

Conservation Greenprint

**Towards a Thriving
Future for Orangutans,
Forests and People**

Our strategy to 2030

**With this Greenprint,
we're thinking long-
term and big-picture:**

**Supporting
fundamental changes
to the conservation
landscape that will
realise our vision of
wild orangutans
thriving in
resilient forests.**



NORTHERN SUMATRA, INDONESIA



- PROVINCE CAPITAL
- LAKE TOBA
- FOREST
- ORANGUTAN DISTRIBUTION AREA
- PROVINCE BORDER
- PLANTATIONS, AGRICULTURAL AREAS AND OTHER USE ZONES

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Sumatran Orangutan Society

Sumatran Orangutan Society
6 Lombard Street, Abingdon
Oxfordshire, OX14 5BJ, UK

The Sumatran Orangutan Society is a
registered charity in England and Wales
number 1158711

Editorial Team

Sumatran Orangutan Society. 2022.
Conservation Greenprint. Towards a thriving
future for Orangutans, Forests and People.
Our Strategy to 2030.

Editor: Helen Buckland
Editorial support: Koen Meyers, Sarah
Moore, Lucy Radford, Darmanto Simaepa,
Lubabun Ni'am, Rina Purwaningsih

Copywriting: David Jay

Design: Venn Creative

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Foreword

At SOS, our vision is wild Sumatran and Tapanuli orangutans thriving in resilient forests. Our conservation strategy focuses on finding local solutions to global challenges. We collaborate with forest-edge communities to secure the long-term future of orangutans through actions that enable both to flourish. Our Conservation Greenprint shows how we can achieve conservation goals while helping to create a template for sustainable development.

Over the last 20 years, we at SOS have worked hard to support the protection of orangutans and their forests on Sumatra. Backed by a global network of allies we have enabled inspiring action by our frontline partners to complement the conservation efforts of the Government of Indonesia.

However, the long-term future of these species is not guaranteed. Fewer than 14,000 Sumatran orangutans now remain in the wild, while Tapanuli orangutans number less than 800. This leaves them vulnerable to the effects of habitat loss and fragmentation, as well as unpredictable and uncontrollable threats such as disease outbreaks and climate change impacts. To provide a secure future for these gentle beings we must ensure that their populations and habitat are robust and resilient. We have to help them thrive.

To do this we need to take conservation to the next level - to treat the cause and not the symptoms. Threats to global biodiversity are driven by systems which reward unsustainable activities that damage nature, over sustainable ones that protect it. We need new systems – not only for governments and industry, but for the people who live alongside and within critical ecosystems. But we can only transform the way forest ecosystems are valued and managed through actions that are localised, specific and necessarily small scale. Understanding how to work in this way is fundamental to long-term conservation success. Sumatra – with its wealth of biodiversity, its resourceful people, and its strong national commitment – is the ideal place to demonstrate how this can be done.

This Conservation Greenprint is our pledge to tackle these complex and nuanced issues head-on. With the invaluable experience of our team and local partners we can focus on interventions that generate lasting change and innovative models that address stubborn challenges. By collaborating with local organisations and engaging the private sector we will support progress towards national environmental and economic goals, with bold initiatives through which people and nature can both prosper. Our programmes will build resilience for orangutan populations, their fragile

forest ecosystems, the people around them and the global climate. At the heart of our approach is a steadfast commitment to Sumatra's rural communities - the custodians of the island's unique forests and wildlife. Balancing the aspirations of Sumatra's people with the protection of its natural resources is not just possible, it is essential - and with Indonesia's pragmatic and enlightened policy framework it can be achieved.

At SOS we consider ourselves conservation optimists. This Greenprint shows how we can turn that optimism into a conservation success story. We have resourceful frontline partners, proven strategies and innovative approaches ready for investment. We will continue to support and complement the efforts of the Government of Indonesia in safeguarding the long-term future of orangutans. At the same time, we will help define and solve the underlying challenges of sustainable human development that are fundamental to conservation in the 21st century. With support from our vital donors and collaborators we can help orangutans, nature and humanity to thrive, together.

We hope that you will join us on this ambitious and optimistic journey.

Helen Buckland, Director

“ We will support progress towards national environmental and economic goals, with bold initiatives through which people and nature can both prosper. Our programmes will build resilience for orangutan populations, their fragile forest ecosystems, the people around them and the global climate. ”

Over the last 20 years there have been countless achievements that we are proud of. Our work on the ground has all been conducted by skilled and committed local organisations, our frontline partners who are integral to our impact in Sumatra.

Every win for one orangutan, one hectare of forest, one forest-edge farmer or one local ecology student matters to us. Here are just a few of our highlights...

- Raised over **£7 million** for frontline conservation programmes.
- Supported regeneration of **over 2,000 hectares of orangutan habitat** by planting more than 2 million trees.
- Championed forest-edge communities and **engaged more than 10,000 people** in conservation action.
- Supported **Yayasan Orangutan Sumatera Lestari** (Orangutan Information Centre) to grow from a small, grassroots volunteer group into an internationally-recognised conservation organisation with over 100 staff.
- Supported the establishment of the **foremost orangutan rescue unit in Sumatra, saving over 200 orangutans** so far.
- Contributed to tackling the link between **international trade and deforestation**, including advocating for stronger regulations on **sustainable palm oil**, and successful calls for EU legislative reform.



Looking Ahead: Our Goals to 2030

Building on our achievements, expertise and experience, we know that to move towards a thriving future for orangutans and their forests we must focus on three goals in the Sumatran landscape:

Protect, Connect and Rewild.

Working alongside our frontline partners, local authorities and forest-edge communities, by 2030 we aim to:

- **Contribute to the protection** of 1.8 million hectares of orangutan habitat
- Prioritise the **long-term connection** of vital orangutan landscapes.
- **Enable the rewilding** of 10,000 hectares of critical orangutan habitat.

For more detail on our goals, and how we'll achieve them, see Part 3: Our Conservation Greenprint.

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Our Conservation Greenprint harnesses the organisation's expertise and experience, gathered over many years, to chart a bold course forward for the future of orangutans on Sumatra.

