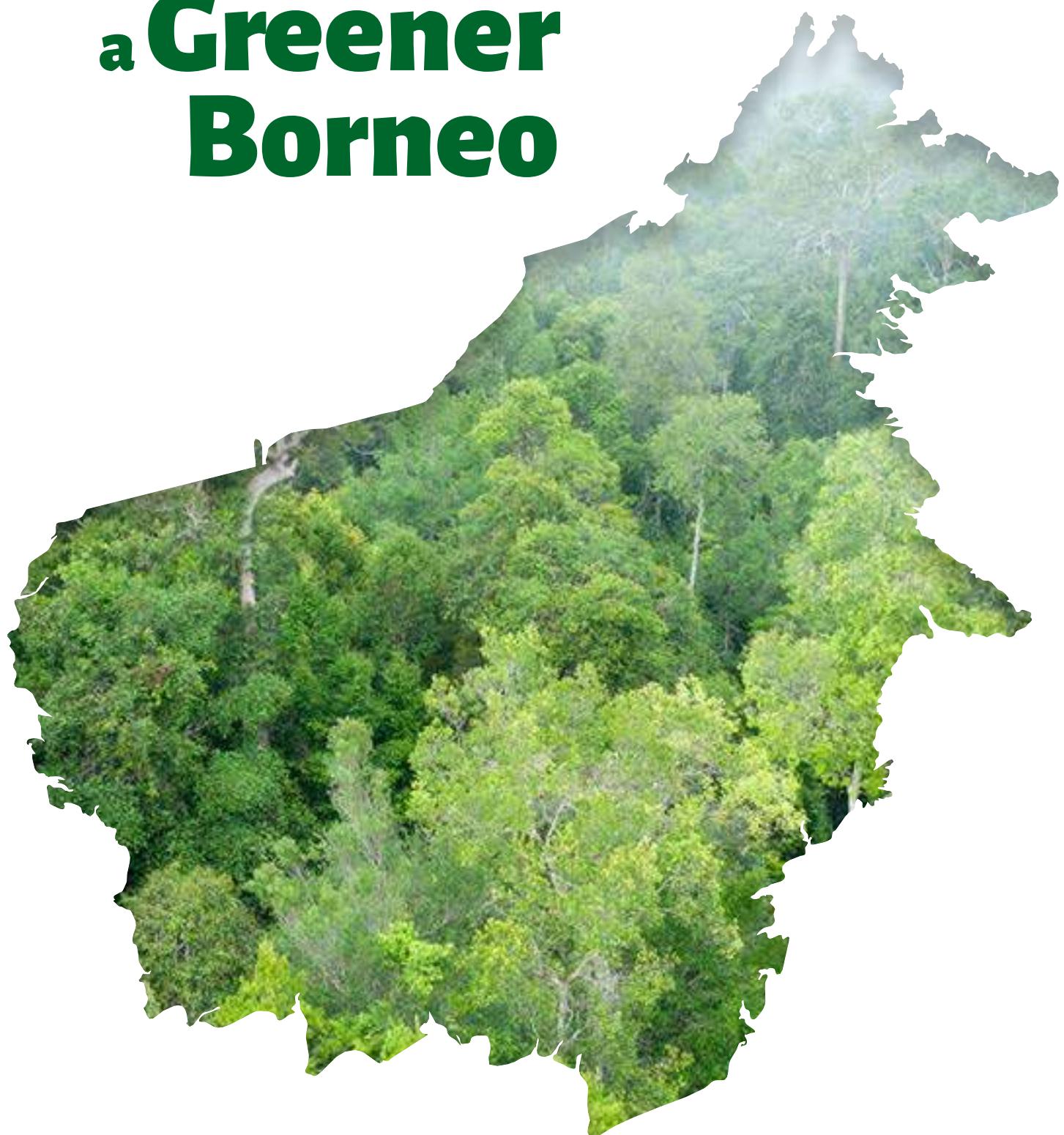


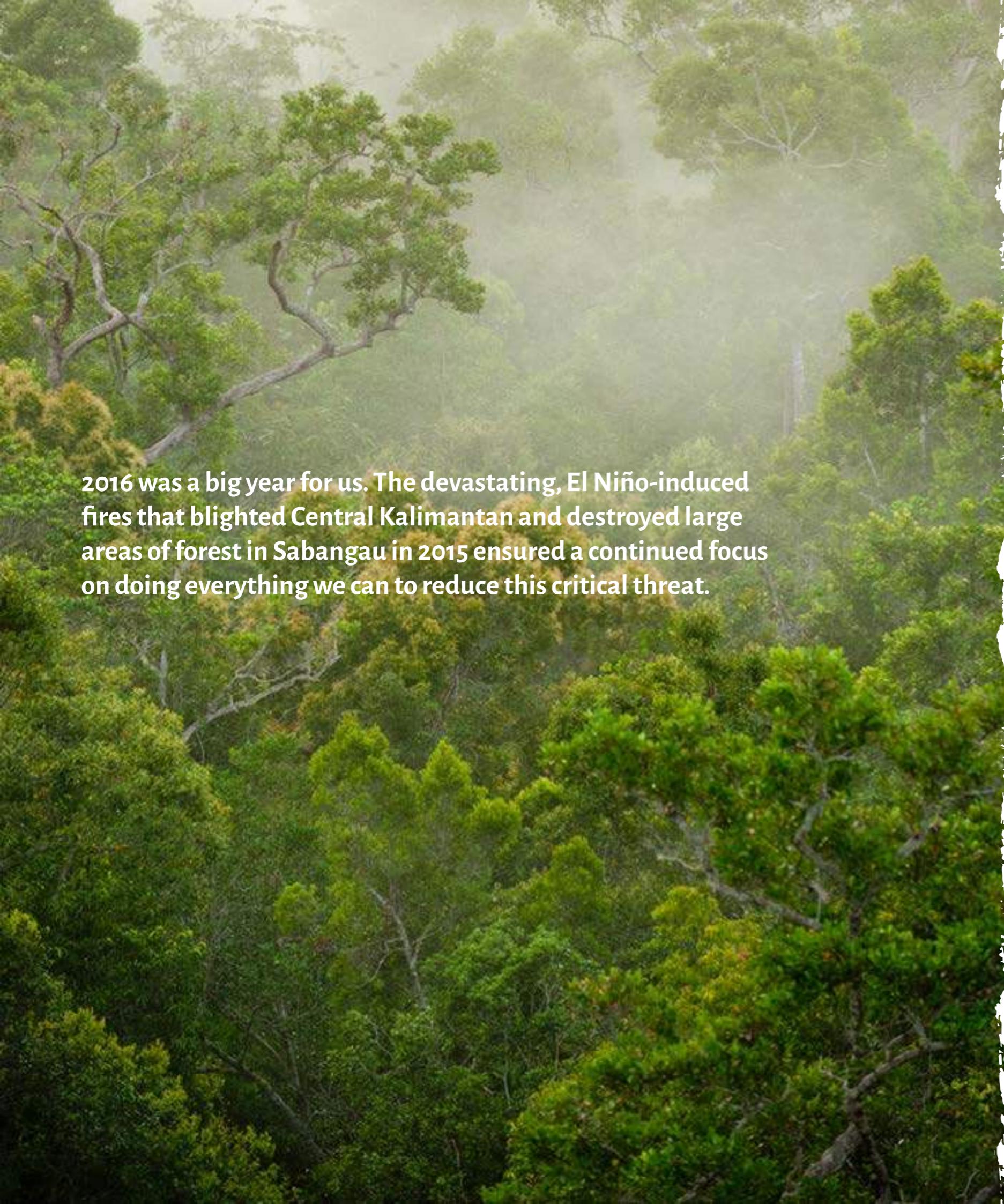
Striving for a Greener Borneo





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2016 was a big year for us. The devastating, El Niño-induced fires that blighted Central Kalimantan and destroyed large areas of forest in Sabangau in 2015 ensured a continued focus on doing everything we can to reduce this critical threat.

Sabangau Forest
Andrew Walmsey

Welcome from the Directors

This included working with more partners than ever before to increase support for existing fire-fighting teams and establish new teams, expand our research and conservation efforts, and increase the scale of our education and outreach efforts to raise awareness and encourage “forest-friendly” behaviour change. We are proud of our team’s incredible efforts in 2016 and hope that you enjoy reading about some of the year’s highlights featured in this report.

To facilitate the expansion of our efforts and to better reflect the broad scope of our research and conservation efforts, we re-branded in 2016 and became the Borneo Nature Foundation (BNF). The Orangutan Tropical Peatland Programme (OuTrop) still remains as the programme name for our field research and conservation activities in the Sabangau Forest, but now works alongside an increasing number of other programmes operating under the BNF umbrella. While our name has changed, our commitment to protecting orangutans, peatlands and the Sabangau Forest has only strengthened. We will continue to strive towards these goals, while simultaneously working to strengthen conservation of other species and forests across Central Kalimantan to increase our conservation impact.

A significant addition to our

