

Project Update: March 2006

Hunting assessment and the involvement of local communities in wildlife conservation in Papua, Indonesia

The assessment of hunting practices among the local communities in Northern Papua is in progress now. We have surveyed 5 villages located in the vicinity of Cyclops Nature Reserve and 16 villages in Nimbokrang area. Two local communities only hunt for subsistence, while the others are hunting for consumption and commercial purposes. A number of target species have been identified during hunting surveys, interviews with hunters and local market surveys. Wild pig, bandicoots, cassowaries, cuscus, Rusa deer and bats are being the primary hunted animals in Northern Papua, Indonesia. Since hunting of wildlife is important for many people in Papua, there is a need to identify which groups of animals are likely being vulnerable to hunting and which species are most possible to be harvested in sustainable manner.

Two local undergraduate students have been trained in practical wildlife conservation skills. In order to involve local communities in wildlife conservation, we have approached the village leaders and the elderly of local communities. Two village meetings have been conducted in the study area with a theme "Managing Wildlife in Sustainable Manner". Local communities in both villages expressed an interest and eagerness in a continued relationship with the research team in order to strengthen the existed traditional institutions.

Two workshops/seminars have been organised in Cenderawasih University to encourage academicians, government agencies, NGO representatives and other stakeholders to take action in conservation efforts. In collaboration with the university, local NGOs and Forest Department, Papua, an initiative Programme, "Papuan Conservation Education Programme", is going to be launched in Jayapura.

