF-Malaysia Executive Director/ CEO

FAQs

“Sadly, despite our high dependency on forests, we tend to take them for granted. Over the past 50 years, we have lost about half of the world's original forest cover, mainly due to irresponsible extraction of its resources and conversion of forested land to other uses.”

WWF-Malaysia

What are the types of trees usually planted and what purpose do the selected trees serve?

Tree species are selected based on their importance for the survival of orang-utan, i.e., for food, shelter and travelling.

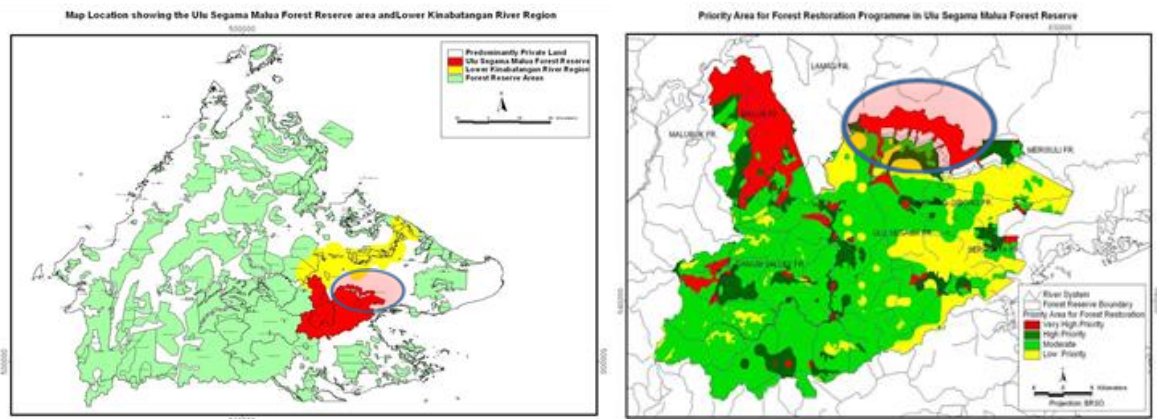
How long does it takes for the trees to mature?

Each type of tree species growth and maturity rate is different, i.e., for pioneer species (fast growing tree species) like Laran (*Neolamarckia cadamba*) and Binuang (*Octomeles sumatrana*), it normally takes from 5 to 10 years for these trees to mature and for Dipterocarp, a hardwood species like Urat mata (*Parashorea sp*) and Kapur (*Dryobalanops sp*), it will take more than 20 years for such tree species to mature.

How does WWF-Malaysia know whether wildlife makes use of the reforested areas?

Confirmation on wildlife usage of reforested area is done through ground observations. Since WWF-Malaysia is focusing on orang-utan's habitat restoration, a characteristic observation will be based on actual sightings of orang utans using the planted trees either for food, travelling (canopy to canopy) or nesting. The orang-utan occupancy in any reforested area also can be determined via aerial nest counts using helicopters.

North Ulu-Segama also known as Bukit Piton Class I forest reserve location (in blue circle):



2007-2015

WWF-Malaysia has restored approximately 2099 hectares (ha) of the targeted 2,400 ha of degraded forests in Bukit Piton.



Planted trees used by orang-utan

July 2012: Orang-utan's nest was spotted on planted tree, Binuang (*Octomeles sumatrana*)

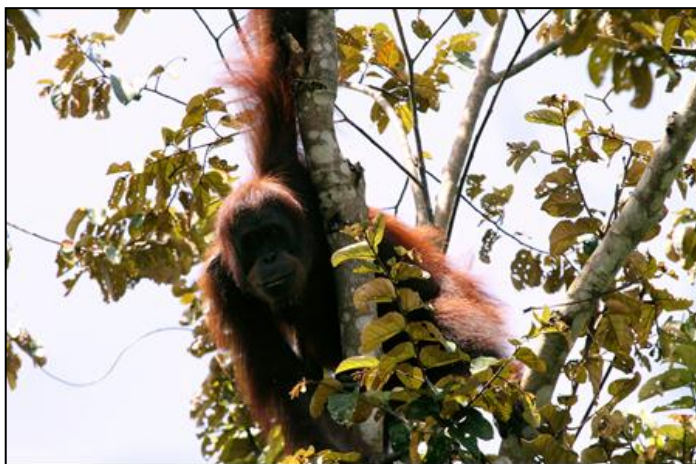


Jan 2013: An Orang-utan was spotted using a planted Laran tree for travelling through, by swinging from tree to tree.



June 2013: An Orang-utan was seen using a planted tree for travelling. Tree species: Sengkuang (*Dracontomelon dao*)

Oct 2013: An adult male Orang-utan was spotted using planted trees for traveling. Tree species: Bayur (*Pterospermum spp*)



Since August 2011, the WWF-Malaysia Orang Utan's Research Team spotted Orang-utan individuals making use of the replanted trees in Bukit Piton, thus giving us hope that WWF-Malaysia's efforts in conserving this area is meeting its objective of degraded forest restoration for Orang-utan's habitat.

Since 2007 to August 2015, WWF-Malaysia has restored approximately 2,099 hectares (ha) of the targeted 2,400 ha of degraded forests in Bukit Piton. There are still another about approximately 300 ha of degraded area to be restored.

WWF-Malaysia hopes that this effort can be continued in order to achieve the objective of our forest restoration programme.



Why we are here.

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

www.panda.org

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