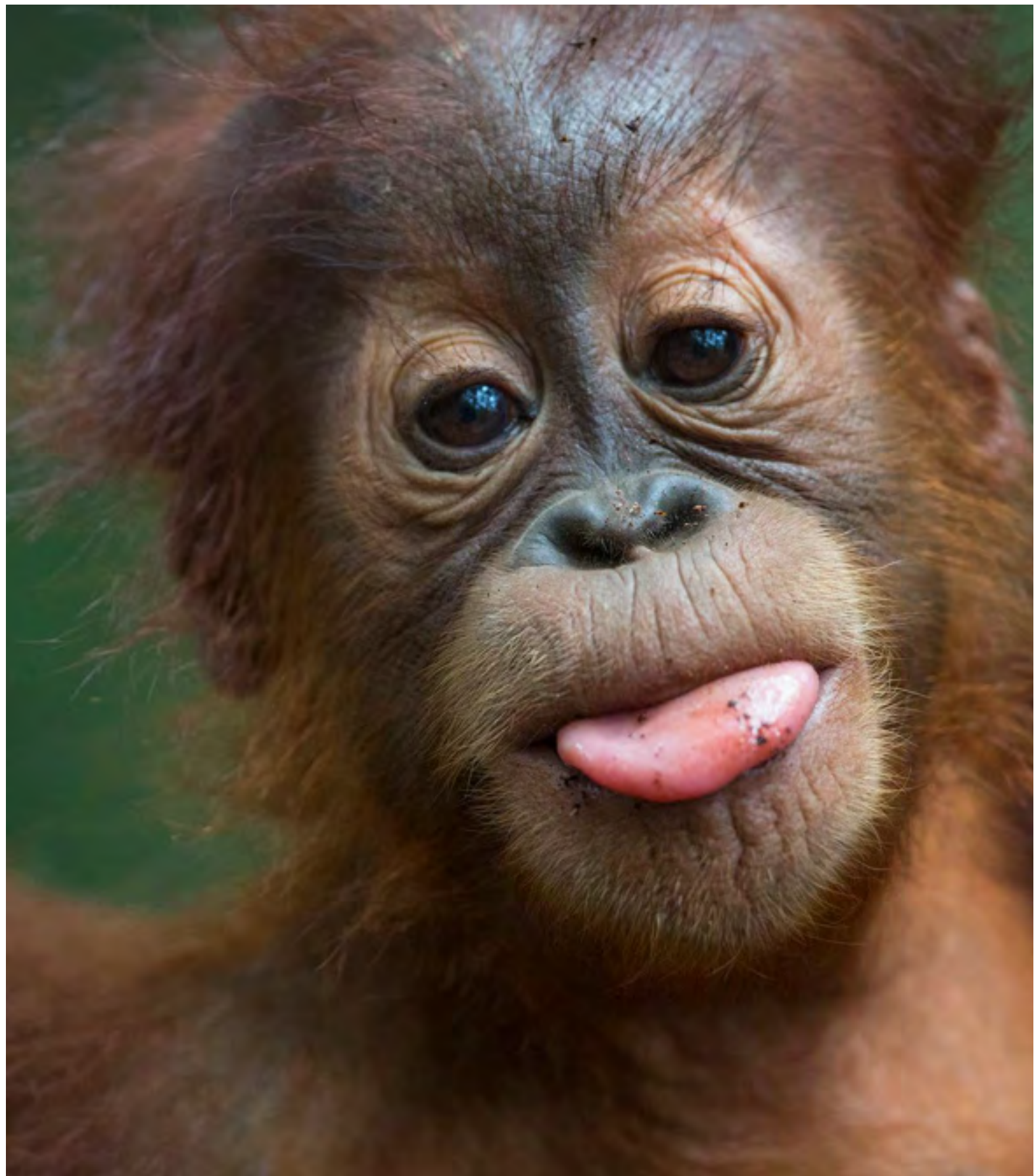
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Ed Matthew
Chair of Trustees

Part 1.

Orangutans - Our Wild Cousins

We know how intelligent and complex orangutans are, and how important they are for the ecosystems they live in, but we also know that there are many challenges facing orangutans in the wild.



People of the Forest

Their name derives from the Malay language, *orang hutan* - literally ‘people of the forest’ - these intelligent apes are now found only in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Orangutans are the only Asian great ape and share around 96.4% of their DNA with humans. Once widespread across southern Asia, they now only survive on the islands of Sumatra and Borneo.

There are three recognised species – the Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*), the Sumatran orangutan (*Pongo abelii*) and the recently described Tapanuli orangutan (*Pongo tapanuliensis*). The Tapanuli orangutan lives south of the Sumatran orangutan’s range, with their closest populations only 100km apart.

The orangutans on Sumatra are almost entirely arboreal, with 90% of their food coming from the forest canopy. They feed on hundreds of different plants, helping to spread seeds and promote forest regeneration. Every night they build a new nest to sleep in, creating gaps in the canopy which allow light through and stimulate plant growth in lower forest layers. They are known as ‘gardeners of the forest’ because of the vital roles they play in supporting and maintaining the ecosystem.

Although mostly solitary, orangutans typically have large home ranges with extensive overlaps.

Orangutans communicate using several vocalisations including the male ‘long call’ which can be heard from nearly a mile away.

Orangutans are highly intelligent, and in captivity have been shown to recognise themselves in a mirror.

Wild orangutans use medicinal plants to treat wounds; different populations have their own traditions of tool use, showing they have unique cultures.



Why Protect Orangutans?

The key to saving orangutans is preserving their forest home.

Orangutans are amazing creatures deserving protection in their own right, but there are also practical reasons to conserve them.

Without the rainforest they cannot thrive in the wild, and without them the forest would lose a key ‘gardener’ which helps to maintain the health and resilience of the ecosystem. Orangutans share their habitat with many other unique and globally-threatened animals such as the Sumatran tiger, rhino and elephant, as well as countless birds, insects and other creatures. So, protecting orangutans as a flagship species also protects thousands of other species – the entire biodiversity of the tropical rainforest.

The forests also perform vital ecosystem services for communities around them and further afield. They act as crucial watersheds, absorbing huge amounts of rainfall and releasing it steadily to ensure a regular water supply downstream whilst reducing the risks of floods, landslides and soil erosion. The rainforest also supports agriculture by regulating the local climate and providing many resources which can be harvested sustainably by forest-edge communities.

At a global level, Sumatra’s intact rainforests and the soil below them are huge carbon sinks. Protecting orangutan habitat is a vital natural climate solution that will help to achieve Indonesia’s goal to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts, as part of the country’s 2030 climate targets.

Challenges facing wild orangutans

Many important human activities can reduce and fragment orangutan habitat if conservation needs are not considered.

Fewer than 14,000 Sumatran orangutans and 800 Tapanuli orangutans now remain in the wild.

Both species are classified as Critically Endangered, with the Tapanuli orangutan considered the most endangered great ape in the world. Orangutans can live for over 40 years, but an average female will have only three offspring in her lifetime. This makes them extremely vulnerable to disturbances and slow to recover from reduced population levels. They need large areas of connected habitat to find sufficient food throughout the year for a population big enough to maintain genetic diversity.

On Sumatra, orangutans face a range of constraints primarily involving restriction and fragmentation of their habitat. These limitations need to be addressed with innovative and locally-sensitive approaches to give these animals the opportunity to thrive in extensive areas of habitat, while providing forest-edge communities with a broad range of opportunities for socio-economic development.



Habitat Fragmentation

It is often not just the scale of habitat loss that has an impact on orangutans, but the pattern of forest degradation. Farmlands, energy infrastructure, roads and other human-made barriers can cut through natural landscapes and hamper connectivity between populations, leading to orangutans being trapped in isolated pockets of forest. Unless these fragmented habitats are protected and reconnected, there is a risk that some of these populations might disappear— either rapidly due to natural disasters, disease or human intervention, or gradually through the genetic effects of in-breeding. Small populations in isolated forest patches are often labelled ‘functionally extinct’ – surviving for now but heading towards extinction in the longer term.



Agriculture

At the start of the 21st Century, large scale habitat conversion in Sumatra for industrial plantations - for commodities like palm oil - was a major threat to orangutan habitat. More recently, however, advances in Indonesian government policies have been effective in addressing this issue.

Unfortunately land use change, now mostly driven by small-scale plantations, is still a serious concern. Oil palm is grown in smallholdings as well as huge plantations, and forested land may be cleared by local farmers for this and other crops such as coffee and cacao. Although the individual areas lost are not very large they can spread over a whole landscape, relentlessly eroding orangutan strongholds year after year. Land is sometimes cleared by burning, which can run out of control and scorch large expanses of forest. Although these activities are

generally illegal, strict enforcement is a logistic challenge and often not a reasonable option for disadvantaged groups in remote locations. Long-term collaboration with local communities is essential to identify how standing forest benefits them and to support the development of sustainable livelihoods.

Infrastructure Development

Sumatra has a substantial rural population that needs access to reliable services and infrastructure. Vital activities like road construction and other development projects (e.g. renewable energy plants) are hugely important for local communities.

However, they can also have significant ecological impacts if not undertaken sensitively, and disrupt valuable natural services. Opening up access to remote areas, disturbing critical

habitat and separating orangutan populations are all issues that must be addressed to strike a balance between socio-economic development and preservation of natural capital.

