



HBCA

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR CHANGE FOR ANIMALS

CASE STUDY



Protecting Orangutans Through Organic Farming

ORGANISATION INTERNATIONAL ANIMAL RESCUE

COUNTRY INDONESIA (WEST KALIMANTAN)

DATE SUBMITTED 19 APRIL 2016

CONTACT ALAN KNIGHT

KEYWORDS ORGANIC FARMING AND
FERTILIZER PRODUCTION TO
PROTECT ORANGUTANS

Project Background

We needed to engage local people around our rescue centre in West Borneo to engage with us to protect the environment and orangutans. We started with running educational programs to get people interested. We use a peddle powered cinema to take environment movies into the jungle and show the locals. Many local people didn't know that orangutans were critically endangered. They thought orangutans were common because there were lots of them in their forest. When we explained that there looked like lots of them but in fact this was because the animals were concentrated into ever decreasing forest areas, the local people began to understand and wanted to help them.

Valuable information is not easily accessible to those planning and involved with projects aiming to apply HBC theories and principles . Hence, HBCA is developing a resource that provides an overview of interventions and the lessons we can learn from them. If you have a case study to submit or any enquiries about this case study, please get in touch.



We outreach to local people in West Kalimantan and offer them training in organic farming. At the moment they slash and burn the rainforest and in the dry conditions that exist in Kalimantan the fires spread and cause uncontrollable forest fires. By training them in farming techniques we can increase production for them and encourage them not to use slash and burn techniques. They have been forced to slash and burn because they have no fertilizer. One of our initiatives is to install a gas digester into their village which allows them to produce biogas from animal waste and this allows them to cook without using wood from the rainforest. The bi-product of the gas digester is really good fertilizer that they can use to increase production by 7 times. We also give them orders for fruit and provide them with fruit trees to plant orchards. They then grow fruit to fulfil our orders which gives them fair trade prices for their production. It's a win / win relationship and the forest is protected so the animals are safe.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qlv6m44pspzjuuu/AAAaT8P508m2TOwN7N2l2gvpa?dl=0>

Our initiative developed to teaching organic farming techniques followed by providing trees for them to plant and then placing orders with them for fruit. We hope to extend the relationship to promoting ecotourism using local people to provide tours to sympathetically observe wild orangutans in their forest and provide overnight accommodation in long houses etc.



Achievements

It is early days for this project but we estimate a 7 fold increase in the production achieved by using fertilizer. This is a huge achievement for the local people and also a massive change in their use of local forest areas.

Challenges

Setting up the project was a challenge. We needed to provide a nursery to provide the fruit trees on a commercial scale. We had to provide the bio digester at a cost of \$5000 to prove it will work. Also we had to provide an agronomist to live with the people in the village to provide constant tuition in new farming techniques and to help the local people to understand that change takes time and to be patient and allow the fertilizer to do its work.

Overview of Intervention

By providing the Bio-digester and allowing the local people to produce large quantities of fertiliser we enabled them to produce more crops on their existing land. They can do this year after year and they therefore don't need to move their production area and slash and burn the forest.

Welfare Concerns

Clearly we want to protect the Orangutan not exploit it so we need to make sure the welfare of wild animals is protected when we reach this stage. We are now producing gas for the village from a bio-digesture so we needed to provide safety training on how to deal with an inflammable gas and how to use it safely.

Sustainability

Clearly organic farming based on organically locally produced fertiliser is sustainable and it reduces the impact on the surrounding forest.

Lessons to Pass On

Animal welfare and people welfare are inextricably linked. You need to take the needs of the people seriously to effect meaningful change on the animal population.

