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ASSOCIATION OF ZOO & AQUARIUMS



ACTION INDONESIA Newsletter

Issue 9
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GLOBAL SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLAN

ANOA
BANTENG
BABIRUSA

IN THIS ISSUE

- Action Indonesia Day 2021!
- Genetic sampling project in Indonesian zoos
- The birth of a Javan banteng during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Cycle for Sulawesi! Matt Thompsett's challenge to raise funds for wild cattle
- GSMP update in the AZA mid-year conference update TAGs
- Action Indonesia webinar



Editor's note

By *Corinne Bailey, Programme Officer, IUCN SSC AWCSG & Caitlin Cross, Field Programmes Intern, Chester Zoo*

Welcome to the ninth issue of the Action Indonesia GSMP newsletter! This issue follows the beginning of PKBSI's genetic sampling of GSMP species in Indonesian zoos and our preparations for Action Indonesia Day 2021!

Action Indonesia 2021 is happening on **August 15th**. Find out more about how you can get involved in this newsletter, on our [website](#), and on social media. In the run up to the big day, we are also running a live panel event on the 13th July, hosted by WAZA. [Join this session](#) to hear GSMP experts from 3 continents speak about their work to conserve anoa, babirusa, banteng and Sumatran tiger using the One Plan Approach.

This year, PKBSI, LIPI and Action Indonesia have been collaborating on a genetic sampling activity to sample 30

founder individuals of anoa, babirusa and banteng in Indonesian zoos. We would like to send a huge thank you to all the zoos involved so far for their participation!

We continue to send our best wishes to all of our partners affected by the pandemic. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has committed their time and efforts to the GSMP during this challenging period, and look forward to when we can see each other safely again.

The work and continued capacity building in Indonesia is only possible with your support. Please get in touch to find out how you can help and get involved. If you would like more information about the Action Indonesia partnership, including joining and contributing, please contact [Corinne](#). We hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to hearing from you!



ACTION INDONESIA
GLOBAL SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLAN

Action Indonesia Day 2021!

By *Corinne Bailey, Programme Officer IUCN SSC AWGSG & Charlotte Smith, Head of Conservation Education & Engagement Chester Zoo, Chair Action Indonesia Education Working Group*

Our third annual Action Indonesia day will be held on the 15th August!

Action Indonesia Day is an annual initiative to celebrate and raise awareness for anoa, banteng, babirusa, Sumatran tiger, and the species with whom they share their habitats. So far, we have held two Action Indonesia days, and have been overwhelmed by the positive involvement we have seen from zoos and institutions across 3 conti-

nents, as well as the general public! Over 53 zoos have participated to raise global awareness for these species, through a range of in person and virtual activities. We're aiming for even more engagement this year!

This year, we want organisations to get involved in person with their visitors and on social media. Previous in-zoo activities have included face painting at Bali Safari, giant GSMP species habitat board games in Chester Zoo, and animal personality tests at Zoo Miami!

Online, there has been Instagram Live keeper talks by Ragunan Zoo and others, photo and video competitions by R Zoo and Siantar Zoo, quizzes and much more using the hashtag **#ActionIndonesiaDay!**



Action Indonesia Day Activities at Bandung Zoo

We'd also love to see as many people as possible showing they care about these species and helping raise the profile of Action Indonesia Day by creating and sharing posts on their own social media channels.

Join us on this special day and bring lots of attention to some often overlooked but very special and endangered Indonesian species. To find out more about how you can get involved and to download some of our many useful resources in English and Bahasa Indonesia, please visit our website www.actionindonesia.org or contact [Corinne](#). And don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Instagram to be part of the fun on the day!



Action Indonesia Day Activities at Zoo Miami, credit Zoo Miami.



Genetic sampling project in Indonesian zoos

The Indonesian Zoos and Aquariums Association (PKBSI), in collaboration with the Indonesian Institute of Science (LIPI), and the GSMP Genetics Working Group, is leading on the sampling of the founder animals of the Indonesian zoo populations of anoa, babirusa and banteng. Here, Dr Christina Hvilsom and Yonathan explain more about the background to the project, and provide an update on its progress.

Background: Why is genetic sampling of GSMP species important?

By Dr Christina Hvilsom, Genetics WG co-leader, Geneticist, Copenhagen Zoo

Anoa, babirusa and banteng are identified as national priority taxa for conservation as they are threatened with extinction. Primary threats to these protected species include illegal hunting for consumption and habitat loss, resulting in declining and fragmented populations. Such negative influence on the populations can lead to dramatic losses of genetic diversity, if no protective actions are taken. This is because genetic diversity is the key to their capacity to adapt in times of change, and thus crucial for their long term survival.