Conflict With People

With their habitat usually bounded by - and often replaced with - agricultural land, orangutans sometimes move into cultivated areas, from local fields and home gardens to huge oil palm plantations. Smallholders and plantation owners alike can lose crucial crops and income to wildlife incursions. Often they respond by chasing the animals, by shooting them, or even by capturing them for live trade.

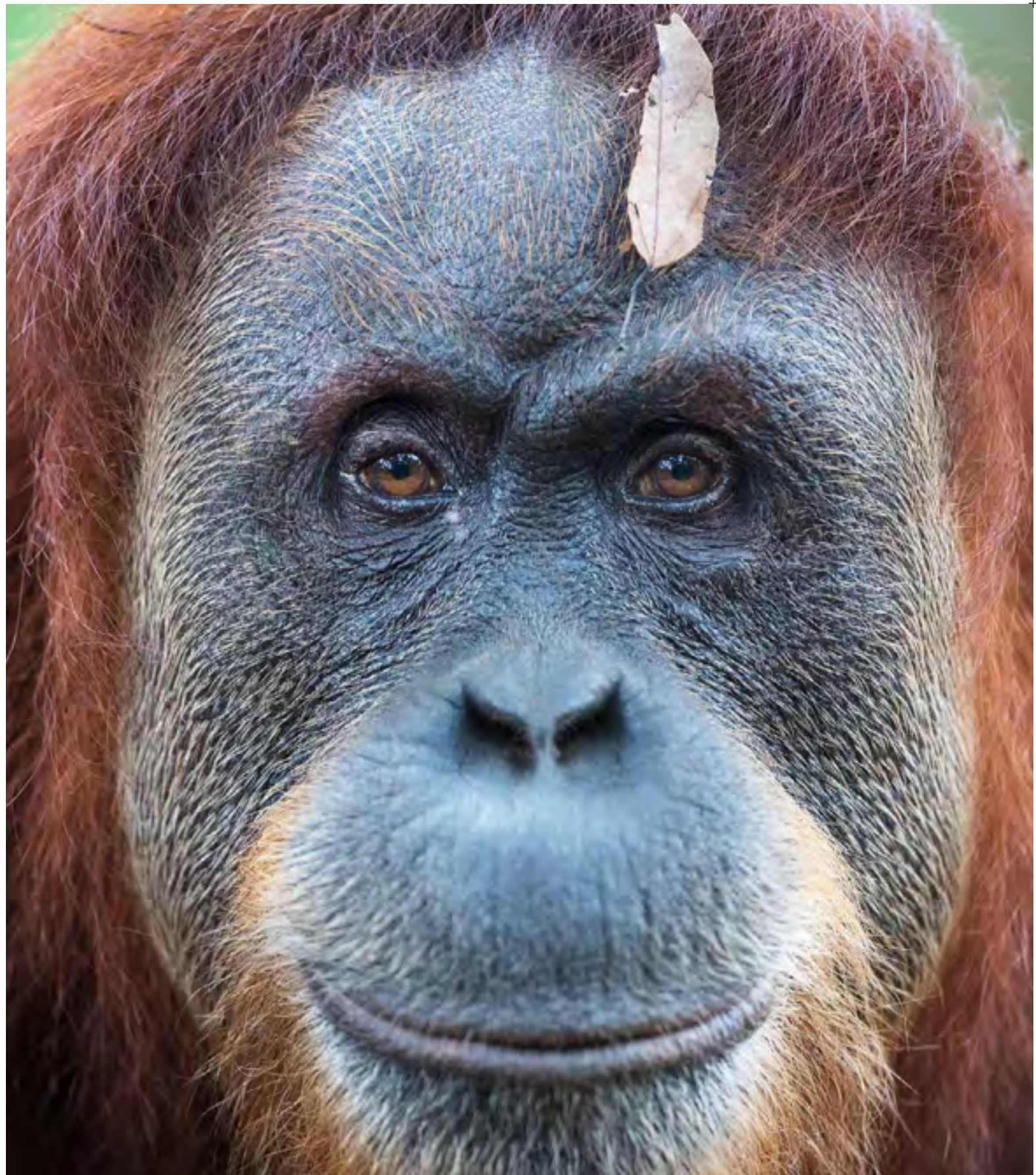
Sometimes the animal may simply be making their way to another patch of forest or sampling some easily accessible food at the edge of their territory. Such conflict is not only harmful or

lethal for that orangutan, it effectively reduces the amount of land available for the whole population and may sever connections with other habitat patches and populations. Many techniques are available for avoiding these situations or resolving them non-violently. Working with local farmers and plantation owners to show how and why this is a better outcome can vastly reduce conflict.

Part 2.

Our Principles

Our values and approaches are the foundations of the innovative conservation model that we are building.



Be More Orangutan

To protect the orangutan, we harness the characteristics that our flagship animal has evolved to live in harmony with its rainforest home, to help us adapt and succeed in the dynamic conservation ecosystem.



Inquisitive

Effective strategies need to be based on sound evidence.

Our ongoing analysis of the drivers behind key challenges, and the opportunities for forest protection, allows us to prioritise and focus on the locations where action is most needed and the approaches that will have the greatest impact. Our commitment to continuous investigation helps us invest our resources wisely, where the need is greatest, to achieve the best outcomes for orangutans.

- We use a **unique and comprehensive analytical framework** to develop programmes by prioritising landscapes and interventions.
- We track and assess key indicators to ensure that **our approaches are working**.
- We obtain **new information and evidence** through investing in research.
- We continuously gather and analyse data in an **ongoing process of adaptive management**.

Strong

Our core strength comes from building long-term, trustful and genuine partnerships with frontline organisations and local communities. **At the heart of this is our 3 Cs approach:**

Community Powered

We ensure that the people who live in and around Sumatra's forests are integral to all our work.

Collaboration

We partner with (in)credible local organisations, support them technically and financially, and bring them together to amplify their voices. We co-create robust, locally-driven solutions by involving these partners, forest-edge communities and government institutions.

Commitment

We know that maintaining long-term investments in conservation reaps huge rewards. By earning trust from communities and gaining a deep understanding of the challenges they face, long-term engagement produces solutions that meet the needs of both communities and conservation.

Agile

Achieving tangible and long-lasting conservation results is complex, especially in dynamic landscapes facing multiple challenges. Being a small and nimble organisation gives us many advantages to seek and explore new routes to success.

- **We are quick to embrace new opportunities** and implement promising and innovative ideas.
- **We are responsive and problem-solving** in relation to emerging threats and opportunities.
- Our approach is **nuanced and locally-driven**, never letting scale come at the expense of effectiveness.

Keystone

Orangutans are a keystone species, shaping the habitat in ways that benefit their co-inhabitants and the overall biodiversity. Acting as a keystone organisation in the ecosystem of conservation stakeholders in Sumatra, we enhance the sector as a whole by promoting collaboration, innovation, transformative ambition and an evidence- and impact-led approach.

- We promote **skills and knowledge** exchange among our partners and allies.
- We provide technical and hands-on support to enhance our partners' capacities to deliver **effective and sustainable interventions**.
- We amplify the voices and expertise of our local partners, recognising their **unique insight into conservation challenges** and solutions.
- We lead by example, promoting data and information sharing by **making our analyses available to partners and stakeholders to support wider decision making**.

Decolonising Conservation

We acknowledge that most international conservation models emerged from colonialism and that we must not perpetuate colonial attitudes or support activities that compromise any people's rights or freedoms. Throughout our work we commit to recognising national sovereignty, correcting historical power imbalances and supporting all communities' rights to sustainable development and self-determination. Environmental and social injustice are inextricably linked, and we always pursue equality and fairness alongside environmental progress.



Acting as a keystone organisation in the ecosystem of conservation stakeholders in Sumatra, we will enhance the sector as a whole by promoting collaboration, innovation, transformative ambition and an evidence- and impact-led approach.

