

Rufford Small Grants for Nature Conference, Indonesia 2014

25-26 January 2014

Final report by Matthew Linkie

Conference proceedings

Fauna & Flora International (FFI) and the Rufford Foundation held a two day mini- conference for a selection of Rufford Small Grant (RSG) for Nature award winners from Indonesia. The main objectives of the conference were to:

- Provide a forum for grant recipients to discuss ideas, problems, issues and create invaluable networking opportunities; and,
- Increase communication and information between Rufford and its grant recipients.

The beautiful tropical island of Sabang, northern Aceh provided an inspiring location to hold this first ever Indonesia RSG conference, which was attended by 16 grantees. Participants ranged from first-time RSG recipients (7) to second RSG recipients (3) to those Booster recipients (6). The first day was allocated for project presentations, which were designed to highlight the logical progression in project implementation and evolution of project design from the first RSG to a second RSG to Booster. The second day involved a field trip to an FFI marine project site, including visiting a mangrove forest rehabilitation site with the local customary marine leader.

A summary of the conference proceedings follows with an emphasis placed on describing Rufford's added value as both an initial donor and longer term partner, but also on the inspiring conservationists who have been supported by RSG to champion their cause.

1) The RSG, although relatively small in nature, has been enabled disproportionately **large and tangible conservation impacts** to be delivered. There were compelling examples from two projects.

- Aswita (second RSG): through her Rufford fieldwork and persuasive lobbying, convinced and then supported an Aceh government agency to successfully revise its district spatial plan so that complete and legal protection was afforded, for the first time, to all local breeding sites of the Critically Endangered painted terrapin (*Batagur borneoensis*).
- Arif Setiawan (Booster): worked with shade-grown coffee farmers in Java to protect forest and a population of co-inhabiting Endangered Javan gibbons (*Hylobates moloch*). The project supported the establishment of local enterprise units that were able to add a conservation premium to coffee sales, using the gibbon as the flagship species. This doubled the price paid to the farmers, who rank amongst the poorest in Indonesia. Singapore Zoo has recently begun marketing and selling this 'Sokokembang coffee'.

2) Rufford has enabled early career conservationists to get that **all important first start** and mobilized sooner than they would have done otherwise.

- Pitra Akhriadi (first RSG): established West Sumatra province's first team to conduct population surveys of three *Rafflesia* species, all of which have yet to be assessed for entry into the IUCN's Red List due to a lack of dedicated research and researchers.
- Wilson Novarino (Booster): is now a senior Indonesian conservationist. However, his initial RSG grants enabled him to launch Indonesia's first tapir conservation project and since then he has become the IUCN's national focal point for the Tapir Specialist Group, is a senior lecturer at Andalas University in West Sumatra and Founding Editor of the recently launched Indonesian Journal of Natural History.
- Panut Hadisiswoyo (Booster): used his RSG grants to set up a collaborative management system that enabled local communities to directly derived ecotourism benefits from Gunung Leuser Natrional Park. He has gone on to become the Founding Director of the highly regarded Orang-utan Information Centre and is one of Indonesia's leading authorities on orang-utan conservation.

3) Rufford **fills a funding gap** in supporting projects that focus on species and ecosystems that are traditionally difficult to fund raise for, but nonetheless have high conservation value.

- Irwan Lovadi (second RSG): was concerned about the illegal trade of pitcher plants that he saw in flower kiosks in his home state of West Kalimantan. So, he routinely saved up enough money to browse the internet for an hour at a time searching for information on

pitcher plants. Upon discovering Charles Clark's name and his 'The Pitcher Plants of Borneo', Irwan wrote to him, received a free copy of the book and then with a Rufford grant was able to spend his weekends strapped to cliff faces on Mount Kelam, West Kalimantan, surveying for new locations of the endemic (to the mountain) and Critically Endangered *Nepenthes clipeata*. A '*Nepenthes* Conservation Club' now exists to further the project goals.

- Indra Yustian (second RSG): focussed on the then Data Deficient Western Tarsier (*Tarsius bancanus*) on the even littler known Belitung Island located off mainland Sumatra, adding new and valuable information on its status in the wild that contributed to its recent Red List reclassification of Endangered.

4) Rufford grantees are able to widely disseminate their project findings, but also make direct and **important contributions to international biodiversity initiatives** and their targets.

- Annisa Satyanti (first RSG): widely disseminated her results on the little studied topic of limestone forest and its flora at a national level (for government and academia) and international level (such as the Convention on Biological Diversity). This proactive approach ensured that her project results informed important conventions and also decision makers.
- Rufford has enabled emerging conservationists to **explore and test** their own locally developed approaches to biodiversity management.
- Erlinda Kartika (first RSG): is using story telling as part of a community outreach project to create positive and locally-held perceptions towards tigers in West Sumatra, as a step to introducing conservation measures to prevent retaliatory killing of the Critically Endangered Sumatran tiger (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*).
- Firmann Aldy (first RSG): is exploring novel techniques for studying the interactions between Critically Endangered Sumatran rhinoceros (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) and seed dispersed plants and how the loss of rhinos might impact on ecosystem health.

