

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs, please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to jane@rufford.org.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole

Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details

Your name	Panut Hadisiswoyo
Project title	Marike Ecotourism Development Initiative (MEDI)
RSG reference	9624-B
Reporting period	May 2011 – May 2012
Amount of grant	£11,996
Your email address	panut@orangutancentre.org
Date of this report	4th June 2012

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Socialisation of MEDI project			Fully achieved	Socialisation was conducted through formal and informal community meetings in local community houses and traditional coffee shops
Survey of encroachment and ecotourism spots in Simolap Marike			Fully achieved	As a result of this survey, 10 ha of degraded forest inside the Gunung Leuser National Park were identified. In addition, tourism hotspots were identified and a trekking trail demarcated and mapped.
Focus Group Discussions on Ecotourism Development			Fully achieved	The FGD sessions increased understanding of the importance of MEDI development in Marike region and resulted in the development of an MoU between the OIC, Simolap Marike Ecotourism Board (LPSL, in Indonesian) and GLNP authority. These key stakeholders are now active in managing ecotourism development in the village.
Marike Ecotourism Council (MEC) training			Fully achieved	25 local community members have participated in guide training and have thus been provided with the baseline skills necessary to conduct responsible ecotourism services for visitors. The alumni of this training cohort have now formed themselves into a guide association, under the Simolap Marike Ecotourism Board structure.
Infrastructure development			Fully achieved	A visitor centre has been constructed and is being maintained and operated by Simolap Marike Ecotourism Board and the GLNP authority. A trekking trail has also been established and mapped with the aid of local guides. This information has been compiled in a Marike pocket guidebook.
Environmental education		Partially achieved		1,000 posters promoting Marike as an ecotourism destination have been produced and distributed. The pocket guidebook in Indonesian has been finalised and will be printed in June 2012, with an English version underway and scheduled to be printed in July 2012.
Conservation camps			Fully achieved	Just over 100 participants from three schools and communities surrounding Marike and the nearby area of Bohorok have participated in conservation camps.

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

At the first stage of MEDI's implementation, the project coordinator struggled to engage with the local community especially in ecotourism development planning, as the people seemed to lack confidence that it could be developed in their community.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was made between the Simolap Marike Ecotourism Board (LPSL), GLNP authority and the OIC, ensuring that each party knew and understood their role in project implementation. Unfortunately, the establishment of this MoU took more than 4 months, resulting in an unanticipated delay in MEDI activities.



Figure 1 Working with the GLNP Authority

However, after the MoU was signed by the local stakeholders were more confident that the MEDI was an integrative programme that supported everyone's needs.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.



Figure 2 The new GLNP Visitor Centre in Marike

1. MEDI created the necessary conditions for the establishment of Marike as an ecotourism destination. This has included the construction of a GLNP visitor centre, so that guests have a central location to gather and learn about the area and its surrounding forests, and the newly created tourism management body of the area has professional office space to work from. A group of journalists from Indonesian national media have also been brought to the area to help promote Marike, with the following being just one article that resulted:

http://medan.jurnas.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=78747:sos-gelar-kemah-konservasi-untuk-pelajar-smp&catid=56:akademia&Itemid=63.

Various groups of ecotourism operators from the relatively close Bukit Lawang ecotourism site have also started to offer trips to the Marike area as part of packages for visitors to Bukit Lawang. In April 2012, 5 foreign visitors came to see what Marike has to offer, with an additional 17 Australians, having been told about Marike during their stay in the Tangkahan ecotourism site, having come in May 2012. We thus



Figure 3 A Focus Group Discussion held in Marike

anticipate that this number will continue to grow in the coming months.

2. A Memorandum of Understanding between the OIC, LPSL, village government leaders, and the GLNP authority was signed, which will help in securing sustainable ecotourism development in Marike. This MoU provided momentum for the initial collaboration among local key stakeholders to develop and plan ecotourism and manage conservation of the GLNP forests in the area.

3. The project has been expanded to include forest restoration, and thus far seven hectares of degraded forest have been planted with native trees by the local community, including LPSL members. The restoration of degraded GLNP forests is an extension of the project with support from the (Australian) Orangutan Project, and now the GLNP and LPSL continue to manage the restoration activities on 10 hectares of degraded forests as a result of illegal logging and encroachment.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).