Part 3.

Our Conservation Greenprint

Our innovative approach has grown out of detailed analysis and evidence-based planning - studying the core needs and the best ways to tackle them to create a robust and targeted strategy for success.

Our Vision

Wild orangutans thriving in resilient forests

Our Mission

Protecting orangutans, their forests and their future

Our Goals



Protect

Standing forests kept secure and stable, viable wild orangutan populations sustained.



Connect

Isolated forests connected, fragmentation of orangutan populations reversed.



Rewild

Degraded forest ecosystems in orangutan landscapes recovered and rewilded.

Our Strategy

Root Causes

Understanding the specific drivers and patterns of threats to orangutans so we can plan effectively and respond rapidly to critical situations.

Seeds of Sustainable Development

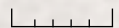
Enabling and supporting local communities to pursue development without biodiversity loss.

Space to Flourish

Engaging all stakeholders to secure the future of forest landscapes.

Evolving Conservation

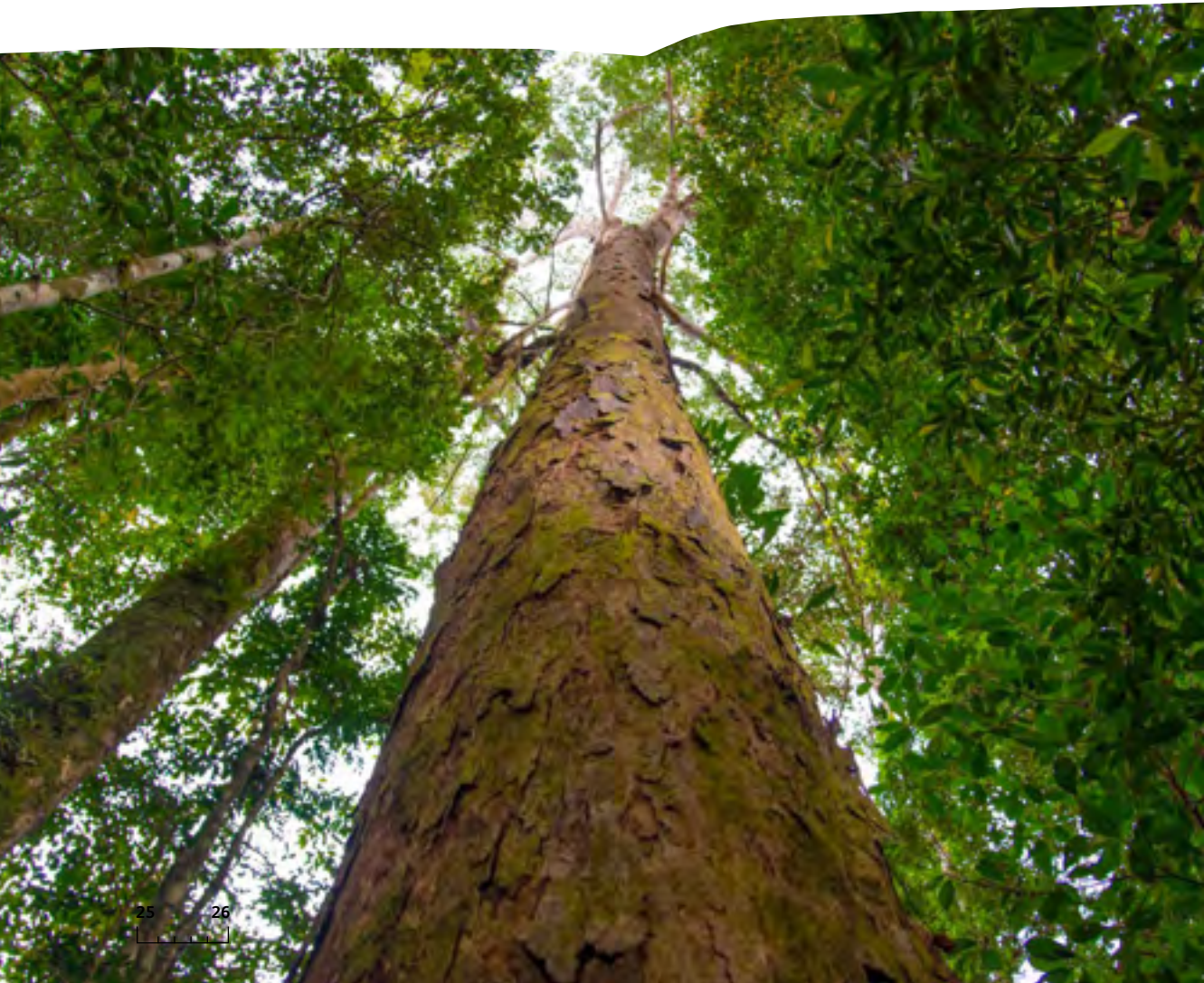
Forming positive partnerships to share our skills and empower conservation allies.



Our Goals

Our Conservation Greenprint has three strategic branches, which build on the foundational work of the past twenty years.

These represent an evolution and re-doubling of our efforts, and a framework for ambitious targets for impact on the ground through our local NGO partners.



Protect

Standing forests are secure and stable, and viable wild orangutan populations are sustained.

By 2030, SOS will have contributed to the effective protection of the 1.8 million hectares of orangutan habitat on Sumatra.

We will support Indonesia's efforts to achieve zero deforestation by 2030, in line with their climate commitments made during COP26.

By 2030, SOS will have contributed to halting the historic reduction in numbers of wild Sumatran and Tapanuli orangutans.

Orangutan numbers on Sumatra have fallen to fewer than 14,000 Sumatran orangutans and 800 Tapanuli orangutans. We will enhance the stability of wild orangutan populations, and support their recovery.



They shape their habitats in ways that benefit their co-habitants and the overall diversity.





Connect

Isolated forests connected, fragmentation of orangutan populations reversed.

By 2030, SOS will have contributed to enhancing the viability of wild populations of Sumatran and Tapanuli orangutans, securing and recovering connectivity between populations that are genetically isolated or vulnerable to functional extinction.

Many orangutan populations on Sumatra are not viable in the medium to long term: without secure connections to other populations, they face genetic bottlenecks and risk spiralling towards extinction. We will help to address habitat fragmentation with targeted action to create and maintain viable wild populations.

*partnerships
us and empower
es.*



Rewild

Degraded forest ecosystems in orangutan landscapes recovered and rewilded.

By 2030, SOS will have contributed to the regeneration of 10,000 hectares of orangutan habitat.

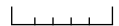
Together with our partners we have rewilded more than 2,000 hectares of orangutan habitat over the last decade, turning back the clock on habitat destruction.

By 2030, as part of the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, we will support the rewilding of five times as much land for the benefit of orangutans, people and nature.



Rewilding

We support a range of interventions to enhance, rehabilitate and re-establish orangutan habitat. We follow a rewilding philosophy, focused on creating a self-sustaining natural system integrated with the human communities around and within it. Rather than striving to recreate historical conditions or exclude human presence, we look to the future to support nature and people in generating functional, sustainable ecosystems that provide services for people and biodiversity, including a long-term home for orangutans.





Our Strategy

Introduction by Koen Meyers, SOS Conservation Director.

Trends in loss of biodiversity have proven that “fine and fence” tactics have failed to protect wildlife and habitats. Without drastically changing our approach, conservation will be unfit to address the dual biodiversity and climate crises facing humanity.

At SOS we promote a fundamentally different approach. Through constant evaluation, reflection, innovation and out-of-the-box thinking we aim to identify, design and deliver efficient and effective conservation results. Rather than trying to replicate projects, which can often work in one place and not another, we constantly refine frameworks that produce unique projects to fit the needs of each site and each community. We are continuously seeking to explore, develop and pilot new and inclusive approaches, driven by Indonesia’s robust conservation policy framework and supported by international environmental instruments such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the New York Declaration on Forests, and the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework.

