



February 2016, Newsletter No.22

Chairman's Report

Welcome to our first Newsletter for 2016, a year that, following recent challenges, promises to see continued development and growth for Ecolodges Indonesia. Last year was a difficult time with volcanoes erupting in Java and Lombok close to Bali, and very serious forest fires in Borneo. These events caused some concerns for our business, particularly following major investments in consolidating the management and governance of the company. However, our determination to improve our governance continued as our lawyers proceeded with restructuring the company on a sound legal footing.

Recent new developments include the official opening of our solar energy facility at the Rimba Orang-utan Eco Lodge, purchase of a house in Kumai on the river to improve guest services, and the formation of a birding section within Ecolodges Indonesia led by Carol and Detlef Davies, new shareholders, who run a bird tour company from New Zealand.

This Newsletter will concentrate on the fires in the Tanjung Puting National Park, which were a direct threat to our iconic Rimba Orang-utan Eco Lodge, and the company's response to this challenge. These fires were described on the internet as the worst fires in history. Their carbon emissions at the peak were similar to the whole of the USA. This is accordingly a global problem. However, the response to the fires by the authorities was poor and incompetent. The fires were fought solely by the local people who were poorly equipped and had little access to water. The flames were only extinguished by the arrival of the monsoon rains.

Ecolodges Indonesia, together with donors, mainly persons who have stayed at the lodges or read our Newsletter, have established a special fund to work with partners to develop a rapid response team and assist in fire control when this event happens again. A special sub-group of the company led by investors from Byron Bay in Australia has been established to oversee these funds and how they will be used. Developments up to the present are described below in the Newsletter. **We wish to thank all those generous people who have donated to this fund and we will continue reporting to you all on how your funds are being used.**

In this newsletter:

- Chairman's report
- Tree Planting Programme report **thanks to your donations.**
- Links to Palm oil investigations and palm oil free cosmetics
- Featured employee
- Links to Instagram, Facebook and Ecolodges websites.
- Contacts

The Tanjung Puting Park is a unique ecological part of our world and it is all our responsibility to try and safeguard its future.

Alan Wilson.

Follow-up report on the Ecolodges Indonesia Tree Planting Programme for the Tanjung-Puting National Park

What a fabulous response to our request for support to replant Tanjung-Puting after the devastating fires last year. We thank all those who have donated for their generosity and support to help in the struggle to prevent the destruction of this critically important Park – home to many endangered animal and plant species including the iconic orang-utan.

General.

All funds collected are held in a special bank account as we work with our local NGO partners to finalise the strategy before seeking final input and approval from the Ecolodges Indonesia Board of Directors. In the past we have donated funds directly to individuals or NGOs who had relevant projects in line with what donors had agreed to. In this case we feel the project is so important that we have formed our own team to administer and execute activities.



Local communities helping to plant trees

Action.

Following consultation with a number of key stakeholders and experts the following action has been agreed upon.

- (i) Set-up a special subcommittee to manage this activity, of Marie Gale (Chairperson), Meryl Wilson and Gede Ori. A specialist training group has also been established, comprising Suzanne Noakes (a key person in the Rural Fire Service around the Lamington National Park in South East Queensland, Australia) and Ross Krippner (ex-member of the New South Wales Fire Brigades).
- (ii) Establish a special bank account and cost centre to ensure accurate accounting. This will be managed by the Conservation Fund of Ecolodges Indonesia under Meryl Wilson.
- (iii) An agreement reached with key local partners specifically FRIENDS of the NATIONAL PARKS Foundation (FNPF) (Director Dr. Bayu, a Balinese veterinarian and Mr. Basuki a Tanjung Puting-based forestry expert (Bachelor of Forestry)). Initial discussions are underway also with the ORANGUTAN FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL (OFI) (Director Professor Dr. Birute Galdikas, an investor in Ecolodges Indonesia).
- (iv) Fire is the biggest threat to forests and any reforestation project. A replanting project therefore not only needs to focus on seed collection, seedling growth and planting but also on maintenance and protection. Our strategy involves:



Gede Ori & Dr Bayu modelling the donated Fire uniforms

- (a) An aggressive tree planting programme advancing into the areas burnt in the recent devastating fires;
- (b) Forming an efficient fire-fighting unit at Tanjung Harapan village, including paying a core group and providing a training programme. This component would also establish and train a Volunteer force of around 200 persons from the local towns and villages ready for action
- (c) Two local people from Tanjung Puting will be participating in fire-fighting training and hands on experience with the Rural Fire Service in Queensland, Australia. Thank you to Suzanne Noakes for organizing this.
- (d) Purchase of heavy duty pumps, hoses and back pack water sprayers. The Ecolodges is donating storage space at the Rimba Lodge and a further storage space will be set up further up river at FNPF facilities.
- (e) Preparation of emergency plans which also includes improving water access, setting up portable holding tanks and deep wells.
- (f) Fire retardant treated uniforms have been provided by Save Indonesian Endangered Species Fund (SIES). The uniforms were donated to SIES by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

We will continue to report all developments to donors via our Newsletters, website and Facebook page.