Figure 4 OIC Founding Director Panut Hadisiswoyo leading a training workshop on ecotourism

We have been instituting our model approach to working with communities living adjacent to the Leuser forests: community conservation action plans are developed through a participatory process, and then we provide bespoke training to support the community in enacting these plans. MEDI has built on this and focused on ecotourism development in the region, with amongst other benefits:

a. Training sessions hosted on:

- **The GLNP and its potential** (Biodiversity index of the GLNP, with a focus on the Marike region; Potential ecotourism hotspots the Marike region of the GLNP);
- **Practical Ecotourism** (Ecotourism as a means of protecting nature and serving conservation; Practical design and description of a sustainable ecotourism package);
- **Effective Ecotourism Guiding** (Requirements of becoming an ecotourism guide; Discussion of techniques used in guiding an ecotourism trip);
- **Nature and the Environment** (Principles of environmental protection and management; Practical interpretation of nature for trek guiding);
- **First Aid / Search and Rescue** (First responder medical training, CPR, emergency evacuations from a forest setting; Practical demonstrations and training in the field).

b. A 9km forest trekking trail has been created, as depicted in the map below. This was based on a field survey conducted by GLNP Rangers and guide association members from 15-19 November 2011, to mark out the best locations to include on the first official trekking trail in the Marike area.

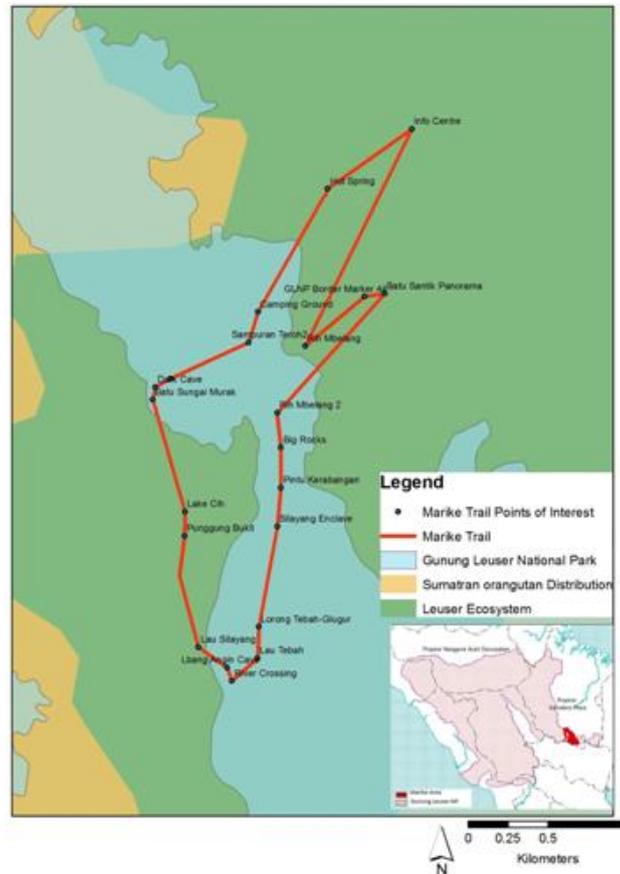


Figure 5 The newly developed trekking trail map



Figure 6 Surveying the trekking trail

We estimate that this trail would encapsulate a 3-day trek, offering a splendid experience of the Leuser forests. As well as the opportunity to view wild orangutans in a largely pristine, untraveled area, the trail includes many different sites and experiences. Below is a shortlist of selected sites of interest:

Rih Mbelang

A 25 hectare stretch of park land that is now largely grassland, said to be due to natural factors, that is otherwise surrounded by primary forest. We shall be conducting restoration work here, and include it on the trekking tour for visitors to also be able to witness and participate by planting trees themselves. This shall be hosted primarily through a tree adoption scheme we plan to implement soon together with the GLNP authority and LPSL association.



