



Heart of Borneo Securing Natural Carbon Sinks & Habitats Evaluation Brief

Project Facts

Project Name	Securing natural carbon sinks and habitats in the Heart of Borneo
Project Location	Indonesia, West Kalimantan, Districts of Kapuas Hulu, Sintang, and Melawi
Project volume and donor	€1.0 M (€870.000 of which from BMU International Climate Initiative via KfW)
Project Duration (from start year)	July 2009 – March 2013
Date of Evaluation	January 2013
Authors of the report	Uli Frank Gräbener (lead) and Yusdinur Usman Musa

Background

Until 2005, illegal logging of pristine forest was occurring at a rapid pace in Borneo. In several areas, logging represented a major source of income for local communities, even if only as day laborer. Bending to pressure from an NGO coalition including WWF, and other factors, the central government took serious action in 2005 to stop these illegal activities. As a consequence, in several remote areas, especially in communities in the Kapuas Hulu district, a major source of income has fallen away.

In response, WWF prepared a project proposal to reduce the rate of deforestation close to one National Park and to replant forests in the vicinity of two other National Parks, all located in the Heart of Borneo range. Project sites are located in three districts within the province of West Kalimantan, Indonesia.

The project “Securing Natural Carbon Sinks and Habitats in the Heart of Borneo” aimed at the preservation of forest carbon stocks and biodiversity. Expected results of the project were improved forest management and the replanting of degraded forest areas. Project progress was to be monitored through remote sensing and compared to various forecast scenarios. As a strategy, the project foresaw to work with two rural communities in the buffer zone of Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park (BBBR NP) and one in the Labian-Leboyan corridor (LLC), with the stated aim of signing co-management agreements (“conservation contracts”) that specify rules and responsibilities.

At the Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park the project aimed at initiating a participatory zoning of the park and buffer by supporting the local communities in identifying economic potentials and finding alternative ways to manage natural resources. Planned activities included a) community mapping; b) participatory planning for protected areas; c) mapping of biodiversity and economic potentials.

In the Labian-Leboyan Corridor, the project intended to combine carbon sequestration, income generation, and rehabilitation of the ecological quality at the local level. Selected sites in the Corridor were to be enriched with local fruit trees, rubber trees, and hardwood tree species that have commercial value and that restore important ecological functions of the forest.

The project was designed as a pilot to be replicated in other parts of the corridor or in other districts within the Heart of Borneo (HoB). The project was initially planned to last through 2011. For several reasons, the project was later granted a no-cost extension until March 2013.

During the course of implementation, the project approach had to be adjusted for both external and internal reasons. Project implementation as a whole could not begin as planned, and activities were delayed. In response, WWF was granted a no-cost extension of the project through 31 March 2013. Since WWF Germany planned to continue project activities even after its funding came to an end, WWF Germany initiated a mission to evaluate the project. The evaluation included a mixture of desk analysis, interviews, focus group discussions, and field visits to the project sites.