To produce this Conservation Greenprint, we immersed ourselves in Sumatra’s landscapes by collecting and integrating a wide variety of ecological, social, cultural and economic information. The datasets were examined, analysed and discussed holistically by an inter-sectoral team of conservation scientists and frontline practitioners, GIS analysts, ecological modeling experts, economists and social scientists. This evidence-based and cross-cutting analytical process has led to the identification of broad, transformational actions – consisting of myriad innovative and diverse interventions on the ground – that are tailored to effectively tackle the issues facing orangutans and their habitat.

The result is a ground-breaking roadmap for orangutan conservation, with partnership, science and communities at its core. We will continue to work in close collaboration with our Indonesian partners, supporting their development while sharing goals, responsibilities and recognition for our collaborative work. Our activities are all individually crafted and flexibly implemented. However, we have identified four overarching objectives that will guide our actions to 2030...



Root Causes

To protect wild orangutans we need to address drivers of habitat loss at every scale.

We must understand where forests need protection, and why. Gathering and analysing all the relevant data enables us to optimise our conservation investments. Different situations need different approaches – be it a physical barrier caused by a road or expanding smallholder agriculture – but ultimately the solution is found in sustainable development based on coexistence between orangutans and people, and building the resilience of ecosystems.

+ **Robust Monitoring**

By collecting and combining a wide range of geographic, ecological and socio-economic data in our unique spatial framework, we can build a detailed picture of what is happening on the ground. This means we can pinpoint and direct our resources to conservation priorities and ensure that we apply appropriate and site-specific approaches, as well as evaluating the progress and success of our activities.

+ **Innovative Research**

Using diverse approaches including citizen science, habitat modelling, livelihood surveys, policy reviews and market chain analyses, we can gather and analyse a full range of data needed to craft scientifically-supported, cutting-edge and tailor-made interventions.

+ **Transformative Opportunities**

We carry out local assessments for opportunities such as habitat recovery, sustainable forest product use and adding value to community economies, so we can determine the most appropriate and realistic solutions for each locality.

Seeds of Sustainable Development

The wellbeing and prosperity of the people of Sumatra are inextricably linked to the fate of the forests – we cannot save one at the expense of the other.

Working through our indispensable frontline partners, and together with local communities in orangutan landscapes, we develop conservation action plans which break the link between development and habitat degradation. We support local people to pursue secure, forest-friendly livelihoods, using innovative approaches that make the forests more valuable to them standing than felled. Our community-based interventions build a network of ‘rainforest guardians’ who help to reduce pressure on the forest and protect orangutans and other wildlife. Together we can build resilience for orangutans, ecosystems, communities and climate through conservation solutions that benefit both people and wildlife.

+ **Orangutan-Friendly Livelihoods**

We can reduce the pressure on farmers to expand their fields into forests by enabling them to increase the profitability of existing land and activities. We do this by setting up collaborative initiatives to diversify livelihoods, improve crop productivity, develop eco-labelling schemes, facilitate market access, establish agroforestry systems and sustainably harvest forest products.

+ **Conservation Commitments**

Through ‘social contracts’ with local communities we provide development services in return for commitments to protect orangutan habitat. We work closely with the communities to identify both the commitments and the services, which could include education, clean water provision or reliable internet access.

+ **Resolving Conflict**

We train farmers in wildlife-friendly crop protection, to reduce crop losses to orangutans and other wildlife. We are also exploring insurance and compensation schemes to encourage cultivation of crops that orangutans do not eat.



Contributing to SDGs:



Space to Flourish

For orangutans to thrive in the wild we must secure and expand the areas where they can live.

Parts of their habitat lie outside protected areas and are subject to various different designations and land uses. We and our expert local colleagues work with a range of stakeholders – including indigenous and local communities, private companies and governmental institutions – who manage, interact with or have tenure rights in forests. Our engagement strategies recognise the different roles, perceptions and values of each stakeholder, and the unique opportunities they bring for maintaining and protecting orangutan habitat. We complement this by developing and applying sustainable finance models to support essential conservation activities.

Community Custodianship

- + We support local communities to gain (or regain) land rights in forest areas through participation in Indonesia’s progressive Social Forestry scheme. We also offer collaborative Stewardship Incentives such as payments for environmental services and conditional cash transfers.

Ecosystem Recovery

- + Through our frontline partners we are scaling up community-led ecosystem recovery efforts. Not only do regeneration projects bring the land back to life, community engagement protects adjacent areas by empowering local people to become guardians of the forest.

Safeguarding Land for Wildlife

- + We identify unprotected habitats in orangutan landscapes and explore suitable ways to safeguard these through ecosystem restoration licences, leasing or acquisition.

Wildlife Friendly Landscapes

- + We encourage and support private- and public-sector land managers and smallholder farmers to adopt pro-orangutan management practices. These include trialling and promoting oil palm agroforestry systems, protecting High Conservation Value forests, establishing habitat corridors or forest islands in agricultural areas and constructing wildlife bridges over physical barriers, such as roads, to enable orangutan movement through the landscape.

Contributing to SDGs:



Evolving Conservation

Acting as an enabler, facilitator and connector, we provide conservation allies with the tools to deliver game-changing programmes.

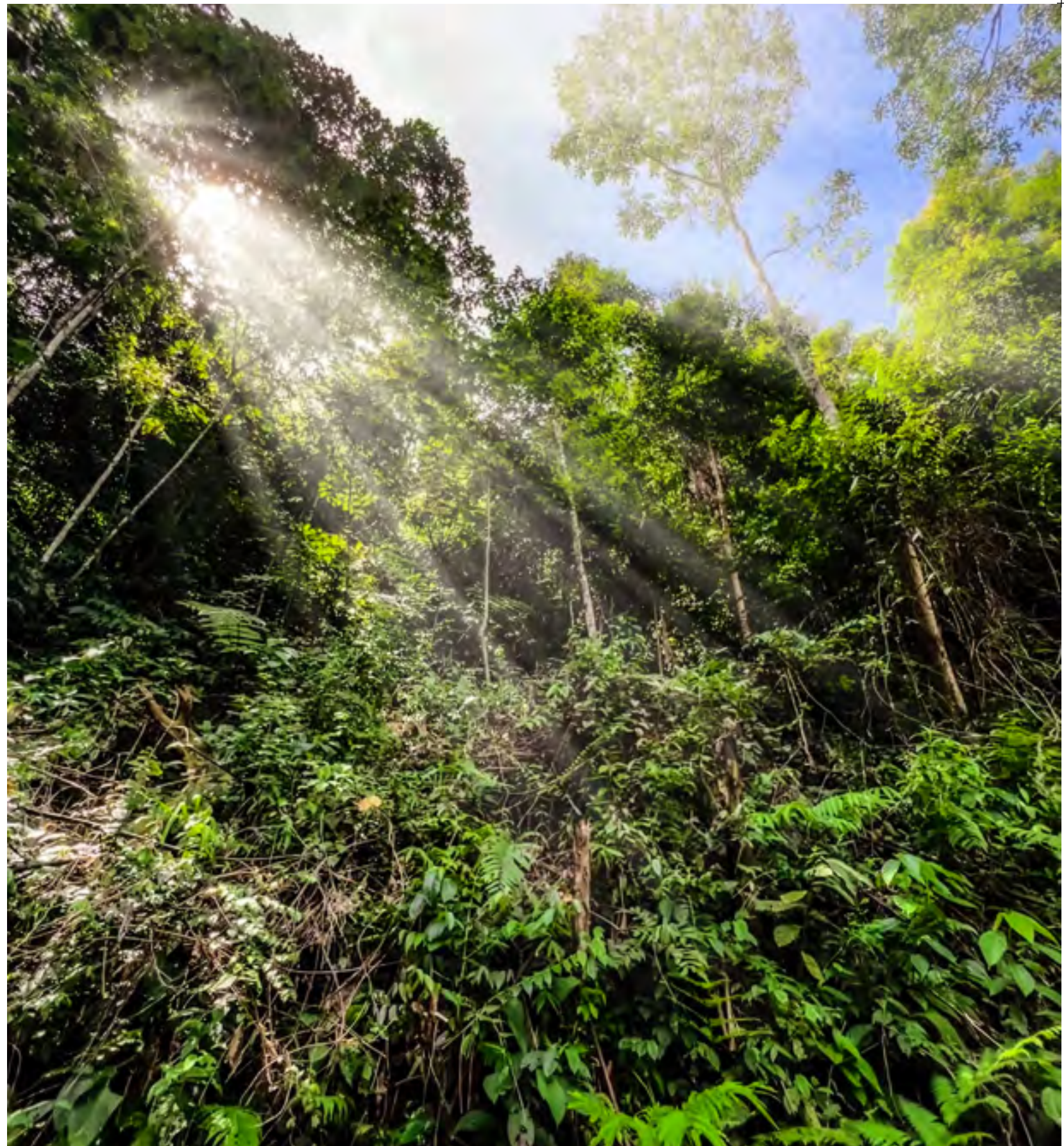
Our actions empower local stakeholders, supporting them with new skills, knowledge and networks to enhance their stewardship of orangutan landscapes. Together with our vital in-country partners, we work with the following stakeholder groups:

- + **Frontline NGOs**
Through long-term, committed relationships, we continuously strengthen the capacities and leadership of our local, on-the-ground partners to manage and protect orangutan habitat.
- + **Private Sector**
We work with private sector partners to integrate orangutan-friendly principles and approaches into all aspects of the value chain. This ranges from small-scale entrepreneurs adopting green business models to large-scale concession holders creating forest corridors.
- + **Local Communities**
We support village and community institutions to ensure that their members can effectively use local mechanisms (such as village development plans) to achieve the best outcomes for sustainable development and orangutan conservation.
- + **The International Community**
We communicate and collaborate with international NGOs and other conservation bodies to share our knowledge and experience, and to help steer global strategy in the most practical and effective directions.
- + **National, Regional And Local Government**
We work with the Indonesian authorities at all levels to support them in setting and achieving the country’s ambitious objectives for nature conservation and sustainable development, including the achievement of the SDGs and deforestation targets by 2030.

Part 4.

Our work on the ground

To apply our strategy in the field we rely on our intimate knowledge of the key areas where we can make an impact and the kinds of support needed, together with a broad toolkit of effective interventions.



Orangutan Landscapes

Our Conservation Greenprint initially focuses on two unique and precious ecosystems - key habitats of the Sumatran and Tapanuli orangutans.

Once these programmes are well established we will expand into other key areas according to our ongoing analysis of threats and opportunities.

As well as focusing on key interventions to protect orangutans, our approach brings additional benefits too.

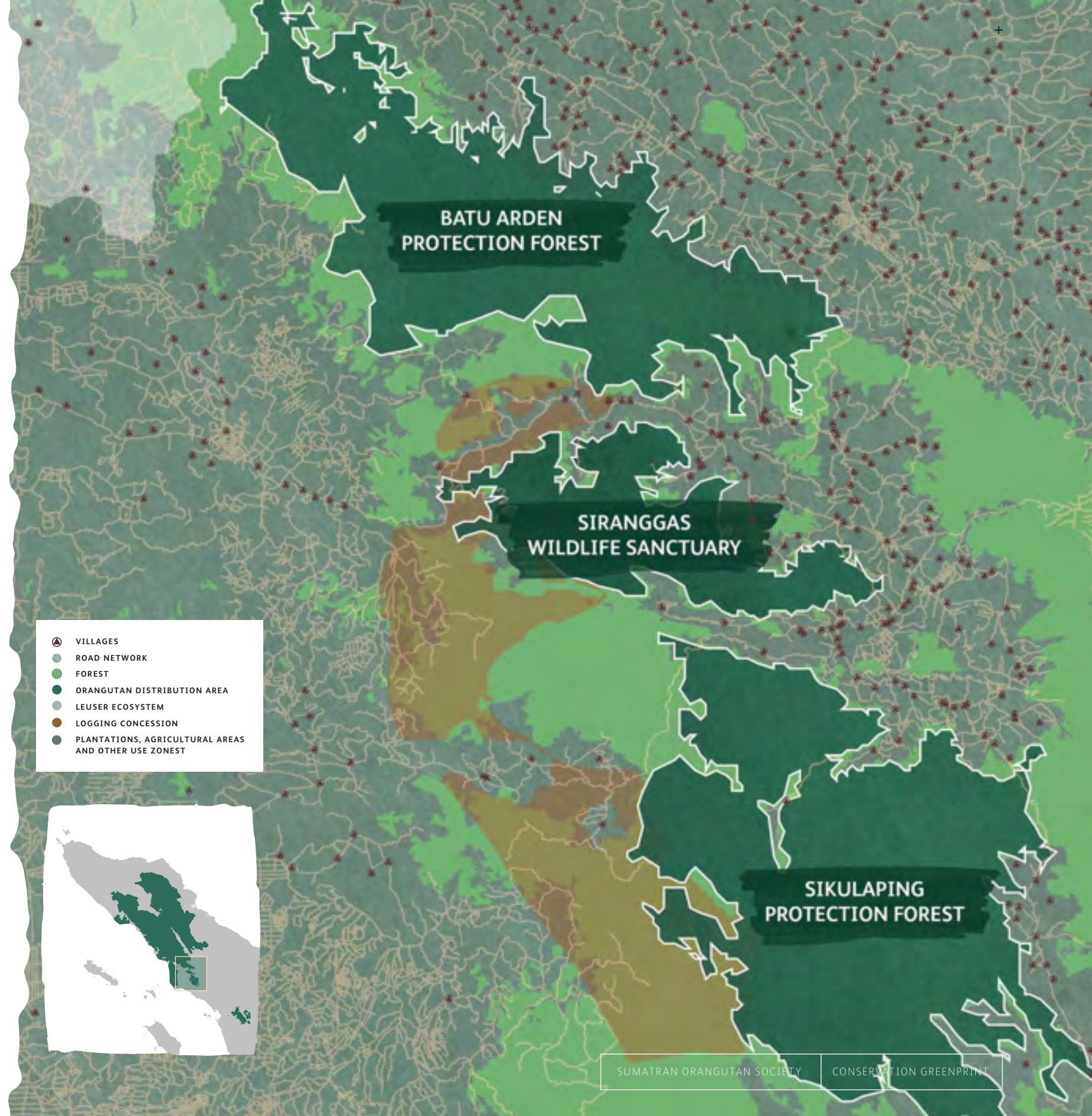
Orangutans share their forest home with an incredible diversity of wildlife, including other iconic and endangered species such as the Sumatran tiger and elephant. Working alongside other conservation groups concerned with protecting the same habitat, we can combine efforts and plan complementary activities.

West Toba

West Toba covers an area of approximately 100,000 hectares on the southern border of the Leuser Ecosystem, with the northern part designated nationally as a Key Biodiversity Area.

The three Sumatran orangutan populations in this ecosystem are too small to be viable in isolation, and could become functionally extinct without the establishment and maintenance of ecological corridors.