conservation activities has been the development of BNF’s new Rungan Conservation Programme. Here, we are taking a lead role in a partnership with numerous local organisations working to protect this important but threatened forest, which is home to the second largest unprotected Bornean orangutan population. In 2016, this included conducting a major research expedition, setting up a new forest research camp, establishing a new village fire-fighting team, beginning community education and outreach, developing plans for forest and community surveys across the landscape, and engaging with relevant stakeholders to explore forest protection strategies for the area.

We are also working towards the launch of a new research and conservation Barito Ulu Programme of research and conservation activities centred around the spectacular Rekut Camp in Murung Raya District, where conservation efforts are urgently needed.

Finally, our Communications and Outreach team continues to reach new heights, and we are proud to see our staff enhancing their already impressive skill sets and taking lead roles in pushing our myriad projects forward. Exciting times!

Rungan Conservation

We first visited Rungan in collaboration with International Animal Rescue in 2010, when local community members from Mungku Baru village requested our help in documenting the forest's biodiversity, to support their efforts to conserve the forest. These short surveys revealed a high diversity of flora and fauna, plus good population densities of orangutans and gibbons, and confirmed the forest's high conservation value. Unfortunately, the forest and its wildlife are facing a number of threats, including proposed conversion to oil palm and acacia plantations, peat drainage and fire, encroachment, gold mining and hunting.