Figure 7 Beautiful panoramic view at Rih Mbelang, but in need of forest restoration



Figure 8 Idyllic forest river country at Ntebah

Pintu Kerabangen

Tropical forest area covered with giant boulders to clamber over.

Lau Ntebah

The meeting point of the Ntebah River with the Wampu River, and a favourite spot for relaxing as well as a starting point for rafting.



Figure 9 Cih Lake

Danau Cih (Cih Lake)

A large lake surrounded by natural stones, at about 600m above sea level. The lake has many different types of creatures living in it, and is another nice location for swimming.

Gua Gelap (Dark Cave)

This cave was carved by the Murak River, which still runs through it, and measures approximately a kilometer in length. The cave hosts a number of wild inhabitants, including snakes, bats, and birds, and has smaller underground streams running through it as well.



Figure 11 Gua Gelap

Gua Terang (Bright Cave)

This cave has a number of beautiful stalactites and stalagmites, and is home to a variety of wildlife species as is the nearby Dark Cave.



Figure 10 Gua Terang

Sampuran Teroh-Teroh

This is a small but beautiful waterfall of the Murak River, and is surrounded by dense forest. This makes for a wonderful swimming spot, and is located adjacent to the Simolap hot springs.



Figure 12 Local youths enjoying the waterfalls in Marike



Figure 13 Natural hot springs at Marike

Simolap Hot Springs

A natural hot spring that emits warming hot water throughout the year.



Figure 14 A wild orangutan nest spotted in the Bukit Candi Forest, along our suggested trekking trail

c. Twenty uniform shirts complete with hand-stitched logos have been produced and distributed to local guides in Marike. These provide a more professional image, and mark the wearer as a trained guide. The uniforms also remind people of the park's status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, part of the Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra.



Figure 15 Newly trained and uniformed guides in Marike

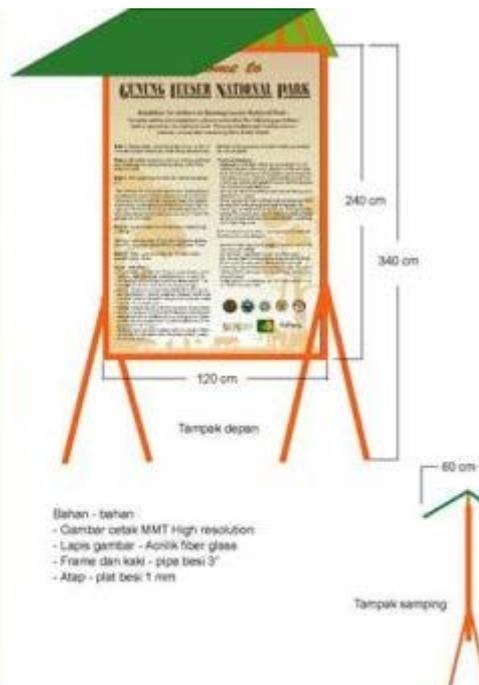


Figure 16 GLNP Signboards for Marike

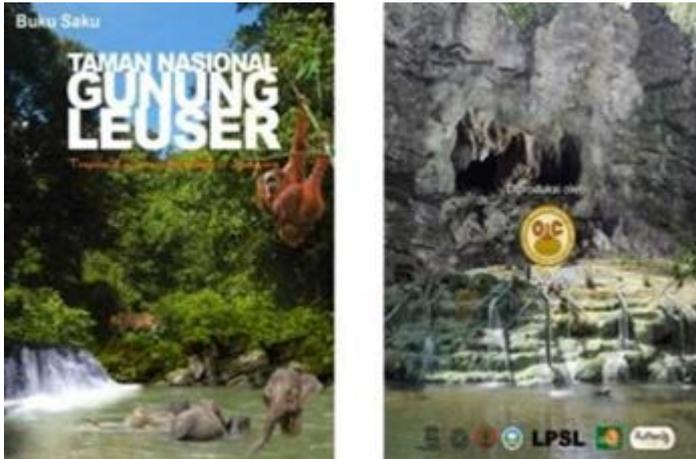


Figure 17 The Marike Pocket Guidebook (Indonesian version)

