



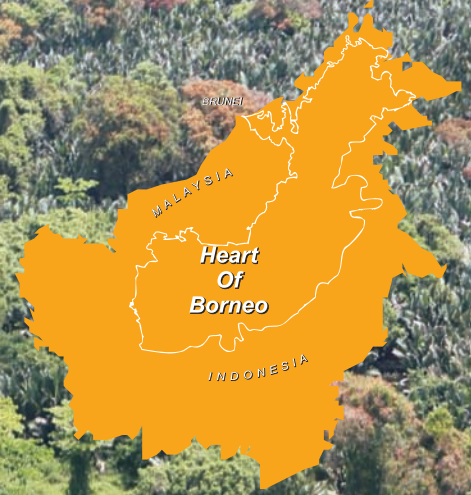
WWF

FACTSHEET

HoB

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Orang-utan (*Pongo pygmaeus*)



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In 2004, estimates of Bornean Orang-utan (*Pongo pygmaeus*) populations placed approximately 54,000 individuals on the island of Borneo, distributed across lowland tropical rainforests in Indonesia (provinces of Central, West and East Kalimantan) and Malaysia (states of Sabah and Sarawak) (Wich et al 2008). Genetic studies of the species shows the existence of three subspecies, namely *Pongo pygmaeus pygmaeus* in the west of Borneo, *Pongo pygmaeus wurmbii* in southern Borneo and *Pongo pygmaeus morio* in the northeast of Borneo. In terms of the size of the animal, of these three subspecies, the *P.p. wurmbii* is the largest and the *P.p. morio* is the smallest.

Populations of Bornean Orang-utan are most abundant in low-lying forests primarily due to its dietary needs which consist mainly of fruits, along with young leaves and bark, flowers, honey and insects. Flood-prone forests and peat swamp seem to produce more sustained fruit crops than dry dipterocarp forests, a factor which may account for higher Orang-utan densities in the swamps. As these habitats undergo conversion to plantations, farms and settlements, the species is left highly vulnerable. Interestingly, recent studies have shown that the *P.p. morio* subspecies demonstrates a relative and unexpected tolerance to habitat degradation in the northern part of the island (Ancrenaz et al. 2005). Despite such findings, more time is needed to determine the adaptability potential of Orang-utans in degraded habitats.

Threats to the species

The Bornean Orang-utan is listed on Appendix I of CITES, an international treaty for the protection of wildlife. A number of major threats have led to the decrease in Orang-utan numbers - over the past 20 years, their habitat has been reduced by at least 55 percent due to conversion of forests for agriculture, mining and settlements. Additional pressures on Orang-utan populations include: large scale logging; forest fires caused by El Nino climatic events; severe drought; conflict between humans and the species on agricultural lands; and demand for young Orang-utans in the pet trade.

Understanding three main biological features of the Orang-utan explains why this species has become endangered:

- Orang-utans can survive only in extensive natural forests, and only in particular forests located mainly in lowlands and swamps.
- Orang-utans require high quality foods and a variety of fruits. In regions where natural fruiting is infrequent and seasonal, such as hill ranges, Orang-utan populations may not survive due to lack of food.
- Orang-utans mature slowly and breed infrequently, a female bearing an average of three young in her lifetime. External pressures such as hunting, diseases and severe climatic conditions either slows natural breeding rates or raises death rates. These have an enormous impact on the survival of Orang-utan populations.



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Reducing destruction of Orang-utan habitats

WWF's goal on Orang-utans is that 'by 2020, populations of the most ecologically, economically and culturally important species are restored and thriving in the wild'. Designated sanctuaries and reserves throughout Borneo play important roles in saving individual Orang-utans displaced by forest clearance, and educating the public on the need for wildlife conservation. In Sabah, most Orang-utans survive in well managed timber production forests including the Forest Stewardship Council certified Ulu Segama-Malua and Deramakot Forest Reserves.

WWF works with many stakeholders including the Indonesian and Malaysian governments, nonprofit and international organizations, and local people in order to save and reduce the destruction of important Orang-utan habitats and promote sustainable management practices.

What is WWF doing to achieve this?

There are five key components of WWF's work in the Heart of Borneo:

- Create a network of protected areas as a refuge for key species, including the Orang-utan.
- Promote sustainable management of timber production forests compatible with sustaining Orang-utan populations.
- Connect these protected areas with carefully managed 'ecological corridors' to ensure Orang-utans and other species can move between them. A large part of this effort is to ensure that all other land without protected status, within and bordering the Heart of Borneo, will be retained as sustainably managed forest land.
- Develop awareness campaigns on Orang-utan conservation programmes targeted to specific groups, particularly the local people living adjacent to Orang-utan habitats.
- Implement Orang-utan conservation projects to protect this highly endangered species.



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	<p>Why we are here To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature. http://www.panda.org</p>
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Towards a Greener HoB

Promoting sustainable management practices supports the continuation of economic activities, such as eco-tourism, in a manner which safeguards Orang-utan habitats. These practices, conducted in ecologically important areas which connect protected areas in the Heart of Borneo, enhance the ability for Orang-utans to survive through the preservation of their habitat.