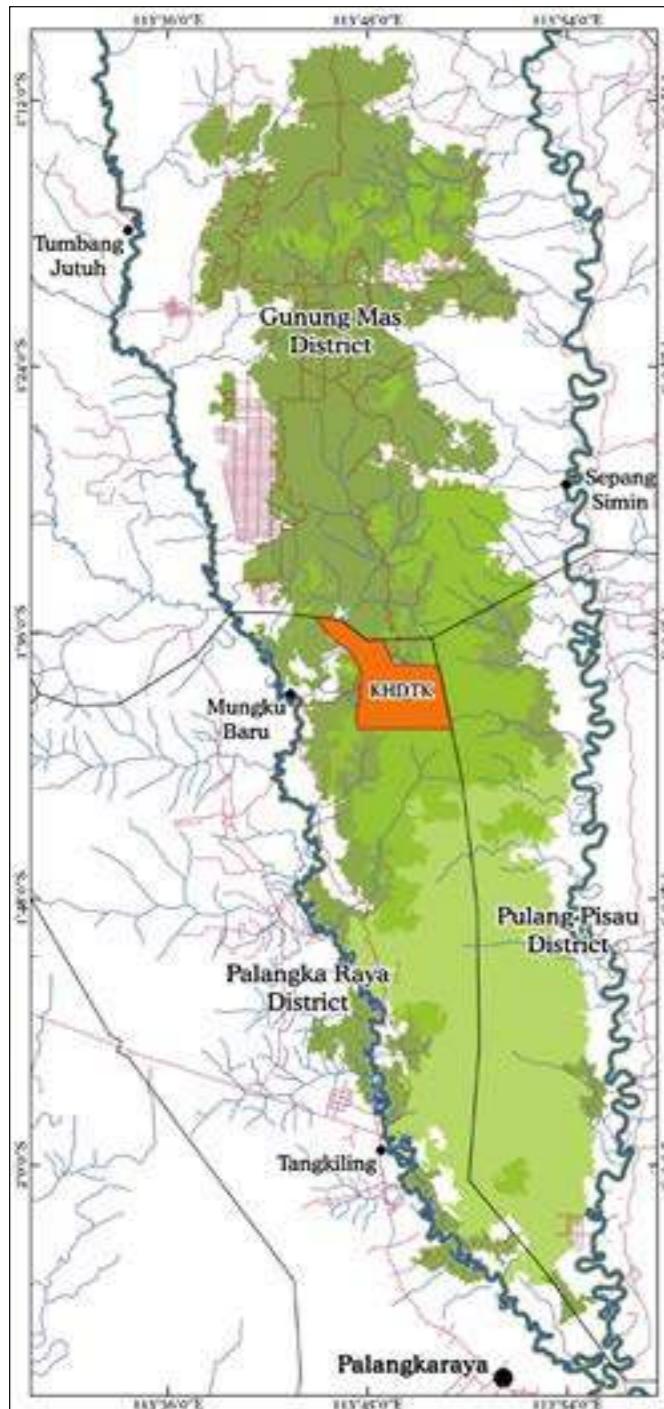
BNF is taking a leading role in a local Mixed-Stakeholder Forum to counter these threats and help secure protection of the Rungan landscape. To work towards this goal, in 2016, we were delighted to officially launch our Rungan Conservation Programme, and sign an MoU with the University Muhammadiyah Palangka Raya (UMP) to support research and capacity building development in the area. Some success in protecting the landscape has already been achieved: a 4,917 ha Education Forest run by UMP was designated in 2014 and a 500 ha Community Forest was designated in 2015. But much more work is needed, with 156,000 ha of forest in Rungan still unprotected and vulnerable.

In collaboration with Ibu Siti Maimunah from UMP, Prof. Frank van Veen from the University of Exeter and the Mungku Baru village community, we spearheaded a joint expedition to the Mungku Baru Education Forest in July-August 2016. This involved a large team of BNF researchers and staff, plus 8 international volunteers and 12 UMP students, who received in-depth training in field research techniques. After building a very basic forest camp (that suffered from repeated flooding!), the team conducted intensive orangutan, gibbon, biodiversity inventory, habitat assessment and mapping surveys.

Mapping work identified a variety of habitat types in the region, from peat-swamp forest in the south, transitioning to heath (*kerangas*), ulin and dipterocarp forest moving further north. Our surveys documented a total 200 wildlife species, including 51 species protected under Indonesian law and 28 species classified as globally threatened by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). In particular, the expedition team surveyed 11.5 km of transect, spotting a total 273 orangutan nests. Combined with our 2010 survey data, this corresponds to a population density of 2.61-2.93 orangutans/km² and an estimated total population of 1,364-2,034 orangutans across the landscape. These data were an important contribution to the 2016



The Rungan River landscape is one of the most important unprotected forests in Kalimantan, but is under serious threat and requires urgent conservation efforts.



Rungan Conservation Program

SITUATION MAP

SCALE 1 : 4,000,000



forest and community surveys conducted across the landscape. Through this, we aim to strengthen the case for forest conservation and better understand community needs in the region, train more local students and staff, and fully engage with local communities and government bodies in conservation planning. This is vital in pushing forward efforts to protect this incredible forest, plus its important orangutan and gibbon populations, and other wildlife.

Focusing initially in Mungku Baru village, we have also been working to establish community education initiatives and fire-fighting teams in the Rungan landscape. For details of our education work, please see page 12. Working together with a local organisation, Yayasan Cakrawala Indonesia (YCI), we have established a new Mungku Baru village fire-fighting team. This ten-man team is entirely comprised and led by local villages, facilitated by YCI and BNF. A number of socialisation and training workshops were held as part of this process, and the team are now able to operate largely independently. Going forward, we will continue to engage with this team and hope that these efforts may serve as a model for the establishment of similar teams in other at-risk areas in the landscape.

Orangutan Population and Habitat Viability Assessment update, in which the 156,000 ha Rungan landscape was identified as the largest remaining unprotected population of this critically endangered species in the lowlands. High southern Bornean gibbon population densities were also found for this habitat, indicating that Rungan is home to a large, sustainable population of this endangered ape.

