

A monthly digital magazine

HUTAN HARAPAN

NEWSLETTER



RENEWABLE ENERGY IN HUTAN HARAPAN

Over the next 5 years PT Reki is planning to have at least 70% of its electricity needs supplied by solar energy. With the price of solar panels dropping and their efficiency increasing, solar energy is a viable option to fossil fuels.

Solar panels are already installed in the field offices and generate electricity for the water pumps in one of the Batin Sembilan villages but there is still a long way to go.

In the meantime, PT Reki, has taken a series of measures to decrease its fossil use. Power cuts in the base camp, including the management office, from 23.00-04.00 hours found that there could be savings of about USD 6,000.- on the monthly power bill. In addition to cost savings, the power outages are an environmentally friendly effort by directly reducing the use of fossil energy.***

PROTECTING THE SUMATRAN TIGER IN HUTAN HARAPAN

The Sumatran tiger (*Panthera tigris Sumatra*) is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List with an estimated population of 400-500 individuals and in a declining trend. Given the pace of deforestation and poaching in Sumatra it could go extinct like its Javan and Balinese relatives in the near future.

The Sumatran tiger can be found inhabiting a variety of habitats from low and highland areas, to mountainous jungle and peat swamp forests. Hutan Harapan's lowland forests is one of the few habitats remaining on Sumatra where the tigers are found.

To date, Hutan Harapan has relied on forest patrols and camera traps as a means to monitor their numbers and protect them from poaching. This is changing however, as high-tech tools are being integrated into monitoring strategies.

The Danish Embassy will fund the purchase five GPS collars that will be fitted onto tigers. The tracking collar has satellite and ground-tracking capabilities with an accuracy of approximately three meters.

According to the Manager for Research and Environment, Elva Gemita, data received from the collars will provide insights into roaming, feeding and mating behavior. With increasing human population pressure, the data will assist in identifying potential zones where human-tiger conflicts may occur. The data will also identify where the tiger's habitat crosses concession boundaries. This will allow management to enhance its collaboration efforts with the neighbouring concessions.***





JELUTUNG LATEX AS AN INCOME GENERATOR FOR THE BATIN SEMBILAN

There is a wide range of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) in Hutan Harapan that have market potential but they all face similar challenges such as lack of clarity regarding their value chain, technical capacities, competing commodities and a shrinking natural habitat. One such commodity is the latex from the *jelutung* tree (*Dyera costulata*) which is used in edible gum and cable insulators. The *Jelutung* wood is also known for its soft texture that is suitable for pencils, interior design material and woodcarving.

Due to overharvesting of the tree for its wood in the past, it is difficult to find except in protected or isolated areas. As the number of trees declined so did the production of latex. The last year the Central Statistics Bureau (Biro Pusat Statistik-BPS) recorded data on *jelutung* latex production in Jambi was in 2007.

In Hutan Harapan, the *jelutung* trees are tapped by the Batin Sembilan indigenous people who sell the latex to intermediaries for less than one dollar (US) per kilo. Based on a survey conducted by the agroforestry team, at least 5 families collect it on a routine basis. In one day, a family can collect 10 kilograms of latex. According to the Director of Operations of PT Restoration Ecosystem Indonesia (Reki), Lisman Sumardjani, there is potential in Hutan Harapan to supply one ton a month of latex. Until Hutan Harapan has a better understanding of all the value chain actors, however, its entry into the latex market will have to wait.

In the meantime, PT Reki is taking steps to increase the *jelutung* tree population, by integrating it into agroforestry systems that have been established with communities. There are six agroforestry demonstration plots with an area of 1-2 hectares each in various locations that are used to learn about different planting systems. Finally, every year *jelutung* seeds are collected from the forest and cultivated in the company's tree nursery.***

IN SEARCH OF DRAGON'S BLOOD IN HUTAN HARAPAN



The term "dragon's blood" conjures up images of exotic or mythical animals, but in reality it has nothing to do with the animal kingdom. Also known as *jernang*,

it is a red resin that comes from the fruit of the rattan palm (*Daemonorops spp.*). It has been in use since ancient times and is now found in cosmetics, industrial products and medicines. The vivid red resin is exported from Indonesia to China, Hong Kong and Singapore.

In Hutan Harapan, dragon's blood is a source of income for the Batin Sembilan indigenous peoples. They harvest it by taking off the layer of red resin encasing the unripe fruit of the rattan, then roll it into solid balls before being sold for USD 109 to 276 per kilogram.

Hutan Harapan is collaborating with Jambi University and the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) to better understand its habitat and potential for cultivation. According to Dr Revis Asra of Jambi University, "rattan *jernang* prefers the habitat at the edge of the river, so it is also beneficial to maintaining the soil conditions along the river banks."



The research team found four types of rattan *jernang* in Hutan Harapan, two of which are high quality producers of dragon's blood and are able to fetch a high market price. In order to improve the sustainability of the rattan *jernang*, Dr. Revis suggested to protect the mother trees and learn how to cultivate the plant. In addition, it is necessary to work with the Batin Sembilan to improve their harvesting techniques such as removing the resin without cutting the stem.***

Hutan Harapan is the first ecosystem restoration concession in Indonesia managed by PT REKI as a result of joint initiative of Burung Indonesia, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and BirdLife International. Of total 98,000 ha, 52,000 ha lies in South Sumatera and 46,000 ha in Jambi. Hutan Harapan is aimed to conserve natural habitat of globally threatened species, the critically endangered lowland rainforest, and collaborate with local communities in managing Hutan Harapan as a productive landscape.



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