

Local community participation in ecotourism and management of wildlife sanctuary in Sabah

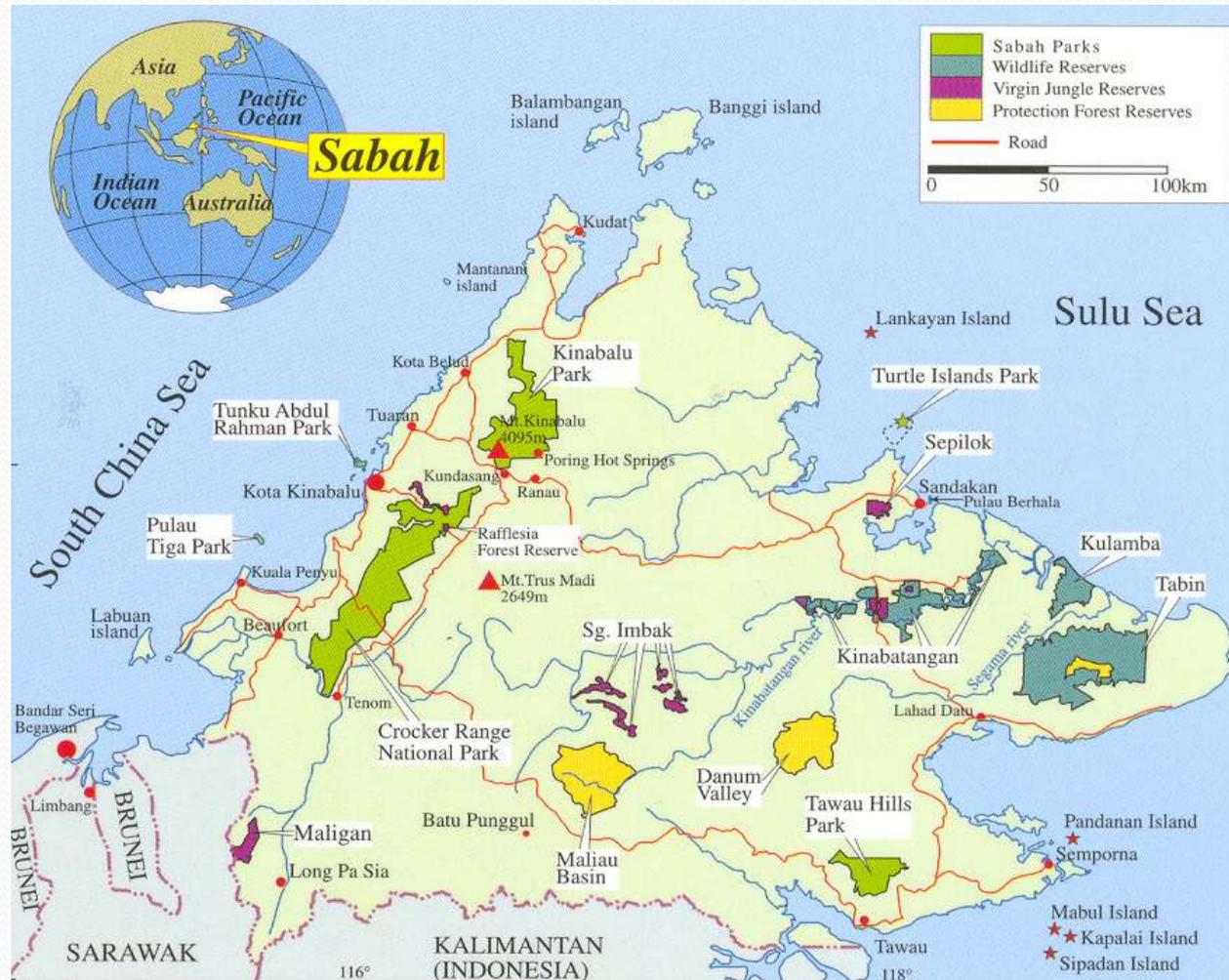
Augustine Tuuga
Deputy Director
Sabah Wildlife Department
Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia



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Sabah, Malaysia



Introduction

- The creation of protected area which was traditionally used by local communities is viewed as denying them access to natural resources and also seen as not benefitting them.

Lower Kinabatangan Floodplain

- Very rich in wildlife diversity
- So far a total of 1,000 species of plant
- 250 species of bird
- 50 species of mammal
- 90 species of fish and reptile were recorded in the area.
- Notable species found here are the Orangutan, Proboscis Monkey, Clouded Leopard and Bornean Pygmy Elephant.



The Local Community



- Known as Orang Sungai or River People
- Traditionally engaged in subsistence activities, cultivating small amounts of non-irrigated rice, vegetables and semi-wild fruits
- Most of their animal protein is obtained from freshwater prawns and fish from the rivers and lakes
- Basket-like rattan and bamboo fish traps are a frequent feature along the waterways throughout the area

Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary



- The last forested alluvial floodplain in Asia and an area of enormous importance for wildlife and the local community
- 26,000ha was gazetted in 2005 as Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary

Community-based Ecotourism



- RAE was established by the Sabah Wildlife Department and the NGO HUTAN in 2003
- RAE's ecotourism model is based principally upon the Gorilla tourism project in Rwanda, with significance placed on community involvement that has led to the creation of new jobs and tourist related services in the village of Sukau.

RAE Tour



- Encouraging visitors to experience and learn about research and conservation initiatives by visiting Orangutan research site
- To raise general awareness and interests of all guests to specific and detailed issues concerning wildlife conservation and the environment

Other Attractions



- Viewing Proboscis monkey from boat
- Viewing Bornean pygmy elephant from boat
- Bird watching
- Habitat restoration
- River cruising
- Village homestay with cultural activities

Local Community Participation in PA Management



- **River Keeper Unit**
- Trained and appointed as Honorary Wildlife Warden
- Assisting in protecting elephants and other wildlife within the Sanctuary
- Assist to monitor wildlife and threats to wildlife along the river and within the sanctuary
- Conduct day and night patrols to monitor and prevent illegal activities
- Monitor tourism activities along the Kinabatangan river, and stop any boat going too close to wildlife

Conclusion



- Establishment of the protected area represent the beginning of a period filled with both challenges and opportunities as the Government, local people and other organisations work towards the wise use of Kinabatangan floodplain

Thank you for your attention