Recent work on anoa and Sulawesi babirusa suggest that both species have lost significant amount of genetic diversity in the wild over the last few hundred years. One of the most important long-term threats to the survival of these GSMP species



The vet from Surabaya Zoo collected blood samples from a babirusa. Credit, Surabaya Zoo.

stems from a potential lack of genetic diversity. This diversity is crucial for these large mammals to adapt to future changes in their habitat, such as e.g. increased pathogen pressure. There is an urgent need to conserve these Indonesian taxa and will require increased understanding and protection of populations in the wild, as well as ensuring healthy, genetically suitable *ex situ* backup populations, in case of need for re-introduction to the wild.

The aim of the genetic work under the GSMP and PKBSI, is to characterize the genetic diversity of both wild populations and *ex situ* populations in Indonesian, European and North American Zoos. The international GSMP researchers will work closely together with their Indonesian counterparts on applying technical skills and building knowledge and resources in Indonesia enabling future use on other species, both *in situ* and *ex situ*.



How is the genetic sampling being managed?

By *Yonathan, PKBSI-GSMP Programme Officer*

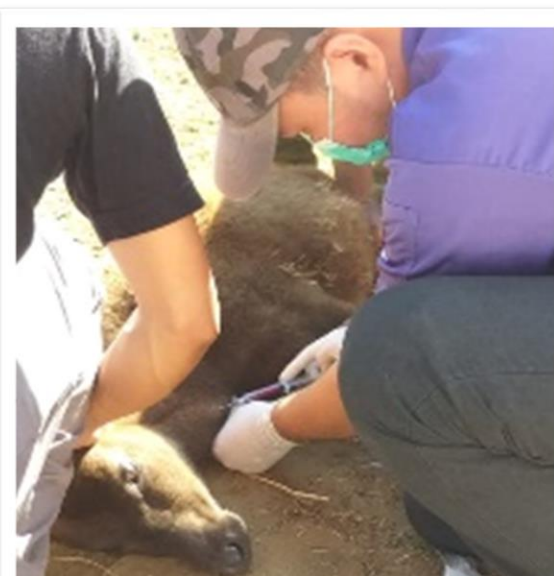
PKBSI is in collaboration with LIPI and the Action Indonesia GSMP Genetics Working Group, including Dr. Christina Hvilsom, from Copenhagen Zoo and Dr. Laurent Frantz from Queen Mary University of London to sample a total of 30 banteng, 30 babirusa, and 25 anoa.

Animals will be sampled during the permit period that was issued by the Director General of Natural Resources and Ecosystem Conservation, Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia, in November 2020. PKBSI has started the genetic sampling from 10 Indonesian zoos to collect samples from each of the 3 species.

This sampling project is a huge collaborative effort and required a lot of logistical management from multiple institutions.

Before starting the sampling, we coordinated with each provincial Natural Resources Conservation Agency (BKSDA) regarding the administration and documents that were required. In parallel, we communicated with the zoos so that they could prepare their animals and resources. Whilst some animals had been trained for blood drawing, others need more time to be conditioned for this purpose. We developed a timeline to visit each zoo and to transport the samples to LIPI, where they will be analysed in the laboratory.

By June 2021, we have managed to collect around 60% of the samples of each taxa in 8 zoos:



Anoa blood samples were collected from Citra Satwa Celebes. Credit, PKBSI

Bandung Zoological Garden, Taman Safari Indonesia Bogor, Batu Secret Zoo, Taman Safari Indonesia Prigen, Surabaya Zoo, Ragunan Zoo, Gowa Discovery Park, and Citra Satwa Celebes. We really appreciate all the hard work from the zoos and the BKSDA offices that made this sampling activity possible. We will continue to collect the remaining samples in July.

Dr. Yohana, the senior vet from Taman Safari Indonesia Bogor, who was involved in sample collection, said:

“Through genetic assessment of these species, we look forward to understanding the relatedness and the origin of the species so that the genetic diversity can be maintained”



Inspection from BKSDA Jakarta at Ragunan Zoo as one of requirement before transporting samples to LIPI. Credit, Ragunan Zoo.



The birth of Javan banteng during the COVID-19 pandemic

By *Taman Safari Prigen*

Banteng (*Bos javanicus*) are classified as endangered and threatened with extinction. In Java, wild banteng can only be found in four protected areas; Ujung Kulon National Park, Meru Betiri, Alas Purwo, and Baluran.

Taman Safari Prigen are happy to share the news of that a male Javan banteng calf was born last year, in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic following GSMP breeding recommendations! Recommended births are particularly important in Indonesian zoos, as they include more 'founder' animals from wild populations, whose genetics are underrepresented in the global *ex situ* population.

