

**A close relative
needs our support.**

Courier 2/09

Born to be free.

The rainforests on Sumatra harbour countless animal and plant species including the endangered orangutan. But every hour vast swathes of valuable rainforest fall victim to slash and burning or logging. The orangutan is gradually losing its home to the steady destruction of its habitat.

Captured and expelled

The orangutan is losing its means of existence through the destruction of rainforests for the cultivation of giant palm oil plantations. While foraging they often stray onto plantations and get in the way of plantation workers. Sometimes they are shot in the process. The surviving orangutans, mostly infants or the young, are captured to be sold as pets.

With their new owners they often live a dire existence under shocking conditions: in backyards of animal traders and in far too narrow cages, exposed to the sun and rain, without enough food and socially isolated. These conditions result in deficiency diseases and often death particularly in infants.

A comprehensive protection programme – SOCP

Together with its local partner organisation, YEL, PanEco works to protect the Sumatran orangutan. Illegally held and injured orangutans are confiscated by the authorities and brought to the quarantine and rehabilitation center run by the SOCP. After receiving medical treatment and a slow preparation for life in their natural habitat, the animals are returned to the wild in the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park. The goal is ensuring that the orangutans can again lead an independent life in the wild.

Should the indiscriminate deforestation continue unabated, then these animals will have no future. This is why PanEco campaigns for the preservation of their natural habitat, why we are fighting for the valuable swamp rainforests of Tripa in Northeast Aceh and why we are lobbying for the last rainforests to be placed under protection.

The decimation continues:

Wild orangutans can only be found on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra. The species found on Sumatra (*Pongo abelii*) is estimated to number around 6 600. The World Conservation Union IUCN has classified the Sumatran orangutan as "critically endangered".

According to orangutan experts, populations numbering over 500 individuals can be considered demographically and genetically stable, as long as they are not threatened by people through hunting or habitat destruction. Only four populations on Sumatra fulfil these criteria: West Leuser with 2 508, Trumon-Singkil with 1 500, East Leuser with 1 052 and Northeast and Northwest Aceh with 834 animals.



At the SOCP quarantine and rehabilitation station the often traumatised young animals learn to live with their own kind. As soon as they are able to survive independently, they are reintroduced to the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park.

Photos: Peter Jaeggi/Ian Singleton

Hope for a life in the wild.

Coty is a small orangutan girl. She was only one and a half years old, when she and seven other orangutans were confiscated by the forestry department and the district police in Aceh province in December 2008. Coty was bought by a local farmer for around 25 Swiss francs. She was held captive by a chain around the neck for around two months. Sometimes she was “allowed” to accompany the farmer to the fields.

Sumatran orangutans in danger

In the Aceh region where Coty was captured the forests are being cleared and burned to make space for palm oil plantations. Many animals die or are killed in the process. An orangutan mother will defend its baby, even if she pays with her life. Young Coty will, in all probability, have been a witness to the demise of her own mother. Even if Coty does not realise it she is one of the “lucky” orangutans. She has survived the brutal destruction of the swamp rainforests and is now safely housed in the quarantine station of the Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme SOCP. Here she will learn to play with her own kind and to live like an orangutan. She will, however, have to spend a considerable amount of time in the quarantine station before she can be released into the wild.

Awareness must be raised

Orangutans like little Coty are seriously threatened. These great apes cannot survive in the long run without intact habitat. PanEco promotes on site comprehensive environmental education and awareness building as a way of stopping the ruthless shooting and capture of these endangered animals and preventing more valuable rainforest from falling victim to deforestation.

Decision makers and the local population learn the value of the rainforests through a directed information campaign. They are shown that this unique ecosystem is not only the basis of life for the diverse plant and animal world, but also crucial to their own livelihood. They learn how to use this natural resource, “the rainforest”, without destroying it and how to secure a livelihood through alternative sources of income.



Orangutan girl Coty was held captive by a chain until she was rescued.

Photo: Ian Singleton

Encouraging results of the SOCP:

Despite the sad fact that an illegal trade in orangutans continues, the conservation programme also registers small successes. The confiscated animals are much younger on average than in the early years of the programme. This means that reports of illegally held animals are being received by authorities much sooner and the young animals can be released from their captivity far quicker.



The Mobile Unit of the SOCP sensitises school children and the local population of Aceh province to conservation issues.

Photo: Ian Singleton

Your donation is an important contribution to the Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme.
Thank You!

Countering the destruction.

Halting the destruction of valuable rainforests for palm oil plantations cannot be done through the awareness and education of the Indonesian people alone. Our behaviour as consumers is an important factor in countering this trend.

Open your eyes!

We must understand the relationship between our consumption and the cultivation of oil palms to prevent more intact rainforests giving way to palm oil plantations. This is why PanEco is working through the environmental education center UBZ NeulandWeinland to achieve greater awareness among the young and old in Switzerland.

Only through more conscientious behaviour as consumers can we ensure that palm oil demand does not continue to increase and that it is covered by sustainable production. Using targeted information, UBZ NeulandWeinland provides children and adults practical guidance on how to handle the available resources considerately and sustainably.

A green paradise

On an excursion through the Irchel forest we devote ourselves entirely to the habitat of a “tropical” rainforest. What is a rainforest, what lives here and what distinguishes it from our indigenous forests? Get to know the forest ecosystem and its inhabitants, its significance for humans and animals and get to grips with the key question of how we can use the forest without destroying it.

You can find more on this exciting tour at www.neulandweinland.ch



Using the Irchel forest as an example, the UBZ shows the differences between tropical and temperate forests. And we uncover where palm oil is hidden in our everyday life.

Fotos: Dominique Keller/Dung van Meerbeeck



What you can do:

- Use organically produced natural cosmetics
- Ensure that the palm oil in products is from sustainable sources
- Buy organic butter or margarine
- Enjoy fresh vegetables over finished products
- Become an Ambassador and inform your friends and relatives!
- Support our work by making a donation:
www.paneco.ch

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