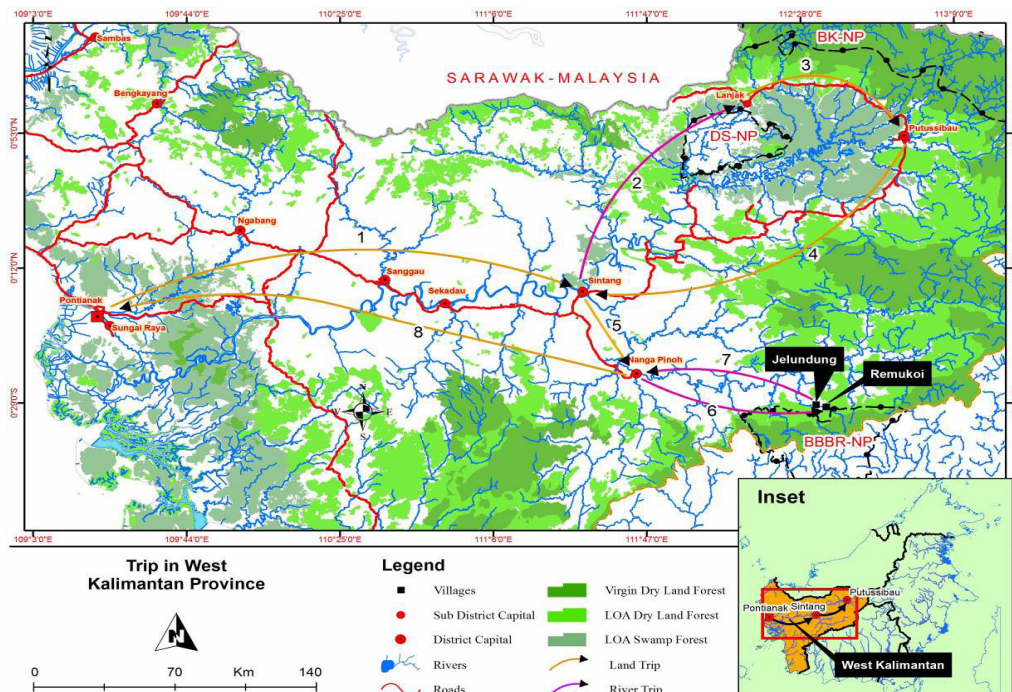


Figure: Project field sites and evaluation route

Evaluation Summary

Relevance and design

Overall, the project seems relevant to several international, national, and WWF-internal strategies. The contribution made by the project to these strategies depends on how well project approaches and lessons learned are documented and actively disseminated. In its initial formulation, the project lacked relevance for its target groups. However, during implementation the project managed to take into account their needs and to become more relevant to communities as well.

The initial design of the project seems to have responded first and foremost to the needs and requirements of the donor (BMU ICI). It partly reveals the time pressure under which the project was planned as well as the difficulties resulting from delayed approval of the project. The evaluation team had the impression that the main intervention strategy slightly changed between what had been originally submitted to the donor and what was later implemented in the field. The

strong community outreach focus was not obvious in the proposal documents but ultimately proved successful for the project to achieve its stated goals.

While there are voices contesting the importance of the Labian-Leboyan Corridor for the movement of Orangutans between the two National Parks, the evaluation team considers the LLC as much more than just a corridor but rather a conservation concept in its own right.

Efficiency

Even though there were some adjustments made to the project during its implementation (in using adaptive management), most project activities were implemented according to plan (albeit not in line with the time schedule). Some changes in the project implementation came as a result of adjustments to the project design and some were necessitated by adaptation to the real conditions in the field (e.g. to the change of restoration sites following a field assessment prior to the start of the restoration program).

Project sites are located in three districts (Kapuas Hulu, Sintang, and Melawi) within West Kalimantan Province. They are spread out over a wide area, with long distances separating the sites not only from one another but also from the main office in Pontianak as well as from the district capitals; frequent long travel therefore affected the efficiency of project staff.

On the whole, WWF West Kalimantan has appropriate and adequate human resources to support this project; however, it lacks a female community-outreach officer, which is essential to supporting women's health and empowerment activities in the communities.

Effectiveness

At the time of the evaluation, it was not easy to assess the success of the project with respect to its goal of "reversing forest loss and degradation in and around Betung Kerihun and Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Parks in order to reduce carbon emissions and safeguard important biodiversity." Many of the planned activities were fully or partially implemented. Some important outcomes of the project have been reached: during the evaluation, there was evidence of the "loss of forest cover in the buffer zone of BBBR National Park [having been] reversed" through strengthening of communities and improved management of the park. This was not the case for the projected outcome that "forest quality of the Leboyan corridor between Betung Kerihun and Danau Sentarum National Park [will be] secured through restoration and rehabilitation." There, the restoration area was reduced to 500 ha in consultation with KfW and BMU, but only 400 ha had been restored at the time of the evaluation. In comparison to the total size of the corridor (approx. 113,000 ha), the 400 ha are considered to be of lesser importance. However, the communities appreciate and consider the presence of Orangutans as something valuable, which is a positive result of the community outreach work the project has accomplished. It is recommended that further activities focus on the LLC as a conservation concept in its own right.