This information will be further built upon during 2017, through a second research expedition to the Education Forest and through a series of shorter

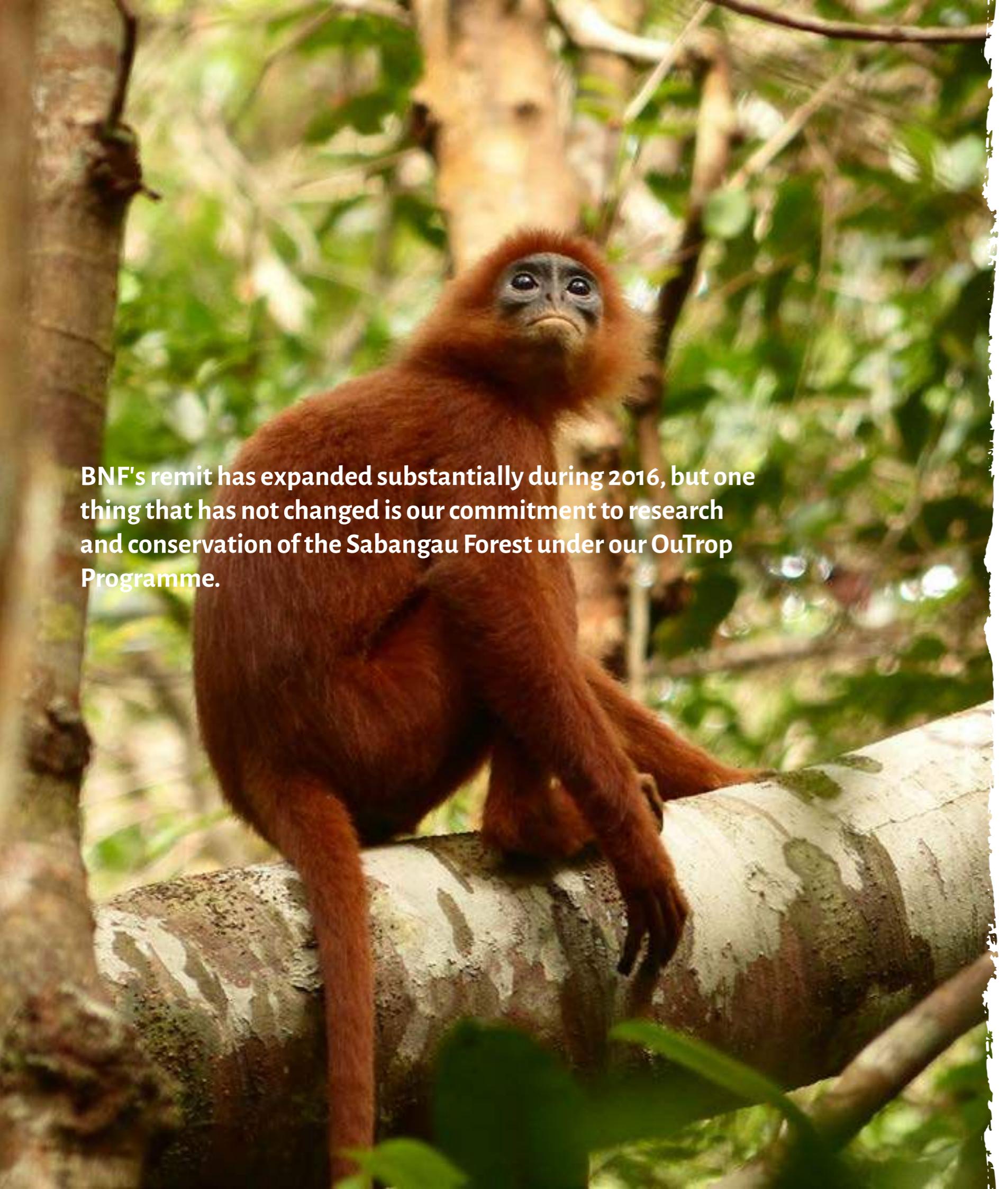
Orangutan pictured in Sabangau forest
Pau Brugues Sintes



Species Focus Orangutans

Highlights of BNF's orangutan-focused work in 2016 include:

- Contributing to updating the conservation status of the Bornean orangutan in the IUCN's definitive Red List of Threatened Species ([see here](#)). This process resulted in an increase in the species conservation status to Critically Endangered. This is the most severe threat level before extinction and further highlights the vital importance of field research and conservation efforts for key wild populations, such as those in Sabangau and Rungan.
- Generating the most robust estimates of orangutan population density and total population size currently available for the Rungan Forest. With an estimated 1,364-2,034 animals inhabiting the forest, this provides essential evidence of the importance of Rungan for orangutan conservation.
- Documenting large shifts in orangutan population distribution in the Sabangau Forest, following the major 2015 fires, which burned areas of forest near our research site. Our data demonstrate a large influx of orangutans into our study grid and the sub-optimal low-pole forest following the fires, as orangutans were displaced from burned areas. This appears to have resulted in decreased orangutan day and home ranges in the area. We are currently working to study the longer-term impacts of this on orangutan behaviour and population density.
- Making major contributions to an update of the Orangutan Population and Habitat Viability Assessment (PHVA), which is available [here](#). This represents the most complete assessment of the species' status available, and identifies Sabangau and Rungan as two of the highest priority populations of the Central Kalimantan orangutan sub-species (*Pongo pygmaeus wurmbii*).
- Leading orangutan population surveys and training local research teams in oil palm landscapes in Seruyan District with International Animal Rescue, PT. Hutan Amanah Lestari REDD+ forest rehabilitation initiative with UMP, and in the Lamandau Forest with the Orangutan Foundation.
- Fieldwork completed for two PhD projects focusing on orangutans in Sabangau, investigating (1) flanged male orangutan long call acoustic characteristics; and (2) environmental and social influences on these long calls.



BNF's remit has expanded substantially during 2016, but one thing that has not changed is our commitment to research and conservation of the Sabangau Forest under our OuTrop Programme.

