



Kerinci-Seblat National Park in Indonesia

Fauna & Flora International

Photo credit: FFI

Summary

Fauna & Flora International (FFI) is successfully fighting the illegal killing and trafficking of Sumatran tigers in Kerinci-Seblat National Park in Sumatra, Indonesia. Since 2000, FFI has collaborated with park officials, communities, police, the judiciary, and local government to pioneer effective tiger protection strategies. Tiger Protection and Conservation Units (TPCUs), led by park officials alongside community rangers, conduct routine and information-led patrols and investigations. Project efforts have led to effective law enforcement to safeguard tigers against surging international demand, securing a stable tiger density in the core of the park.

Learning Questions Addressed:

- What are examples of institutional arrangements, such as dedicated units or embed programs, that improved the capacity of enforcement or prosecution staff?
- What are good examples of systems, particularly judicial systems, that have made improvements in combating wildlife trafficking enforcement?
- What factors are necessary for effective cooperation among national, sub-national, and local authorities, especially for Wildlife Enforcement Networks?

Problem

Sumatran tigers are severely threatened by poaching for [illegal trafficking](#) of body parts and pelts to supply regional markets. The global wild Sumatran tiger population is estimated to be fewer than 400 individuals, 25% of which make their home in Kerinci-Seblat National Park, the second-largest park in Southeast Asia. It is also home to the critically endangered Sunda pangolin and helmeted hornbill, also threatened by illegal extraction for trafficking. Prior to the establishment of the project, there was very limited capacity to protect the tiger population and combat illegal hunting and trafficking. Rangers were not effectively or strategically deployed across the national park. There was also no effective collaboration between the national park and other relevant agencies and limited recognition of the poaching threat. Finally, community involvement was limited to occasional education-focused activities.

Approach

The project focuses on building functional, practical, and strategic collaborations. The key to this has been leveraging the strengths of each institution to ensure timely, strategic collaboration that maximizes organizations' resources and skills. This creates stakeholder ownership for each stage of the effort. The process has been organic – building on key relationships and opportunities and responding to challenges appropriately – recognizing that wildlife trafficking threats are dynamic.



Photo credit: FFI

Collaboration between communities and institutions improved evidence-gathering for prosecutions.

targeted training and skill development between the park and local community rangers enable the TPCUs to respond quickly and effectively to poaching threats.

Results

For 15 years, TPCUs have been invaluable in detecting and deterring poaching threats. They patrol more than 23,000 km, preventing the trapping of tigers and other species. Since 2017, they have removed almost 6,000 snares. According to Linkie et al. (2015), the information from local informants has led to an increase in snare detection of more than 40%.

The project's facilitation of effective collaboration between communities and key institutions, including a memorandum of understanding between four provincial police forces and the park has improved interagency information exchange, wildlife crime law enforcement strategy development, and evidence-gathering for successful prosecutions.

The project has directly contributed to 63 arrests and 59 successful or ongoing prosecutions for wildlife crimes. Three-month to four-year sentences have been imposed on convicted criminals. In 2017, the recorded poaching threat fell by 90%, as a direct result of this strategic law enforcement against key individuals. Despite a dramatic spike in global tiger trafficking between 2012 and 2015, Sumatran tiger densities in the core park area remain stable.

The program is indebted to the long-term support and commitment of the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry, especially the management and staff of Kerinci-Seblat National Park, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, 21st Century Tiger, Dreamworld, Disney Conservation Fund, Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors, and Panthera.

About this case study series: In 2017, USAID collected [case studies](#) addressing the questions posed in the [Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Agenda](#). The finalists represent both USAID-funded and non-USAID-funded activities from around the world. The information provided in the case study series does not necessarily represent the views or positions of USAID or the U.S. Government.

Lessons

- **Solicit stakeholder perspectives to ensure that program approaches meet and complement the goals of each group.** FFI engaged with and sought the perspectives of park managers and staff, local communities, government agencies, the international scientific community, and non-governmental organizations from the start.
- **Enable learning by providing opportunities for partners to exchange ideas and experience.**
- **Embed and sustain necessary skills by building ownership for each stage of the law enforcement process** within the relevant responsible institution.
- **When partners see results and own successes, partners remain motivated and engaged.**
- **Collaboration must be timely, strategic, and maximize each organization's unique resources and skills.** For example, park staff should build a robust case before working with the police, so there is sufficient evidence to enable immediate action.
- **Community rangers should be trusted local community members to encourage information sharing and teamwork.** Inclusion of community rangers in the TPCUs has been essential for cultivating local informant networks and minimizing risks to them.
- **Community informants must trust their local contacts.** They must see that agencies can work together to ensure timely responses that result in prosecutions or a swift patrol response without placing them at risk.

To learn more about on FFI, visit: <http://www.fauna-flora.org/species/sumatran-tiger/>