5) Rufford grants have often acted as seed funding to establish teams, build local capacity, identify priority biodiversity conservation needs and begin to address these through developing **replicable models for future projects**.

- Rasyid Dongoran (second RSG): used his grants to develop a tiger conservation model for Batang Gadis National Park, which is under high pressure from a commercial gold mining operation. With the demonstrated successes from his Rufford work, he was able to recently secure USD600,000 under the Tropical Forest Conservation Act to expand this model to human-tiger conflict management, forest patrolling and community empowerment across the entire national park and surrounding areas.
- Fachruddin Mangunjaya (Booster): used his grants to pilot innovative faith-based approaches to conservation through working with Islamic leaders, Islamic boarding schools and other religious channels. His project-developed urban biodiversity conservation gardens were a success and are now managed and funded by the local government authorities. His approaches have also led to wide collaboration with other faith-based projects that have adopted some of the best practices that he has developed.

6) Rufford funds have enabled grantees to **train up a future generation of conservationists**, and often for critically important species or ecosystems that would otherwise have received little attention.

- Mirza Kusri (Booster): epitomizes this point probably more than any other Indonesian grantee. Through three Rufford grants she has trained and support >100 Indonesian university students in enhanced amphibian research techniques and raised awareness amongst >2000 school children turning generally negative perceptions towards amphibians (such as them being considered as 'irrelevant' and 'unclean') into positive ones (such as being 'interesting' and 'funny').
- Matthew Linkie (Booster): used his Rufford grant to establish the first wildlife monitoring programme for Kerinci Seblat National Park, which is now managed and funded by the Ministry of Forestry. With four years of support he trained 56 research staff (from government, NGOs and Indonesian universities), which included students that were previously trained through another Rufford recipient, Wilson Novarino's, grant!

New collaborations forged in Aceh

The Rufford conference set out to identify and establish areas for collaboration between grantees and increase further opportunities for collaboration through their own local

networks. Here follows what was achieved from two days in Aceh.

- Data on the painted terrapin, as collected by Aswita's project, is in short supply and urgently needed by the IUCN Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group. Mirza Kusri, as the Indonesian representative for this group, agreed to introduce Aswita and her project to the Group's chairman to facilitate data exchange.
- Annisa Satyanti, as a government-employed botanist, offered support from her agency to Irwan Lovadi's plan to develop pitcher plant tissue cultures, as Annisa has previously done for her research.
- Fachruddin Mangunjaya identified the role that Islamic leaders could play in preventing the consumption of turtle eggs from the RSG Pulau Banyak project and in Erlinda's Sumatran tiger conservation project. He will share publications and contact information from his RSG project.
- Several conference participants agreed to write up their RSG data for submission to the Indonesian Journal of Natural History, which is edited by Booster recipient, Wilson Novarino.
- In March 2013, Matthew Linkie and Jeanne McKay (DICE) developed and ran an RSG proposal writing workshop at the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation's (ATBC Asia conference, held in Aceh. This workshop and its training materials were shared with the Sabang participants and several have already set dates in 2014 to run the workshop at their respective institutions in order to build local conservation capacity and encourage further RSG submissions.

Recommendations

- A future Rufford conference should include grantees from eastern Indonesia and also those focussing on marine issues, both of which were under-represented in the Aceh conference. However, it is also important to ensure that the set of talks are not too disparate, otherwise the identification of natural linkages and mutually beneficial collaborations will be harder to achieve.
- Indonesia holds the second highest number of RSG project awards (India being the highest). It is therefore surprising that not a single RSG receipt has advanced to the Continuation stage. Feedback from the Booster recipients revealed that this was because they had progressed in their career and felt that they were no longer suitable.

- To increase and improve project information dissemination to a wider audience, such as the IUCN Specialist Groups and national park authorities, Rufford should include a subsection or set of guidelines to enable this to occur within the RSG proposal format.
- Rufford should consider creating an alumni network similar to CLP, with regional meetings and opportunities for wider peer learning. This could coincide with regional meetings such as ATBC, allowing RSG recipients to present their work to an even wider audience. Also, an electronic Rufford mail-list would enable a global alumni network to connect.
- Some of the participants suggested conducting a gap analysis to identify locations (e.g. eastern Indonesia) and issues (e.g. marine biodiversity conservation) that are under-represented in RSG and which might then be prioritised for Rufford support.
- Wilson Novarino suggested a small grants scheme, whereby a pool of student projects (e.g. GBP1000 each) could be funded under a single RSG capacity building grant of GBP6000 that is awarded to the supervisor. This would have the advantage of increasing the number of projects and opportunities for early career conservationists who would benefit from the experience of initially managing a smaller grant.