Sabangau Conservation

Spurred on by the devastating fires of 2015 and a desire never to see fires of this scale in Sabangau again, our work has continued to go from strength to strength in 2016. Continuing our long-running collaboration with the Centre for the International Cooperation in Sustainable Management of Tropical Peatlands at the University of Palangka Raya (UPT LLG CIMTROP UPR), our existing initiatives have been solidified and expanded, and new initiatives created.

Firstly, we have continued to bolster our fire-fighting defence, working to improve the capacity of two existing fire-fighting teams in the area (the Community Patrol Team run by UPT LLG CIMTROP and the TSA Bukit Tunggal team), and to develop plans to establish two new fire-fighting teams in the local villages of Kereng Bangkirai and Sabaru. This includes providing equipment, training and networking opportunities. One important development has been the deployment of a second fixed-wing drone, which complements our existing quad-copter drone. These drones enable us to spot, monitor and tackle fires more accurately, safely and economically (see page X).

In support of this and to prevent fire in the long-term, we have also

been working to block the old illegal logging canals that continue to drain the peat. In 2016, we reached our target to build 71 dams on five canals. Dam breakage has been a frequent problem in the past, with 16 dams reported as being broken by local people and subsequently repaired during 2016. To prevent this in the future, metal gates have now been built at the mouth of seven canals in the area. Our hydrological monitoring data collection at 39 locations is demonstrating lower water discharge rates in dammed compared with undammed canals, and before and after dam construction within individual canals. This vital work will be built upon during 2017, when we will be embarking on our most ambitious canal-blocking programme ever.

Our reforestation efforts also continued apace. In 2016, our primary focus was on (1) comparing replanting success for four different tree species in deforested areas that had been newly burned in 2015 vs. areas that had been burned many years previously; and (2) evaluating the potential use of "bakul" baskets on replanting success. To date, local reforestation projects have typically used plastic "poly-bags" to grow and transport their seedlings for replanting. While cheap, these may create stress for the plants if removed immediately prior to planting and present obvious environmental



issues in the use of plastic. In contrast, bakuls are woven from locally-grown rattan by local women, and decompose in the peat so do not need to be removed during planting, reducing stress for the plant. Our monitoring of replanted seedlings to date is showing encouraging results, with survival and growth rates for “bakul seedlings” that are at least as high or higher than those of “poly-bag” seedlings.

The wide range of other ecological research and training projects conducted under our OuTrop Programme in Sabangau continued throughout 2016. This included studies of orangutan, gibbon and red langur behavioural ecology, forest fruit/flower and litter-fall production, forest structure and dynamics, fruit-feeding butterflies, fish and crocodilians (in particular *Tomistoma*). As ever, this work was facilitated by a large number of students and visitors, whose contributions are vital to our efforts.

The importance of our Sabangau field site for education and training was very apparent during 2016, with a number of groups benefiting from opportunities provided at the site. Importantly,

this included training and development of BNF's 17 local field staff working in Sabangau, plus Community Patrol Team members. We also welcomed a group of University of Leicester Masters students participating in an intensive BNF-led two-week field module focusing on practical peat-swamp forest ecology and conservation strategies, plus visits by a number of school groups.

Species Focus Wildcats

Highlights of BNF's cat focused work in 2016 include:

- Contributing towards 12 papers in a special supplement of the Raffles Bulletin of Zoology focusing on Bornean small carnivore and cat conservation ([see here](#)). Using novel predictive modelling techniques, the papers provided updated assessments of population distribution and conservation threats for these species, plus recommendations for their effective conservation.
- Contributing towards updates of IUCN threat status for the leopard cat (LC), marbled cat (NT), clouded leopard (VU), flat-headed cat (EN), and bay cat (EN), providing the most up-to-date and authoritative assessment of these species' conservation status.
- Discovering the presence of the rare and elusive Borneo bay cat in the Rungan landscape. This represents the first record of the species in both this area and in mosaic heath/peat-
- swamp forest habitat, and extends the known distribution range of the species by around 64 km further south-west. The flat-headed cat is now the only one of the five Borneo cat species not yet detected in the Rungan landscape – hopefully that will change with continued camera trapping surveys in 2017!
- Beginning concerted camera trapping efforts to detect arboreal cats and other species in the forest canopy. With cameras placed at a range of heights from 8-15 m above the ground, we are expanding our knowledge of arboreal animals and gaining new knowledge about canopy camera trapping – the first time this has been done in Kalimantan!
- Through our work to capture wild cats on camera traps, we have also recorded images of 21 mammal and 13 bird species in Sabangau, and 26 mammal and 11 bird species in Rungan, all contributing to our long-term monitoring of mammals and birds in these areas.





Youth Education

Raising awareness about Kalimantan's incredible forests, the threats that these face and the impacts that our decisions have on these ecosystems is hugely important. This is particularly true for the younger generation, who will be the future stewards of Indonesia's forests and wildlife. BNF is therefore delighted to have been able to dramatically expand its youth education initiatives over the past year.

Anak Sabangau:

- Our *Anak Sabangau* (Children of Sabangau) project involves environmental and academic education activities in Kereng Bangkrai village, which neighbours the Sabangau Forest.
- In 2016 an average of 70 children aged 4-15 years joined our weekly activities. These focused on a different theme each month, covering environmental values, peat-swamp forest ecology, water cycles and climate, orangutans, gibbons, forest biodiversity, threats to the forest and its wildlife, the impacts of plastic pollution and BNF's forest research activities.
- The project culminated in a big Anak Sabangau Festival, which celebrated the year's work, provided strong messages about the environmental issues affecting the village and was great fun! It included a photography and poster exhibition about Anak Sabangau activities, a Dayak dancing show performed by the children, an environmental film screening and a fashion show using costumes made from recycled materials to highlight the

plastic pollution problem facing village. Over 500 people attended, including five local NGOs, plus village and district authorities.