Included is an introduction to the GLNP and specifically Marike, factsheets about species of fauna and flora that visitors might encounter, ecotourism services on offer in Marike, and a trail map of the local forest, highlighting specific points of interest.

f. The “Charm of Marike Ecotourism” poster was developed in order to better promote the natural beauty of Marike, as well as the GLNP as a whole. A minimal amount of text was preferred so as to be more visually appealing, with the message “Leuser Ecotourism for the Conservation of Leuser”. 1,000 copies will be distributed throughout northern Sumatra, through our field programmes across the region

d. Two rugged Guidelines to the GLNP signboards have been constructed and placed in Marike, educating visitors on park guidelines and their importance for conservation.

e. A 24 page Pocket Guidebook to the GLNP: Marike, is in production. This book is in a similar style to those previously produced for Bukit Lawang and Tangkahan ¹, and will serve as a quick information source for visitors.

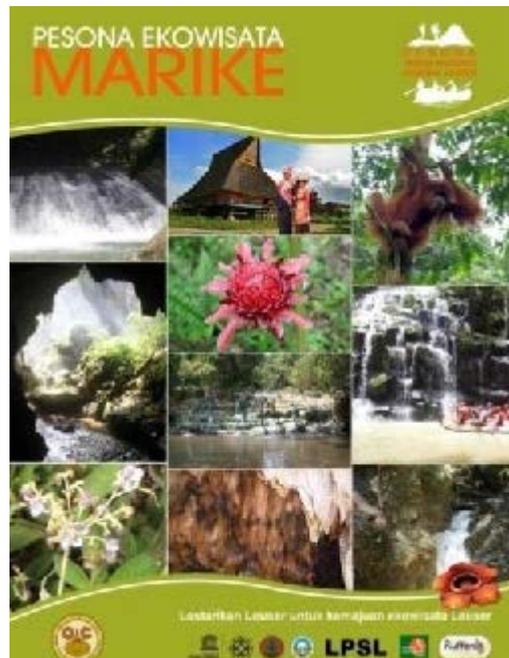


Figure 18 The Charm of Marike Ecotourism



Figure 19 English language training

g. As Marike is still relatively off the regular tourist trail, the communities are not regularly exposed to foreigners. In order to be able to hone their language skills, which are of course vital for hosting an ecotourism site, from October to December 2011, under the supervision of an Indonesian English language teacher, a total of 24 language classes were held, each with 16 guide participants. Participants studied English

¹ Downloadable from orangutancentre.org/archive/publications/, with another version now in production for the Ketambe ecotourism site

grammar, greetings, vocabulary, functional skills, and later practised what they learned with some Dutch tourists to the area, and also with local guides from the nearby Bukit Lawang.

Through all of this and more we have raised local capacity, and built conservation awareness and appreciation within the community of the intrinsic value of forests, and the ecosystem services they provide.

This latter information, by extension through ecotourism ventures, will also be shared amongst national and international visitors to the region, thus completing the ecotourism circle of knowledge.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes we plan to continue, primarily focusing on forest restoration activities in the area. We have had a national park restoration initiative operating throughout the Langkat district of North Sumatra (also where Marike is located) since 2008, and since 2010 have expanded this work to include the Aceh Tenggara district of the Aceh province. Through this work we directly empower local communities to become actively involved in the conservation of the



Figure 20 One of our GLNP forest restoration tree nursery sites

Leuser forests, and through the necessary regular maintenance of trees after planting, sustainability is inherent in the entire process.

Towards further ecotourism development, through our planned restoration efforts we shall remain active in the area, with restoration itself then becoming part of the visitors' experience. However, we will only be in playing a support role as necessary, with tourism management and funding expected to be done independently between the LPSL and the GLNP authority.

To that end, it is essential that the local community can further develop their services and infrastructure themselves, as after having received training, logistical, and infrastructure support from the MEDI, they now have the tools to be able to maintain the area and their livelihoods on a more independent basis.



Figure 21 Ongoing informal ecotourism guide training in Marike

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

We plan to disseminate MEDI results to media organisations and promote Marike as an ecotourism site with local tour operators, and also through our ongoing concurrent ecotourism development programmes in Bukit Lawang, Tangkahan, and Ketambe. We have created a network of linked sites, whereby at each we can cross promote and advertise what is available in other parts of northern Sumatra. Currently too an official promotional website for Marike ecotourism is near completion, and will be online as soon as possible.