Participant list and timetable

No.	Presentation order	Time (minutes)	Time	Title	Grant type (and year/s)			
					RSG1	RSG 2	Booster	Continuation
-		-	0700-0830	Breakfast				
0.1	Matthew Linkie	10	0830-0840	Participant introductions and introduction to the 2014 Rufford conference for Indonesia				
1	Erlinda Cahya Kartika	15 (ppt) + 5 (Q&A)	0840-0900	Using participatory video and storytelling method as environmental education tools to increase people's tolerance toward Sumatran tiger in West Sumatra	2013			
2	Firman Aldy	15+5	0900-0920	Identifying critical mutualisms between a threatened megaherbivore (Sumatran rhinoceros) and a threatened ecosystem	2011			
3	Annisa Satyanti	15+5	0920-0940	An impact assessment of limestone quarries on flora diversity in Ciampea	2008			
4	Pitra Akhriadi	15+5	0940-1000	Assessment of conservation status of <i>Rafflesia</i> in West Sumatra	2008			
5	Maggie Muurmans (given by Ferzya)	15+5	1000-1020	A holistic approach to community ecosystem conservation in Pulau Banyak, Aceh, Indonesia	2013			
-		20	1020-1040	Coffee & fruit break				
5	Indra Yustian	15+5	1040-1100	Ex situ conservation of <i>Tarsius bancanus</i> on Belitung Island - A pilot project near their natural habitat	2010			
6	Mulyadi (given by Khollis Munawar)	15+5	1100-1120	Protecting Sumatran tiger habitat in Aceh	2013			
7	Aswita	15+5	1120-1140	Sustainability of Integrated Coastal Management in Pusong Cium Island for Habitat of Tuntong Laut (<i>Batagur borneoensis</i>)	x	2011		
8	Irwan Lovadi	15+5	1140-1200	Promoting the conservation of critically endangered <i>Nepenthes clipeata</i> in West Kalimantan, Indonesia	x	2011		
9	Rasyid Assaf Dongoran	15+5	1200-1220	Local Community Empowerment on tiger and its conservation in Batang Gadis National Park, Indonesia	x	2013		
10	Wilson Novarino	15+5	1220-1240	Malayan Tapir Conservation Project	x	x	2008	
11	Arif Setiawan	15+5	1240-1300	Coffee and Primate Conservation in Central Java, Indonesia	x	x	2009	
-		60	1300-1400	Lunch				
12	Fachruddin Mangunjaya	15+5	1400-1420	Developing of Ex situ-Biodiversity Project and Ecosystem Services Education for Islamic Boarding School in West Java	x	x	2013	
13	Mirza Dikari Kusri	15+5	1420-1440	Promoting frog conservation through environmental education and research experience	x	x	2002	

14	Panut Hadisiswoyo	15+5	1440-1500	Marike Ecotourism Development Initiative (MEDI)	x	x	2007	
15	Matthew Linkie	15+5	1500-1520	Monitoring population trends of tiger and their prey species in Kerinci Seblat National Park, Sumatra	x	x	2008	
-		20	1520-1540	Coffee & fruit break				
16	Nurul Winarni (skype)	15+5	1540-1600	Ecosystem Service, supporting the forest, supporting the people: Evaluating ecosystem services of forest edge for park boundary support	2013			
17	Eni Hidayati (skype)	15+5	1600-1620	Youth-Based Coral Nursery for Future Rehabilitation in Sumbawa Island, Indonesia	x	x	2010	
18	Discussion	160	1620-1900	Sharing experiences, ideas for boosting project publicity/sustainability/fund raising/continuation				
-			1900-2030	Dinner				
19	Discussion	90	2030-2200	continuation...				

Photographs

Day 1 – A selection of presentations



Indra talking about tarsiers



Irwan describes the behind his RSG



Rasyid pretending to be a tiger



Wilson telling a tapir joke



Mirza pitches her Frog Camp initiative



Arif pitches his gibbon coffee initiative



Aswita talks terrapins



Panut talk ecotoursim



Fachruddin has a positive outcome



Linda changes local attitudes



Freya points to Pulau Banyak



Pitra the *Rafflesia* champion



Question time



Matthew wraps up the day

Day 2 – Field trip to FFI’s mangrove reforestation site and ‘Kilometer 0’ (most

westerly point of Indonesia)



Wading out from the boat



Customary leader of the fishermen explaining the project



Getting wet on the way back



Famous Indonesia landmark reached