- We also started to develop a new children's library to provide opportunities to improve reading ability and environmental knowledge, provide school tutoring to Anak Sabangau children and promote a healthy lifestyle by supplying fruit during our activities.

Gibbon Goes to School:

We launched our first children's storybook '[The Little Gibbon Who Lost His Song](#)' at the 2016 Ubud Writers & Readers Festival in Bali. The book was written, illustrated, designed and translated by members of the BNF team. With text in both Indonesian and English, the book shares important messages about Borneo's incredible wildlife and the serious threat of forest fires.

In November 2016, we launched 'Books for Borneo' Crowdfunder Campaign, supported by Sir David Attenborough, to raise funds

for a print run of *The Little Gibbon Who Lost His Song*. From support generated through this crowdfunder we are able to donate copies of the book to schools and organisations in Indonesia where it can be used as an education tool.

Using this book, our education team have delivered storytelling sessions, called 'Gibbon Goes to School', to nine local schools. A total of 436 local children have attended these storytelling events and 179 books been donated to schools and conservation organisations across Indonesia during 2016.

Kelas Konservasi (Conservation Class):

During 2016 BNF designed six environmental education modules on peat-swamp forest ecology, biodiversity, primates, water, conservation threats and conservation solutions. Working together with the local government Education Department, we are offering these modules to local schools to complement their formal education curriculum.

Global Issues Network (GIN) Kalimantan 2016

Together with Bina Cita Utama (BCU) School, Borneo Nature Foundation hosted the first ever Global Issues Network (GIN) youth conference in Kalimantan. This international conference welcomed 115 students from Central Kalimantan with 100 young people from Jakarta, Bali, Korea, Singapore and Australia. More than 300 people came together at the BCU School in Palangka Raya for the three-day conference in September 2016.

The GIN Kalimantan conference introduced children, aged from 12 to 17 years old, to exciting and inspiring young presenters from Kalimantan and other regions of Indonesia. The conference consisted of a mixture of workshops, field trips, Dayak cultural experiences and evening celebrations. Topics discussed

included recycling, human rights, sustainable development, marine protection, wildlife conservation and food security. It is the intention of this conference that in spreading knowledge and sharing experiences, it inspires the students to move towards practical solutions for issues that they care about.

Conservation Education in the Rungan Landscape:

- In July 2016, BNF's Education Team visited Mungku Baru village to deliver a storytelling session of our gibbon book and introduced several conservation games. A total 74 local children, two teachers and two school heads attended this event, together with 10 BNF volunteers from our Rungan expedition.
- A second event was held in Mungku Baru village for International Orangutan Day, which was attended by 86 elementary school children and four teachers, raising awareness about and celebrating the area's wild orangutan population.

And More!

Not content with the above, in 2016 our Education Team also:

- Ran a field trip to the Sabangau Forest for 16 children and seven teachers from Green School in Bali, providing first-hand experience of the forest and its biodiversity.
- Participated in a staff exchange with the Gunung Palung Orangutan Project in West Kalimantan, to meet, share experiences and build connections between our education teams.
- Assisted in the three-day Bali Conservation Jamboree, which included a variety of different workshops focusing on environmental awareness.
- Recruited an enthusiastic team of 16 local volunteers to help with our activities and further build this exciting programme.

Outreach

A new brand!

We saw many new beginnings for BNF in 2016, including the launch of our [new website](#) and social media pages. The website remains one of the main platforms to promote BNF's work, and engage new audiences and partners in our conservation and research activities. BNF is now active on three social media platforms; Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. As BNF evolves and grows, we will continue to share our latest news about project activities with global audiences through these online communication channels.

Rainforest: Live 2016

Rainforest: Live is a day of social media activity bringing people live wildlife sightings from rainforests around the world. This annual event, founded by BNF, is designed to give people a glimpse into what it's like to explore a jungle, and why conserving these diverse and unique habitats is so important. Since Rainforest: Live started in 2014, a total 19 conservation organisations have joined from Asia, Africa and South America, taking it around the world. This year's event took place on 3 June 2016 and the hashtag #rainforestlive reached over 1.5 million people.

Events

- BNF partnered with Borneo Productions International (BPI) and Bina Cita Utama (BCU) School to launch a new nature photo exhibition I am the Forest, which exhibits the beautiful, unique flora and fauna of Kalimantan. The works

of internationally recognised professional photographers from Indonesia and abroad, as well as photographs taken by talented local photographers from Palangka Raya and other parts of Kalimantan, were showcased. The photo exhibition is a reminder that we can all have a personal connection with the forest. I am the Forest has been on show to the public since September 2016 in Rungan Sari, Palangka Raya and was featured on BBC Indonesia.

- BNF hosted an event in the centre of Palangka Raya city in celebration of Orangutan Caring Week 2016. In collaboration with Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation, Rumah Talenta, Institute Tinggang Borneo and Shouts of Wurmbii, we presented orangutan-themed activities including poetry, street theatre, live music and games to a crowd of over 200 people.
- Pemuda Bicara* (or 'Youth Talk'), supported by BNF, took place on 15-16 October 2016 in Palangka Raya. The two-day event consisted of cultural performances, live music, a photography exhibition, panel discussions and children's activities. The event created a platform for young people to speak out and take action for their environment and culture, in the hope of preventing climate disaster.

Media coverage

BNF team members attended the following notable meetings/symposia in 2016:

- The International Primatological Society congress in Chicago, USA.



Theatrical performance at
Orangutan Caring Week 2016



I Am the Forest photo exhibition - 2016



Pemuda Bicara - 2016

a letter of response co-authored by 139 peat experts (including five BNF Directors) and published in [Global Change Biology](#).