Figure 22 A conservation camp being held for local youth in Marike

A special edition featuring Marike ecotourism development is scheduled to be published in June 2012 by OIC invited journalists from Inside Sumatra magazine, a leading travel magazine in Sumatra, and offered reading material in Garuda Indonesia flights. This is intended to share the result of MEDI project and at same time, promote the new destination of ecotourism spots in GLNP widely. The print version has not yet been published, but they have already put online an article about our conservation camps hosted in Marike, available through the following link: <http://insidesumatera.com/?open=view&newsid=1618&cat=10>.

7. Timescale: Over what period was the RSG used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?’

Although originally scheduled to start in April 2011, the project officially began in May 2011, due to a slight delay in support funds being received into our account. In general then the above mentioned constraints encountered in engaging the local community in the early stages of the project resulted in there being a delay in implementing some project activities. However, we were still able to achieve our original objectives, and consider the project complete as of May 2012.

8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference
Programme Coordinator	£2,666.64	£2,666.64	£0.00
Programme support – Fuel and vehicle maintenance	£422.22	£421.43	£0.79
Host Conservation Camps – Transport for participants	£177.60	£177.18	£0.42
MEDI Socialisation – Meals	£138.75	£144.22	-£5.47

Focus Group Discussions on Ecotourism Development – Meals	£138.75	£134.37	£4.38
Host Conservation Camps – Meals for participants	£133.20	£133.20	£0.00
Construction of visitor centre (6 x 8 m)	£5,370.37	£5,370.30	£0.07
Ecotourism and guidelines signboards	£296.30	£296.30	£0.00
Educational materials for visitor centre (standing banners, displays, etc.)	£370.37	£366.76	£3.61
General programme support – Generator Set	£500.00	£496.10	£3.90
Environmental Education / Host Conservation Camps - Film Screening Equipment (LCD, speakers, etc.)	£592.59	£590.01	£2.58
Ecotourism Development Training (MEC) – Training materials	£111.00	£112.77	-£1.77
Ecotourism Development Training (MEC) – Guide Uniform T-shirts with Logos	£185.00	£185.00	£0.00
Host Conservation Camps – Tent purchase	£148.14	£148.12	£0.02
Host Conservation Camps – Camp Banners	£22.22	£21.97	£0.25
Host Conservation Camps – T-Shirts for Participants	£133.20	£131.11	£2.09
Environmental Education – Pocket guidebooks	£330.00	£330.00	£0.00
Environmental Education – Campaign materials (1000 posters)	£259.26	£258.68	£0.58
Total	£11,995.61	£11,984.16	£11.45

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

The most important steps towards developing Marike as an ecotourism site must be made by the local communities themselves. We have succeeded in securing for the area the basic infrastructure and training in order for them to begin, but for further steps they must coordinate their own work and strive towards their own goals independently.

There are still a number of obstacles to the area become an ideal site, such as a lack of reliable electricity and guest houses, as well as an increased difficulty in reaching the beautiful, but necessarily remote region, through the main road to Marike being in a consistent state of disrepair.

However these are issues that must be addressed by the local people, their government leaders, and other local stakeholders.



Figure 23 OIC staff assisting local community members in repairing a broken bridge in the area



Figure 24 A conservation camp participant planting a tree in Marike

Although we have enjoyed working with the communities in Marike and our assistance has certainly been appreciated, the key now is for them to take initiative themselves and cultivate their own livelihoods. Of course we shall still remain available for further assistance if required, which with our plans for continued restoration work in the area, as well as our ongoing work in other Sumatran ecotourism sites such as Bukit Lawang, Tangkahan, and Ketambe, we shall continue to help promote the region as a beautiful ecotourism site.

10. Did you use the RSGF logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes, we used the RSGF logo in all materials produced in relation to the MEDI project, which can be sent by post to the RSGF upon request.

11. Any other comments?

None at this time



Figure 25 Stunning riverine forest in Marike