- Habitat fragmentation, driven by smallholder forest conversion and road network expansion, has dissected the landscape and presents a challenge to the conservation of orangutans and other species.
- Establishing social forestry areas, corridors and wildlife bridges will allow the reconnection of forest blocks, creating a single viable population of over 700 orangutans.
- This programme exemplifies our ‘ecosystem resilience’ principle – by helping to connect forests while promoting sustainable livelihoods we are enabling orangutans and communities to truly thrive.

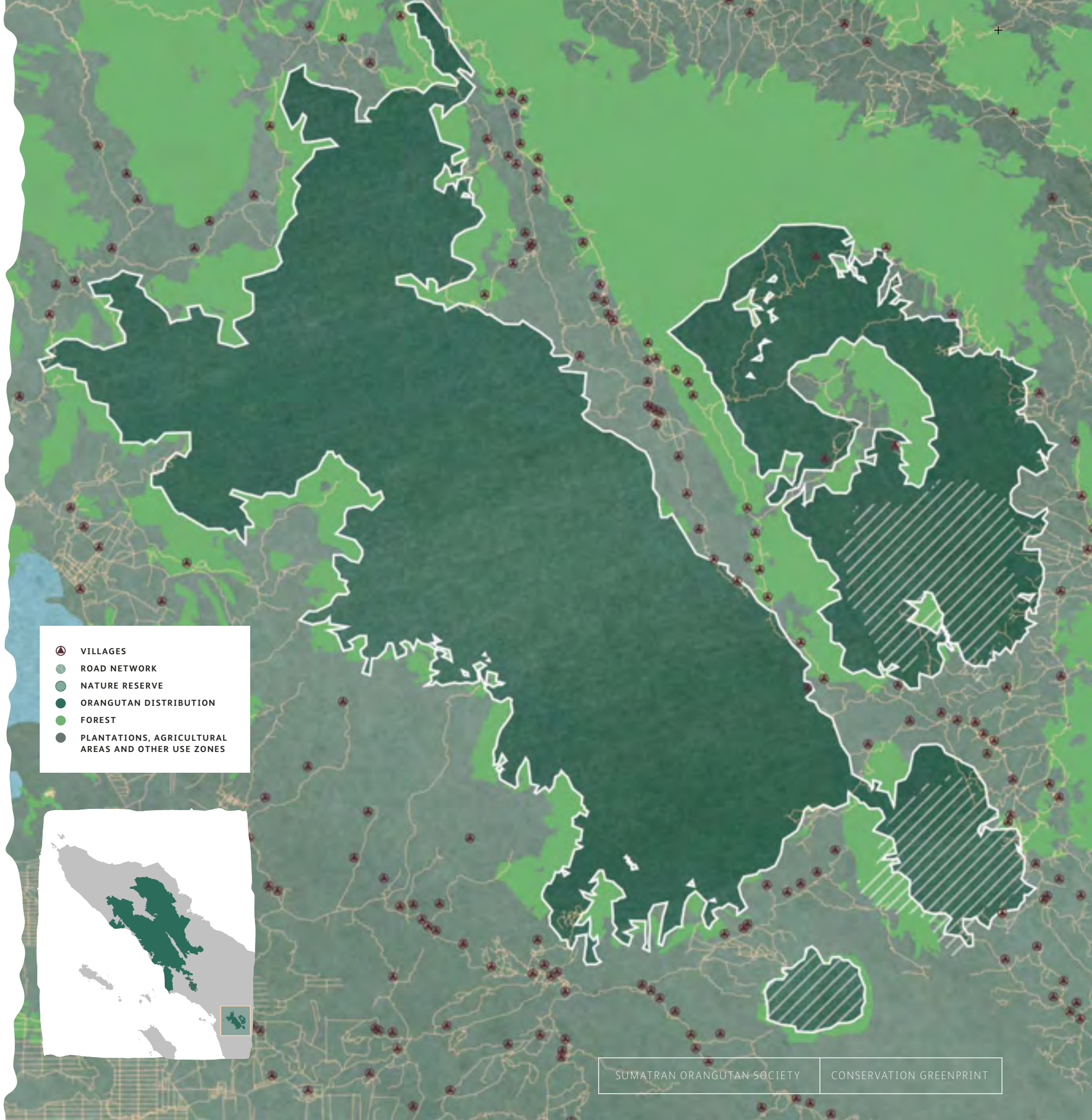


Batang Toru

In late 2017 a new orangutan species was declared – the Tapanuli orangutan (*Pongo tapanuliensis*). With fewer than 800 individuals remaining in several sub-populations, it is not only the least numerous of all great ape species, but probably the most threatened as well.

Found only in parts of the 105,000 ha of the Batang Toru ecosystem, in the Tapanuli highlands of North Sumatra, these populations make the protection of this landscape a global conservation priority.

- These forests host many rare and threatened species, including the Sumatran tiger, Malayan tapir, Sunda pangolin and helmeted hornbill.
- A primary threat is forest encroachment by smallholder farmers. We work with frontline partners and local communities to strengthen forest border management and expand sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- Connectivity is an important factor in ensuring a healthy orangutan population, and we promote innovative multi-stakeholder interventions to address the physical barriers hampering the movement of this species across the Batang Toru ecosystem.



| | |
|--|---|
| | VILLAGES |
| | ROAD NETWORK |
| | NATURE RESERVE |
| | ORANGUTAN DISTRIBUTION |
| | FOREST |
| | PLANTATIONS, AGRICULTURAL AREAS AND OTHER USE ZONES |



Actions on the Ground

Our high-level strategy is underpinned by practical measures that make a real difference to forests, people and orangutans.

We use our experience, analysis and ingenuity to focus on the most effective and realistic interventions. Solutions are tailored to the conditions in each location, so we need a wide range to choose from. Here are some highlights from our **Conservation Toolkit**:

Root Causes

Spatial Analysis

Understanding landscapes through geographic, social and ecological mapping

Satellite Monitoring

Real time updates on areas of concern

Predicting Hotspots

Anticipating threats by modelling and predicting patterns of forest loss

Seeds of Sustainable Development

Forest Friendly Farming

Fostering agroforestry systems and regenerative farming techniques

Resolving Conflict

Encouraging peaceful co-existence between farmers and wildlife

Capturing Value

Generating benefits from forests through sustainable harvesting

Market Access

Enabling forest-edge communities to earn more from sustainable production

Engaging Entrepreneurs

Promoting green business models

Community Institutions

Supporting communities to create their own land management planning tools

Space to Flourish

Social Forestry

Securing community tenure through this progressive national scheme

Stewardship Incentives

Community payments for conservation support and commitments

Ecosystem Recovery

Community-led tree planting and regeneration projects

Wildlife Bridges

Enabling wildlife to cross roads and rivers safely

Connecting Fragments

Encouraging farmers and concession holders to create wildlife corridors

Evolving Conservation

Helping Hands

Long term, trustful and supportive relationships with local partners

Open Access

Sharing information and insights with the conservation community

Individual Empowerment

Building a network of local 'rainforest guardians'

Harnessing Technology

Turning information into action, from eyes in the sky to boots on the ground

Community Embedded

Genuine collaboration on programme development and decision making

Part 5.

Looking Forward

There are challenges ahead for us and for the orangutans, but there are also many reasons to be optimistic. The greatest of these are the insight, resilience and integrity of the Indonesian people, and our shared hope for a brighter future.



Engaging Local Expertise

Our partnerships and alliances are crucial to the way we work, but none more so than the grassroots groups we team up with on the ground.