- The International Peat Congress in Kuching, Sarawak. This meeting was attended by over 1,000 delegates, including a large number of peat scientists and other stakeholders working on Borneo. Presentations included a special session of talks chaired by BNF Co-Director, Dr Mark Harrison, focusing on South-east Asian peat-swamp forest biodiversity and conservation. The meeting also created high interest from local media, which erroneously attributed some statements to the meeting and the International Peat Society claiming that conventional oil palm production on peat had no negative impacts. This was clarified in

Other highlights



- BNF places great importance on the training and development of our staff, and on equal opportunities in the workplace. With a view towards enhancing Indonesia's conservation and research capacity, continuous training is provided under our Staff Development Programme. This ranges from teaching basic field research skills to new recruits to empowering longer-serving staff members to lead projects and manage teams. We are proud to have women leading many of our activities and to reflect Kalimantan's rich diversity of people and cultures within our teams.
- While working to better prepare ourselves for the next dry year, when fire will again threaten Central Kalimantan's forests and peatlands, we have been striving to gain a better understanding of fire dynamics (see e.g. [here](#)) and impacts. We have also continued our efforts to raise global, international and local awareness of these fires and the impacts of behaviour choices on these, with regular discussions during our local education and socialisation activities, on BNF's social media, website and in media articles.
- In collaboration with the Universities of Sheffield and Leicester, BNF have collected ground-truthing data from 490 habitat plots in 49 locations, to verify radar mapping data collected by the European Space Agency's new Sentinel-1A satellite. These data will be important in developing more accurate land classification and fire occurrence maps for the region.
- Developing the use of conservation drones to support fire management, research and awareness raising efforts in the region. Our new Drone Operator now has both a fixed-wing drone (ideal for covering large areas) and quad-copter drone (ideal for intricate surveys of small areas and when runways are unavailable) at his disposal. These drones are being deployed to detect and map fire occurrence, monitor fire spread, plan fire-fighting strategies, map the forest and create striking images to support awareness raising and media stories.
- Supporting completion of data collection for the first PhD study on fish and fishing in the Sabangau area, by the University of Leicester's Sara Thornton. This research has provided insights into fish populations and local fishing communities in the area, and interactions between fish and fishermen. This provides important insights for conservation policy in the area, particularly considering the high reliance of local human communities on fish from the Sabangau ecosystem.
- Completing the first surveys of Tomistoma (the false gharial) in Sabangau. This included conducting 62 nocturnal surveys (using torches to try to spot eye glow) and completing 50 questionnaires in local villages. The species is exceptionally hard to spot, but one individual was sighted, confirming the species' presence in Sabangau, and the presence of the estuarine crocodile was confirmed through interviews. Unfortunately, a number of threats facing the species were identified and we are currently working on strategies to further understand and conserve this understudied species.

Publications

BNF's scientists and students produced a total of 34 publications during 2016, making important contributions to advance our knowledge of forest ecosystems, wildlife and conservation management.

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Cattau, M. E., Harrison, M. E., Shinyo, I., Tungau, S., Uriarte, M. & DeFries R. (2016). Sources of anthropogenic fire ignitions on the peat-swamp landscape in Kalimantan, Indonesia. In: *Peatlands in Harmony - Agriculture, Industry & Nature: Oral Presentations. Proceedings of the 15th International Peat Congress, 15-19 August 2016, Sarawak, Malaysia*. International Peat Society and Malaysian Peat Society, Kuching, Malaysia. pp 393-398.

Cheyne SM, Maimunah, S., & Van Veen, F. (2016). Camera traps reveal wonders in ironwood forests. *Peatlands International* 3: 14-15.

Cheyne, S. M. et al. (2016). Population mapping of gibbons in Kalimantan, Indonesia: Correlates of gibbon density and vegetation across the species range. *Endangered Species Research* 30: 133-143.

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Duckworth, J. W., Hearn, A. J., Ross, J., Samejima, H., Mohamed, A., Cheyne, S. M., et al. (2016). Predicted distribution of short-tailed mongoose *Herpestes brachyurus* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Herpestidae) on Borneo. *Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*, Supplement 33: 132-141.

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Ehlers Smith D. A. & Harrison M. E. (2016) Can Borneo's degraded peat swamps support viable populations of endemic red langurs? *International Primatological Society Bulletin* 41(2): 17-18.

Harrison M. E. (2016) Studying soil properties to help conserve orangutans. *van Walt Environmental CONNECT* 2: 18-21.

Harrison M. E., Cheyne S. M., Morrogh-Bernard H. C. & Husson S. J. (2016) Indonesia's primates suffer from forest and peatland fires. *Primate Eye* 119: 36-40.

Harrison M. E., Cheyne S. M., Morrogh-Bernard H. C. & Husson S. J. (2016) Indonesia's primates suffer from forest and peatland fires. *International Primatological Society Bulletin* 41(2): 8-9.

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Hearn, A. J., Ross, J., Macdonald, D. W., Bolongan, G., Cheyne, S. M., Mohamed, A. et al. (2016). Predicted distribution of the Sunda clouded leopard *Neofelis diardi* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Felidae) on Borneo. *Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*, Supplement 33: 149-156.

Hearn, A., Ross, J., Brodie, J., Cheyne, S. M., Haidir, I. A., Loken, B., et al. (2016). *Neofelis diardi*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/1366030>

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Acknowledgements

BNF's work would not be possible without the support of our incredible network of collaborators, from Indonesia and around the world. Our research in Indonesia is conducted in collaboration with and sponsored by the Centre for International Cooperation in Sustainable Management of Tropical Peatland (UPT LLG CIMTROP) at the University of Palangka Raya, and the University Muhammadiyah Palangka Raya.

