

A monthly digital magazine

HUTAN HARAPAN

NEWSLETTER

December 2017

From the desk of Editor:

Hutan Harapan Management is pleased to announce the launch of our monthly newsletter designed to update our donors, partners and network about Hutan Harapan's ecosystem restoration activities. There are many interesting and important developments underway in Hutan Harapan and we view the newsletter as a means to broadening our communication efforts. We value the support we have received over the past 10 years and we look forward to working together in the future.



Hutan Harapan's Director of Operations Visits Partners in Europe

During November 2017, PT REKI's Director of Operations, Lisman Sumardjani met with partners and supporters in Europe. His itinerary took him to Göttingen University and NABU in Berlin, RSPB at Sandy and BirdLife International in Cambridge. He also attended the opening of COP 23 in Bonn. During his visits with partners, Mr. Sumardjani discussed PT REKI's current activities and future challenges. In the first 10 years of its management, PT REKI was in a "learning by doing" phase because, as the first ecosystem restoration company in Indonesia, it was creating a new model for restoring production forests.

Looking to the next 10 years he emphasised the need for the company to be financially independent. The management will need to be innovative in attracting capital investment that will support both ecological restoration objectives and develop sustainable businesses to ensure the company has income to independently run its operations. RSPB, BirdLife International and NABU expressed their commitment to support PT REKI's vision for Hutan Harapan.***

Agroforestry is the Future

Hutan Harapan's agroforestry programme is well underway in partnership areas with community groups as a means to improve community livelihoods and support forest protection efforts. PT Reki has already signed collaborative partnership agreements with seven community groups and more agreements are planned for 2018. "Agroforestry activities are being developed based on these agreements so that both parties understand their duties and responsibilities" according to Syahbarul Ain Munthe, Hutan Harapan's supervisor for agroforestry. Currently, there are six demonstration plots of 1-2 hectares designed assess the most effective planting strategies. In addition, more than 31,000 hybrid rubber seedlings, 2,000 fruit seedlings as well as chili, kale, and fish seedlings have been distributed to the community groups. It is hoped that the community groups will start generating an income from the agroforestry activities beginning in 2020. ***





Biogas: Environmentally Friendly and Cost Efficient

After two months of preparation, Hutan Harapan's two biogas units went into operation on November 2017. The "biogas digester" is a simple system which produces biogas, via the natural anaerobic decomposition of organic material such as human and animal waste and household waste. Biogas is a naturally occurring mixture of 60 to 70% methane and 30 to 40% CO₂ with some H₂S (Hydrogen Sulphide). Each of the biogas digesters has a capacity of 7 cubic meters, one of which is located in the main base camp of Hutan Harapan and the other is located in the Tiung Luput lake camping ground.

The base camp needs about 3.3 kg of natural gas for cooking needs, but daily production from the digesters is currently half that amount. Nevertheless, "the introduction of biogas is contributing to the reduction of environmental pollution and reducing the use of non-renewable fuel sources," according to Lisman Sumardjani, Hutan Harapan's Director of Operations. Indeed, the biogas units are just the first step in Hutan Harapan's drive to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels and create an energy self-sufficient future. ***

Homestays to Support Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is one of the most important components of ecosystem restoration activities in Hutan Harapan, especially for the Batin Sembilan indigenous peoples who live in and around Hutan Harapan. The forest is where they can practice swidden agriculture, gather non-timber forest products and hunt wildlife. Restoration efforts in Hutan Harapan must ensure that the Batin Sembilan's economic, social and cultural lifestyle is sustained. With their access to their traditional lands shrinking, however, due to the proliferation of palm oil and timber plantations in the surrounding landscape there is a need to diversify their income sources. One such alternative source is homestays where Batin Sembilan families host visitors to Hutan Harapan. Discussions are underway with the Batin Sembilan that live in the Kelompong River area to identify five families who would be interested in receiving guests. Of course, hosting families will have to be supported with coaching in working across cultures as well as upgrading household facilities.

According to Syafrizal, Hutan Harapan's Community Partnerships supervisor, homestays have the potential to create numerous positive intercultural experiences in the form of knowledge sharing and learning of new languages. In addition, community members develop will new skills such as homestay managers and guides while generating an income. ***



Hutan Harapan is the first ecosystem restoration concession in Indonesia managed by PT REKI as a product of joint initiative of Bureau Indonesia, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and BirdLife International. Of total 98,000 ha, 52,000 ha lies in South Sumatera and 46,000 ha in Jambi. Hutan Harapan is aimed to conserve natural habitat of globally threatened species, the critically endangered lowland rainforest, and collaborate with local communities in managing Hutan Harapan as a productive landscape