We pride ourselves in maintaining strong and diverse collaborations, working with local organisations on the ground while building global partnerships and networks to tackle the complex challenges we face. Our Conservation Greenprint involves developing and expanding these relationships at all levels, still focusing on grassroots conservation groups. We have always supported innovative and visionary civil society actors by advising on and funding their vital projects to help build their capacity to create long-term conservation solutions. From small, community-embedded projects to regional organisations with multiple local programmes, we are continuously looking for dedicated and effective conservation partners to work with, and we are also excited to continue our relationships with existing, inspirational partners like these:



Yayasan Orangutan Sumatera Lestari (YOSL)

Co-founded by SOS in 2001, Yayasan Orangutan Sumatera Lestari, also known as the Orangutan Information Centre, has remained our primary partner in Sumatra with a vision closely aligned to our own. Over the last 20 years YOSL has expanded from a small team of volunteers to a broad-based field operation working in Leuser, West Toba and Batang Toru. Its projects now range from forest regeneration and human-wildlife conflict mitigation to social forestry, sustainable livelihood opportunities and supporting wildlife law enforcement.

Nature for Change (NfC)

Founded by a local forest guide, Nature for Change works with communities around the eastern border of the Gunung Leuser National Park. The organisation's aim is to achieve harmony between local communities and the protected area and its wildlife. NFC's locally-driven programmes include forest rehabilitation by local farmers, community anti-poaching patrols, and promotion of sustainable agriculture and income generation.

“Over the last twenty years SOS has supported us not just with funding and resources, but with skill development, strategic insight and building ambitious programmes together - their encouragement and commitment has allowed us to grow more rapidly than we could have imagined as a local force for conservation.”

Fransisca Ariantiningih, Director
Yayasan Orangutan Sumatera Lestari - Orangutan Information Centre

Committed To Communities

Forming open, genuine and long-lasting relationships with local communities is the key to protecting orangutans in the wild.

Almost all orangutan habitat overlaps with community lands that have been cultivated and managed for centuries, if not millennia.

Globally, forest-edge communities have been economically marginalised and disadvantaged. They often have to pursue their own interests in ways that do not support conservation in order to support themselves and advance their own development. Where community interests are in conflict with conservation activities, interventions are unlikely to succeed.

However, when we can ally them with conservation goals, communities can be highly effective and efficient at protecting biodiversity and ecosystems. Creating the conditions in which local communities benefit from conservation outcomes is therefore the most reliable, and perhaps the only realistic approach to conservation in orangutan (and many other) landscapes.

“ **SOS’ Greenprint is genuinely innovative as it fully recognises the intricate relationship between culture, forests and biodiversity, and the unique role of local communities as the custodians of orangutan landscapes in achieving conservation outcomes.** ”

Darmanto Simaepa, Senior Environmental Anthropologist



Engaging with communities in Indonesia requires a deep understanding of their situation, their culture and their relationship with land and biodiversity.

Environmental anthropologists can document local knowledge, social dynamics and attitudes to biodiversity, and are uniquely positioned to act as bridges between conservation agencies and local populations. We use this local expertise to ensure the genuine participation and representation of communities in culturally-sensitive and locally-appropriate ways, building robust partnerships on the ground that respect and benefit all parties.

National Policies

Since 2013, regulations in Indonesia have progressed rapidly to provide communities more access to land and forests while improving their infrastructure and services. The national Social Forestry framework enables local people to participate in the management of forests through various schemes which permit sustainable activities in areas designated as State Forests.

Rising to the Challenges

Helping to build a resilient future for Sumatra’s orangutans won’t be simple, but we are addressing the underlying challenges that stand in our way.

Of course, our ambitious plans face many obstacles beyond securing the prospects of vulnerable orangutan populations. The complexities and demands on the ground are often exacerbated by situations that reinforce them or stifle conservation efforts. We recognise these challenges and have designed our strategy to bypass, minimise or directly confront them.

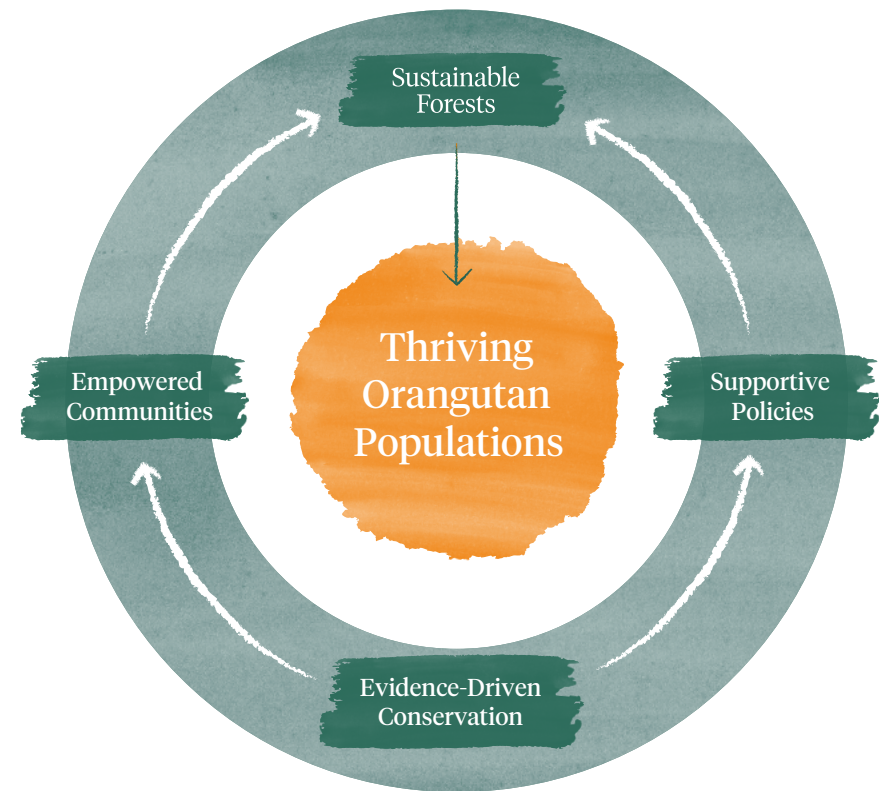
- We work with small, locally-based and community-connected groups as our frontline partners, and embrace the advantages they bring. As we expand this, frontline capacity needs to expand too. We will steadily and sustainably support and invest in our existing partners to bring them with us on this growth journey. We will also collaborate with new partners in different locations and with different skills, extending our reach without losing vital local connections.
- Conventional conservation approaches have not been effective enough. We are working to develop new techniques that avoid old traps. Not all conservation interventions have been guided by hard evidence, so data analysis is a fundamental part of our strategy. We know that short-term projects make, at best, short-term improvements, insignificant over the timescales needed to build resilient, sustainably-managed ecosystems. We work differently, maintaining long-term presence and collaboration in key locations that are crucial for orangutan survival.
- Long-term policy and sustainable development work must be balanced with short-term, reactive projects. Forest-edge communities on Sumatra are changing and developing rapidly, and we must be able to respond to those changes to facilitate sustainable and empowering opportunities as they are needed. Our Conservation Greenprint has a long-term vision of enabling humans to coexist with orangutans, but it works towards this by focussing on dynamic, data-driven priorities to meet the ever-evolving requirements of local people.

Future Vision

At SOS our vision is viable and thriving populations of orangutans in resilient forests.

The communities around them are involved in activities which sustain the forests while having access to economic opportunities that provide them with prosperous and fulfilling lifestyles.

People, both in orangutan landscapes and elsewhere, are passionate about forest and orangutan conservation. Orangutans are thriving with the space to flourish, expand and evolve, and we have moved beyond conservation to living in harmony with them and the forests that we all rely upon.





Photography

Rio Ardi, Binsar Bakkara, Orangutan Information Centre, Paul Daley, Suzi Eszterhas, Juang Solala Laiya, Zac Mills, Jami Tarris, Layton Thompson, Andrew Walmsley.



**6 Lombard Street, Abingdon,
Oxfordshire, OX14 5BJ, UK**

**www.orangutans-sos.org
tel: 01235 530825**

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