We are proud to work together with the CIMTROP Community Patrol Team, TSA Bukit Tunggal and Yayasan Cakrawala Indonesia, who have played critical roles in leading on-the-ground fire-fighting efforts and in training fire-fighting teams, including establishing the new Mungku Baru fire-fighting unit.

We are linked to the following academic institutions, whom we thank for support: the School of Geography, Geology and the Environment, University of Leicester; the Primate Research Group, Oxford Brookes University; the Durrel

Institute of Conservation and Ecology, University of Kent; and the College of Life and Environmental Science, University of Exeter.

We are extremely grateful to the following organisations for financial support in 2016: the StOLT Foundation (Save the Orangutan and the Orangutan Land Trust), the Arcus Foundation, The Orangutan Project, US Fish and Wildlife Great Apes Conservation Fund, Orangutan Appeal UK, Ocean Parks Conservation Foundation Hong Kong, Orangutan Outreach, Orangutan Conservancy, and the Great Apes Survival Partnership.

Finally, we thank the communities and administrations of Kereng Bangkerai, Kecamatan Sabangau, Mungku Baru, Kotamadya Palangka Raya and Provinsi Kalimantan Tengah; the State Ministry for Research and Technology (RISTEK); Nicholas Cliffe & Co.; our many scientific colleagues; and all the Volunteers, Interns, Research Assistants and Students that contributed towards our efforts in Kalimantan.

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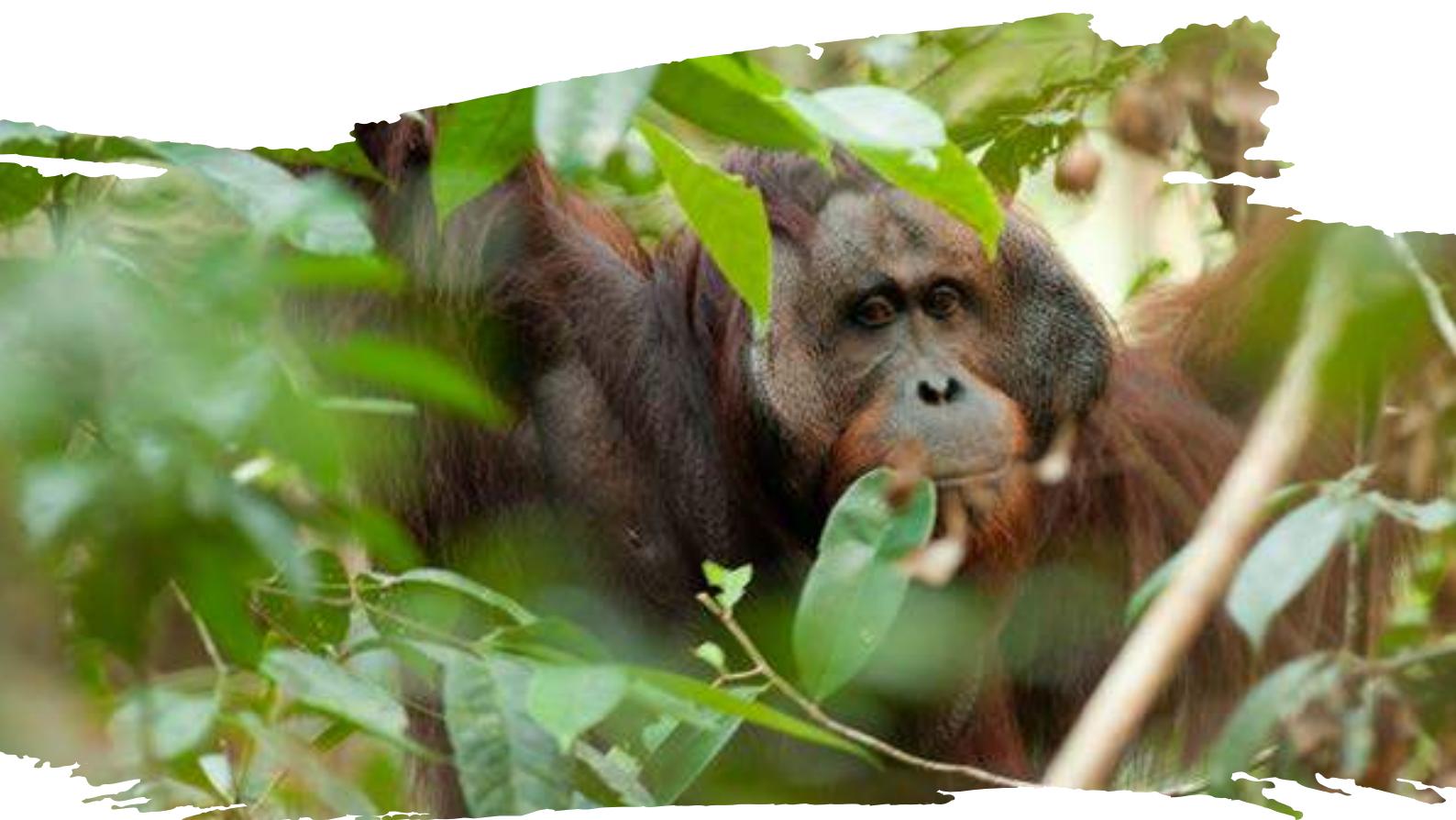
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BNF is registered as a non-profit organisation in Indonesia (No. 5016051162200005) and UK (Company No. 06761511) and is supported by the Orangutan Tropical Peatland Trust (UK Registered Charity No. 1142870)