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## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

# CRU TRUMON: TURNING CONFLICT INTO COEXISTENCE

The critically endangered Sumatran Elephant (*Elephas maximus sumatranus*), vital to maintaining the biodiversity of the forest, has lost half its population over the last 30 years due to deforestation and habitat loss. As their forested habitats have shrunk, elephants have been forced onto farmers' fields to raid crops. This has resulted in conflict and elephant death, as communities seek to defend their property.

To respond to this threat, USAID LESTARI supports a dedicated Conservation Response Unit (CRU) in Trumon Wildlife Corridor. The corridor comprises 27,000 hectares of land that connects Rawa Singkil Wildlife Reserve and Leuser National Park, and hence is important for biodiversity movement. CRU consists of five elephants and four well-trained mahouts that together patrol the forests and mitigate illegal logging and poaching. CRU also works closely with the Trumon Wildlife Corridor Community in an advocacy and awareness campaign that educates villagers on methods to safely drive away elephants from their fields as well as builds appreciation for the importance of preserving forests in order to mitigate threats to their livelihoods. The approach involves the community as crucial partners for collective action towards protecting this charismatic species.

Moreover, the newest elephant member of the CRU team was born on March 16, 2017 and named Intan Setia Lestari by the Governor of Aceh to show his enthusiasm and support for the LESTARI project. An upcoming sub-contract is expected to broaden LESTARI support for CRU and Trumon, including for CRU funding, eco-tourism development, and support for greater legal recognition for the corridor.

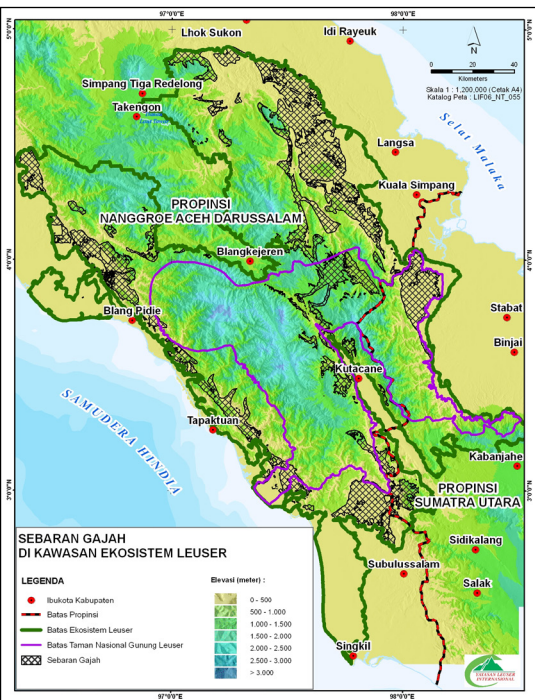


Photo caption: (from top to bottom)  
1. Conducting elephant patrols.  
2. Sumatran Elephant distribution in Leuser Landscape  
3. Newborn Sumatran Elephant - Intan Setia Lestari.

**“Using elephant patrols, we can also show the villagers that elephants can be useful in patrol. We also educate people to send wild elephants away without hurting them. So far villagers learn the techniques pretty quickly,”**  
**Pak Rusdi, Manager of CRU Trumon**