



Case Study:  
Habitat

# PROTECTING PEAT SWAMP FORESTS WHILE BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMY

Credit: Belantara



## The Challenge

The coastal forests of West Kalimantan have been at risk for many years. As with many peat ecosystems, the region faces a constant threat from forest and land fires. A combination of unclear village boundaries and a lack of previous forest and land governance made it difficult to build consensus among communities and create positive change.

## Our Solution

The Belantara Foundation focused its efforts in the Kubu Raya district in West Kalimantan, a peat swamp ecosystem which faces the constant threat of encroachment, poaching, and land expansion by slash and burn techniques ("swidden agriculture"). Thus far, there has been little to no progress made to optimize the potential of high-value natural resources outside the region. The area requires the strengthening of existing institutions, production increases, post-harvest processing, and awareness-building activities that provide economic value, such as ecotourism.

Belantara worked with the European-based sustainable trade initiative, IDH, and a consortium of local partners to come up with appropriate programs which were implemented accordingly. Belantara funded and supported programs in social forestry, protection, restoration and community development.

These include:

- Promoting community understanding of the function of protected peat areas and forests in reducing or suppressing threats from fires;
- Establishing an integrated demonstration plot on biogas, natural agriculture and ponds;
- Restoration and protection efforts, including an Orangutan population and distribution study, and planting trees with economic value, such as rattan, etc.;
- Strengthening the tourism development program initiative in five target villages;
- Establishing Community Fire Response Groups (MPA/KMPA);
- Supporting village improvements via spatial planning techniques;
- Reinforcing social forestry development through a new Village Forest Scheme;
- Developing a plan for the protection of coastal forests and fire prevention;
- Creating sustainable development support programs for local commodities such as fisheries and nipa palms;
- Intensifying family welfare development (PKK) activities, including assistance in product packaging for a women's empowerment program in collaboration with the Regency's PKK. The program helped the women succeed economically, thus preventing the need for land expansions.

## Our Impact

Belantara has impacted sustainable forests and local development with notable results, including:

- Benefits for 20 villages
- Protection of 441,831 hectares of forest
- Restored 2,741 hectares of forest lands
- Recognition of 46,970 hectares as village forest
- Establishment of two canal blocking systems
- Establishment of four agriculture demonstration plots
- Empowerment of 40 community groups (for fire prevention, restoration protection, etc.)
- Construction of 19 aquaculture demonstration plots
- Education of 156 individuals



Protection of  
441,831 hectares  
of forest



The Belantara Foundation is a non-profit organization that works to protect the Indonesian landscape by establishing local sustainability projects in areas that are set aside for conservation, reforestation and sustainable community development. Through its multi-stakeholder approach with Indonesian provincial governments, NGOs and communities, the Foundation funds programs that conserve and rehabilitate ecosystems, protect endangered species and help local farmers realize sustainable prosperity in Indonesia. For more information visit: [belantara.or.id](http://belantara.or.id)



Credit: Belantara



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FOUNDATION

## OUR PARTNERS:



yayasan inisiatif  
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Yayasan Konservasi  
Alam Nusantara



## CONTACT US

Communication Division  
Belantara Foundation

📍 Dimo Space Building, 3rd Floor 6 Timor Street, Gondangdia,

Menteng Central Jakarta 10350 Indonesia

☎️ +62 21 3915434

🌐 <https://belantara.or.id/>

**f** Belantara Foundation

**t** @belantara

**i** @belantara\_found