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

If you would like to support this project it would really make a difference. Our fundraising campaign is still open on Planet Funders until the end of February.

<https://planetfunder.org/projects/ReplantTanjungPuting>

Ecolodges Conservation Fund Team

Marie Gale

Indonesian Government Response

JAKARTA, Jan 14 2016 (*Reuters*) - Indonesia's President Joko Widodo has set up an agency to restore about 2 million hectares (5 million acres) of carbon-rich peat land damaged by fires that sent smoke across the region last year angering neighbouring countries.

The region suffers every dry season from so-called haze caused by smouldering fires, often set deliberately to clear land for palm oil plantations on Sumatra and Borneo islands.

"I have tasked this agency with creating and implementing an action plan so that we can convince the world that we are very serious about overcoming the damage caused to forests and peat lands," Widodo told reporters late on Wednesday.

The agency will work until 2020 in seven provinces on Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Papua islands.

The fires and pollution were particularly bad last year because of dry weather caused by the El Nino weather phenomenon with smoke blanketing neighbouring Singapore and Malaysia for weeks and drifting as far north as the Thai capital, Bangkok.

The fires cost Indonesia \$16 billion, according to the government.

Efforts by Indonesia and neighbouring countries to prevent the fires, and put them out after they start, have shown little success. The fires last year only ended when the rainy season arrived.

A \$565 million lawsuit brought by Indonesia against a pulp and paper company was rejected by a court last month, dealing a blow to government efforts to punish those who set the fires to clear land.

The Southeast Asian nation is the world's fifth-largest emitter of greenhouse gases.
[click here for article](#)

Please visit the following two websites that highlight the impacts of palm oil production in Indonesia.

Palm Oil – Making Wise Choices

The first is a great website, dedicated to educating people about the impact of unsustainable palm oil. They have an app for the phones that you can scan barcodes on food items, and it tells you if there is palm oil in it or not.

<http://www.palmoilinvestigations.org>

The second is the skincare business in Burleigh that goes out of its way to make sure no palm oil is used in any of their products - unfortunately a common practice in most other skin care products.

www.evohe.com.au



Spotted in Borneo:



Oriental Pied Hornbill, Sekonyer, by Detlef Davies



Storkbilled Kingfisher, Sekonyer, by Bain



Bornean Bristlehead Sekonyer, by Ucok

Featured Employee: Komang Suratmini



This newsletter's employee is Komang Suratmini, a valued member of the company's Ecosafari team. Komang joined Ecolodges Indonesia in 2013 following employment with PT Moncol Golfusa where she specialised in the supply of swimming pool equipment. She completed tertiary education at the Universitas Pendidikan National in Denpasar, undertaking economic studies. Komang assists Nyoman Martini in tailoring and delivering travel packages for our worldwide clients.

Instagram Account

We recently started an Instagram account, **@ecolodgesindonesia**. On this account we will be posting photos and information about the lodges, and our guests will have the opportunity to have their photos featured on the page – simply tag your photos with the hashtag **#ecolodgesindonesia**

Stay up-to-date



ecolodgesindonesia



@ecolodgesindonesia

Tag your travel photos with #ecolodgesindonesia and we'll share them on our pages.

We hope that you have enjoyed reading Ecolodges Indonesia's latest newsletter and would like to thank you again for your generous contributions. We trust that you appreciate and support Ecolodges Indonesia's continued commitment to wildlife conservation and our support for the local communities.

From the newsletter team:

Jocelyne Pegoretti, Karen Hagley, Richard Hagley and Ross Krippner.
Byron Bay, Australia.

Contact details:

Head office: Phone – Int:62(0)361 747 4204
Indonesia:0361 747 4204

reservation@ecolodgesindonesia.com

www.ecolodgesindonesia.com

www.ecosafariindonesia.com



More Natural, More Diverse™