The most significant progress the project has made has to do with community and stakeholder engagement in the area. The WWF's work has been much appreciated by the stakeholders in every district. "Conservation contracts" have been signed as a way of securing communities' commitment to conservation and sustainable development, e.g. through development of agroforestry. The evaluation team considers these contracts a success and would very much like to see more conservation contracts made with communities before the end of the project.

Furthermore, the project also has generated significant capacity with respect to carbon baseline scenarios and their analyses, and it should continue to be proactive in its use of this knowledge in its work with local authorities, where more capacity building on carbon accounting is definitely needed.

Finally, the evaluation team is convinced that the project is currently significantly supporting income generation in the communities in which it is working. A quick on-site assessment has revealed that income in the Sintang project sites can be as high as US\$500,000 per annum in about 5 years from now. The evaluation team has asked the project team to perform a deeper analysis of the positive effects of the project on the incomes within the communities.

Impact

The evaluation team considers there to be evidence of change that can clearly be attributed to the work of the project, including the change to land management and a change of attitude in communities towards conservation. Both changes are likely to lead to more standing forest¹. Hence, the evaluation team is convinced that the project will have an impact on carbon stocks, but it is difficult to state and prove how significant this impact will be. For biodiversity impacts, the evaluation team considers the attitude of the local communities towards the protected areas as the most significant factor. The project has managed to get (at least partly) the communities on the side of conservation.

There are also impacts to the communities' well-being, even though this is still in an early stage. Depending on the actual effects of the project on the incomes in the communities, the impact on the well-being of the communities may be considerable.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the project seems to be high for the following reasons: a) strong community engagement, b) successful capacity building, c) co-management approaches, and d) supporting policy work. The project has managed to establish over time a relationship of trust with the communities. This is the result of a long process of community engagement and the considerable experience of the project team.

Risks to sustainability include the single focus on rubber plantations as the economic alternative, further expansion of palm oil plantations into the LLC, and political support for conservation and sustainable development. While the project seems to have managed to achieve high sustainability in project results, the evaluation team did not find any documented sustainability strategy. Nor did the evaluation team find any exit strategy, and since WWF cannot work with the communities forever, this seems urgently needed.

Adaptive management

It is stated that the project is using systems to document project progress in biannual cycles. However, the evaluation team did not find any evidence of such a system. Project backstopping within WWF Germany had its own approach to tracking progress (on a monthly basis), getting information through regular calls or emails with the on-site project team. This seems like a duplication of work; the project should define a common system that all relevant stakeholders can access. The project seems to have adapted well to changing and/or previously unforeseen needs. While this fact is very positive, it is unclear or at least not sufficiently documented on what basis these changes were implemented. Furthermore, we did not see any evidence of measures in place to anticipate risks pro-actively (early warning system), nor to ensure resilience against these risks. Our discussion with the project team made it obvious that the project team based its anticipation of changes in the field on an analysis of immediate results. While this system of intuitive management seems to have worked well, it could be conducted in a better documented and more transparent way.

Coherence and Coordination

In general, the project is aligned with the national climate change strategy, especially the goals to enhance the carbon stock and maintain biodiversity. The project and/or WWF Indonesia also seem able to ensure coordination with the owners of these different strategies. WWF West Kalimantan managed to establish good contact and earned a good reputation with government officials and other donors early, before project implementation was begun. The local WWF today is one of the agencies to which central and local governments as well as donors working in this area turn to for support and advice. Only on the local level, several partners have mentioned to us that they would like to know more and upfront about the workplans and approaches of WWF in order to be in a better position to support them.

