

Project Update: May 2001

From surveys so far conducted it seems that Anoa are still relatively abundant in large forested areas where hunting pressures are not significant. However as more people are accessing forested areas than in previous years, this will increase the pressure on Anoa, due to their secretive nature and intolerance of disturbance. Hunting pressures are significantly higher than expected. As many as 2-4 animals per month are being caught by hunters from a single village - this level of hunting is not sustainable. Much of the hunting for Anoa is opportunistic - while people collect rottan/wood in the forest they lay snares to catch deer, which are usually abundant, but these occasionally trap an Anoa, which are not easy to release as they are frightened and pugnacious with sharp pointed horns.

So far the team has collected 18 sets of DNA samples for analysis and has set up collection programmes for further samples; measured 10 skulls to investigate variation between populations, and recorded distribution data for most remaining forested areas in South East Sulawesi. Initial meetings have been held with contacts in Central and North Sulawesi to extend the project there later in 2001. Fact sheets and general information has been produced in Bahasa Indonesia for an education programme running on Buton Island, It is planned that similar information will be distributed by YASCITA NGO in the Kendari area, including posters, leaflets and radio transmissions.