

Comment 1

Date: 15 November 2007

Sent by: Gabriel Thoumi and Rezal A. Kusumaatmadja, University of Michigan

Our comments are mostly process and people oriented. They are specific to the issue of fire which I believe may add value to the project.

Here are our fire comments from Rezal and I:

Value questions:

1. Are values at risk for the villagers in Aceh those of autonomy in the development process?
2. Do traditional Acehnese have strong knowledge of traditional fire usage?
 - A. Can this be part of the fire management answer?
3. How do they describe an efficacious burn (temperature, moisture, fuel and wind conditions)?
4. How is locals' collective support for management activities important in this regard as well?
5. How do they culturally understand fire?
6. Local feelings toward lighting versus anthropogenic fires?
7. "fire conservancy" - these practices have reduced the incidence of natural light burning which had historically served to moderate undergrowth. Does this work in Aceh?
8. What themes can be learned from the disaster management techniques used successfully and unsuccessfully from the Tsunami?
 - A. As this relates to gender
 - B. Acehnese Islam (compared to Javanese syncretistic Islam)
9. Fire management involves the repetitive activities of:
 - A. Preparing
 - B. Preventing
 - C. Responding to fire
 - D. Planning
 - E. Evaluating
 - F. Coordinating programs
 - G. All structured within institutional arrangements?

Mitigation:

10. Risk of crop failures, uncertain land tenure and disease are priority issues in subsistence strategies and development plans. How is forest fires and swidden fires incorporated into your model?
11. *Risk = Hazards x Vulnerability / Capacity*
 - A. How do locals measure quantifiable and qualitatively forest fire risk?
 - B. What are their perceptions?
12. The tension between explicit functions and obscured intentions could undermine the efficacy of formal legal institutional development in Aceh.
 - A. How is fire understood legally?
 - B. Are there social / economic / statutory penalties for fire?

Solutions:

13. Reconceptualizing forest fire and deforestation?

- A. Why is each individual participating?
- B. Is it an individual or group that reacts to forest fires?
- C. What are their needs that are not being met?

Comment 2

Date: 10 November 2007

Sent by: Serge Wich, Great Ape Trust of Iowa

I have been going over the proposal and in general like it but based on a set of very intense surveys that I conducted for FFI in the area during this year I do not think the area is important for orangutan conservation at this moment. There are probably only a handful of orangutans in the area (and that is being optimistic) that might be the last few remaining of what once was a larger population.

Thus according to me the forest should by all means be protected but there are basically no orangutans in that area anymore. This is why we have taken the area out of the current Sumatran orangutan distribution.
