

Project Update: January 2018

1. Leasing of Orchid Habitat and Planning Field Activities

The orchid habitat is a private owned land and to protect the habitat, the land has been leased. The land leasing agreement was finalised for 3 years in the presence of the land owner and orchid research team members (Photo 1). Prior to that, a team meeting was held on the first week of January 2018 for planning field activities and leasing process.

Team members have visited the site between 5 – 10th January 2018 to construct a fence and to clear invasive and insignificant weeds.



Photo 1: Our team member Abida Rahman (right) and the landowner (center) during land leasing agreement.

2. Habitat Protection through Fencing

The orchid habitat protection activity through fencing has been organised and implemented after a thorough discussion with the local community. It took 5 days to complete the fencing activities surrounding the core habitat of the orchid. The fence was prepared by bamboo and fishing nets to avoid disturbance by humans and cattle at the core habitat. Three locals were involved as labourers to assist in preparing and installing the fence (Photo 2).





Photo 2: Fence preparation and installation at the orchid habitat by engaging the locals.

3. *Clearing of Invasive and Insignificant Weed Species*

Invasive and insignificant weed species at core orchid habitat were identified and removed in order to ensure congenial growing environment for the orchid species during the field visit (Photo 3). This activity was closely monitored by the team members. Furthermore, all flora and wildlife were recorded from the habitat as notes of the natural history of the area.



Photo 3: Engaging locals to clear invasive and insignificant weeds.

4. *Employment and Engaging Locals for Guarding and Protecting Orchid Habitat*

One person from the local community was appointed to monitor and guard the habitat, and protect the fences. He will regularly visit the site for inspection and maintenance of the fence as well as other relevant activities and will report to the principle investigator accordingly.