The Taman Safari Prigen vet, Nanang Tejo Laksono, said the calf was born without complications on August 12th 2020. Born to mum Beti and dad Mathos, the banteng calf is called Beni.

Dr. Nanang also explained that the calf is currently in good health and is suckling from its mother. Beni is monitored for suckling every 2 hours and is displaying normal behaviour within his enclosure. Benti is also doing well. In addition to her regular health treatments, she is given moloco (a nutritional supplement) to support her breast milk production. The Curator of Taman Safari Prigen, Drh. Ivan Chandra explained:

"Besides taking care of the calf, we also conduct an overall health evaluation every month. We carefully monitor the conditions of all our banteng"

Taman Safari Prigen are taking action to save our Javan banteng. We are working together with zoos, governments and conservation organizations from around the world to support the Action Indonesia GSMP goal of demographically and genetically healthy *ex situ* populations.

Since the breeding recommendations began in 2016, Taman Safari Prigen has had 11 recommended births. The birth of this calf is yet another success story of banteng breeding. As a Conservation Institution, the news of the banteng birth made us very happy and has further encouraged Taman Safari Prigen to continue conservation breeding activities, especially for endangered animals.



Banteng calf Beni at Taman Safari Prigen, Credit TSI Prigen



Cycle for Sulawesi! Matt's challenge to raise funds for wild cattle

By *Caitlin Cross, Field Programmes Intern, Chester Zoo & Matt Thompsett, Flamingo Land.*

Matt Thompsett cycles 1092 miles in 10 days on his exercise bike to raise money for conservation in Sulawesi!

During April, Flamingo Land zookeeper Matt Thompsett cycled the equivalent of from Bitung (North Sulawesi) to Makassar (South Sulawesi) on his exercise bike in just 10 days to raise money for conservation in Sulawesi! He raised over £1,000, which will be used to support conservation and population monitoring research in Sulawesi, home of the anoa and babirusa.

If you are inspired to start your own fundraiser for the Action Indonesia GSMP species, we'd love to hear from you! Get in touch with [Corinne](#) to share your ideas.

Matt's story:

"I've always had a love of all things cattle since starting my career working with domestic livestock. My favourite time of day was walking the fields checking the many breeds of cattle. During my time working at a safari park, I was fortunate

to be able to spend 3 years working with Lowland Anoa, Banteng



Credit: Matt Thompsett

and Asian Water Buffalo, At this point I knew that this is where my passion lies, and where I wanted to tailor my career towards, to be able to help and support these species.

That is where the idea of this fundraiser came from. I had never tackled anything like this before and I knew it would be tough. I spent a solid 4 months training and altering my diet. The actual cycle was harder than I imagined it to be, both mentally and physically. There were highs

and lows as expected, but finishing each day knowing I was just that little further was enough to keep me going. The last few days especially as my left knee and lower back were starting to fail me.

I look forward to seeing all the incredibly generous donations being put towards the species I truly love and hope that for many more years, these species can survive and start to thrive."



GSMP update in the AZA mid-year conference ungulate TAGs

In March, Asian Wild Cattle Specialist Group Chair James Burton presented at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Ungulate TAG Mid-Year meeting on the activities of Action Indonesia.

Updates shared include the five year progress of the GSMPs in increasing populations, improving genetic diversity, raising awareness, building capacity, promoting collaboration and more. It was a great opportunity to connect even more with our brilliant AZA partners!



Join the Action Indonesia GSMP Webinar!

By *Charlie Dale, Community Engagement Officer, Chester Zoo, GSMP Education Working Group member*

Join us on the **13th July** for a panel discussion with key representatives from the Action Indonesia. The international collaborative team will be sharing how their expertise contributes to the One Plan Approach conservation efforts for anoa, banteng, babirusa and Sumatran tiger.

Find out more about what goes on behind the scenes in the GSMP, hear from some of our core working group members, and learn how you can get involved in the GSMPs and contribute to this international effort to save anoa, banteng, babirusa and Sumatran tiger.

The session will be hosted by David Field, WAZA Committee for Population Management Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland.

It will be delivered in English language, with Indonesia translation for a question session at the end of the discussion.

When? Tuesday 13th July - 1pm UK time/ 7pm Jakarta/ 8am Washington, DC/ 2pm Central European Time

Where? This event will be held on Zoom and will be recorded. Please [register for the webinar here:](#)

Meeting ID: 948 4369 0575

Passcode: 031801



Anoa and Banteng at Chester Zoo, Babirusa at San Diego Zoo



Contacts

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Please enjoy this issue of the Action Indonesia Newsletter.
We look forward to hearing from you!



Supporters of Action Indonesia

We would like to thank all of the organisations, trainers and staff who support Action Indonesia and make our work possible.