¹ A study that was finalised only after the evaluation mission quantified the reduced carbon emissions and attested the project to have contributed to a reduction of over 900.000 tonnes of CO₂ through better forest management. The CO₂ sequestration from reforestation is estimated to add up to app. 15.000 tonnes in 15 years. Given these calculations, the project has outperformed its initial ambitions.

Project performance rating table

Criteria	Description of Strong Performance	Rating/Score	Evaluator Brief Justification
Relevance	The project/program addresses the necessary factors in the specific program context to bring about positive changes in conservation targets	Good	The project is relevant with respect to several international and national strategies and declarations. The project has adapted to make itself relevant also with respect to the target groups.
Quality of Design	The project/program has rigorously applied key design tools (e.g., the WWF PPMS).	Fair	Project design has been conducted under time pressure. WWF internal standards have not been applied, the design tools of the donor were not used to the greatest extent possible (e.g. missing assumptions)
Efficiency	1. Most/all program activities have been delivered with efficient use of human & financial resources.	Good	The project was conducted with efficient use of financial and human resources. The project employed or built up (carbon accounting) qualified staff.
	2. Governance and management systems are appropriate, sufficient, and operate efficiently.	Fair to Good	A down-side to efficiency is the distances between project sites and resulting travel for project management and coordination.
Effectiveness	1. Most/all intended outcomes—stated objectives /intermediate results regarding key threats and other factors affecting project/program targets—were attained.	Good	The project has made some progress; the planned outcomes were reached only partly. However, the evaluation team was of the opinion that project goals (carbon & biodiversity) will benefit from initially unplanned outcomes the project has achieved.
	2. There is strong evidence indicating that perceived changes can be attributed wholly or largely to the WWF project or program	Good	Perceived changes can be attributed largely to this project.
Impact	1. Most/all goals - stated desired changes in the status of species, ecosystems, and ecological processes - were realized.	Good to Excellent	The evaluation team had the impression that there was evidence of change both with respect to carbon stocks and biodiversity. This impression was underpinned by carbon studies succeeding the evaluation.
	2. Evidence indicates that perceived changes can be attributed wholly or largely to the WWF project or program.	Good	This evidence is largely related to a change of attitude among targeted stakeholders, and this change can be attributed to the project.
Sustainability	1. Most or all factors for ensuring sustainability of results/impacts are being or have been established.	Excellent	WWF has ensured the sustainability of the project through collaborative management, district policy advocacy, and good relationships with communities.
	2. Scaling up mechanism put in place with risks and assumptions reassessed and addressed.	Fair	The evaluation team was not shown a systematic scaling up mechanism, despite the fact that this is an intended goal of the project.
Adaptive Management	1. Project/program results (outputs, outcomes, impacts) are qualitatively and quantitatively demonstrated through regular collection and analysis of monitoring data.	Fair	The evaluation team was told about but has not seen a system in place to monitor output and outcome as a basis for adaptive management. However, the project team has apparently had regular coordination meetings to verbally share the project progress. On a biannual basis, progress was compiled and contributes to an aggregated report.
	2. The project/program team uses these findings, as well as those from related projects/efforts, to strengthen its work and performance	Good	Despite some weaknesses in demonstrating and making transparent the project progress, the project team managed to adapt the project well through intuitive adaptive management.
	3. Learning is documented and shared for project/program and organizational learning	Fair to Good	WWF has good documentation of learning such as books, regular reports, etc. and has shared this with other projects/offices in Jakarta and on the provincial level.

Disclaimer

I confirm that the above evaluation report is the result of an independent project evaluation process. The evaluation team has never had any relation to the project and its implementation. These results represent the process of a free assessment of project documentation and the results found on-site.

This evaluation was an internal evaluation of the evaluation unit of WWF Germany in collaboration with an external evaluation expert. The focus of the evaluation is on internal learning and improvement.

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