



SUMATRAN ORANGUTAN
CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

Embargo till Monday, November 13th, 09:00 CET

to International Press & Media

November 10th, 2023

Press Release and Invitation to Zoom Press Conference: Ground-breaking new orangutan conservation, education and welfare facility receives first residents in Sumatra, Indonesia.

The Swiss NGO PanEco Foundation and its Indonesian partner Yayasan Ekosistem Lestari YEL (Sustainable Ecosystem Foundation) are delighted to announce that the first orangutans have moved into their ground-breaking new facility in Indonesia known as the Orangutan Haven. The Orangutan Haven is a unique new conservation, education and recreation resource in development just 40 minutes from the city of Medan in North Sumatra, Indonesia. Originally conceived as a long-term home for orangutans that cannot be released to the wild, when later open to the public, the Orangutan Haven will offer visitors the opportunity to learn more about species like the orangutans and the living environment while spending time in a natural green setting away from the hustle and bustle of the city. Whilst not yet open to visitors, some orangutans have already now moved in to their new naturalistic island homes.

Invitation to Zoom Press Conference Monday, November 13th, 09:00 CET

You are welcome to join the Zoom Conference and hear more about this exciting milestone for this globally unique project from:

- Dr. Ian Singleton OBE, Initiator of the project and Conservation Manager Orangutan Haven (Medan, Indonesia)
- Irena Wettstein, Co-Managing Director, PanEco Foundation (Berg am Irchel, Switzerland)
- Diana Kosmanto, CEO, YEL, (Medan, Indonesia)
- Gilbert Murrer, Head of construction, YEL (on site)

Link to join the Conference:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84506480692?pwd=cEJVcnRlYm9uZW5kZWp1OTlyRiBKUT09>

Meeting-ID: 845 0648 0692, Code: 490880



Photographs

Please download pictures here: [Link Google Drive Folder](#)

Please take a look at the attached full press release and I look forward to seeing you at the Zoom conference.

Best regards,

Ian Singleton, Ph.D., OBE



Orangutan Haven – Wildlife Park in North Sumatra, Indonesia

Background

Since 2001 the PanEco Foundation and Yayasan Ekosistem Lestari (Sustainable Ecosystem Foundation) have been working with Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry to implement the Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme (SOCP). To date the SOCP has cared for more than 450 orangutans, mostly confiscated illegal pets. Of these, more than 200 have been released at the edge of the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park in Jambi Province and another 150 have been released into the Jantho Pine Forest Nature Reserve in Aceh province. In both locations the SOCP is gradually establishing two entirely new genetically viable and self-sustaining wild orangutan populations as a safety net should a catastrophe befall the remaining original wild populations. There are currently over 50 individuals being cared for at the SOCP Orangutan Rehabilitation and Quarantine Centre in Sibolangit, North Sumatra. Most of these will eventually be released into the wild as well.

A new home for those who cannot be returned to the wild

However, some of the orangutans at the SOCP Orangutan Quarantine and Rehabilitation Centre cannot be returned to the wild as they would not survive. Some are blind, and others have physical or psychological challenges. Given that orangutans can live to 40 or 50 years or more, the Orangutan Haven has been created to provide these individuals the best possible care and welfare for the rest of their lives, on large naturally vegetated islands, rather than living out their days in the large metal cages they previously occupied. The islands are equipped with climbing structures, ropes, plants, nesting baskets and freshwater drinking pools, and are separated from each other by wide water moats.

Who is moving in

12th September saw the first orangutan move into the Orangutan Haven. His name is *Krismon*, which is short for '*Krisis Moneter*' or '*Monetary Crisis*'. He was almost certainly given his name by his illegal owner in 1998, the year of a major financial crisis in Indonesia. From then until May 2016, when he was confiscated by the authorities, he grew up in a cage only about 1.5 metres wide and 1.5 metres high, little bigger than his body. As a result, he has some physical and psychological issues that preclude him being released to the wild, although he has made amazing progress whilst with the SOCP since his confiscation.

The 2nd orangutan to move in was *Leuser* on 5th October. Leuser is blind in both eyes due to being shot 62 times with an air rifle, including twice in one eye and once in the other, during a conflict with local farmers. The third orangutan to move in was *Paguh*,



on October 17th. He is also blind due to being shot by local villagers after wandering into some farmland at the edge of the forest. The fourth orangutan to move in to the Orangutan Haven on November 7th is Dina, a 7 years old female who is also blind, due to an encephalitis infection of the brain when she was still a very young infant.

All four orangutans are doing well, and we are delighted to announce that on October 19th, Leuser became the first orangutan to be allowed out on the one of the Orangutan Haven's 9 orangutan islands.

"This was a huge day for all of us, but especially for Leuser himself. We had no idea how he was going to find his way around and map out his new environment but he went straight up a rope from his indoor quarters to one of the nest baskets provided on the island, 6m off the ground. Since then he's been exploring the ropes and timbers around his nest baskets, gradually visiting new features and new areas every day. It's just fascinating to watch this process and imagine what is going through his head as he develops a mental map of his 'new world'", said **Dr Ian Singleton, Conservation Manager of the Orangutan Haven.**

«This is the culmination of over 10 years of planning and preparations. We've all worked very hard for a long time to make this a reality and are just thrilled to see Leuser looking much happier and less frustrated than he was in his old cage at the Quarantine and Rehabilitation Centre», added **Irena Wettstein, Co-Director of PanEco Foundation in Switzerland.**

Besides Leuser, Krismon and Paguh now also have access to their islands. Both are gradually and carefully exploring the bridges and the ends of the islands nearest to their houses, venturing a little further each day.

The next orangutan to be given access to one of the islands will be Dina, in just a couple of weeks' time. The plan then is to bring the female Dek Nong, and adult male Lewis, to the Haven to begin the next chapter in their lives as well.

Environmental Education and beyond

The islands allow the orangutans to live a much more natural and enriched life, while still receiving all the care they need. When the Haven is open to the public, sometime in 2024, these individuals will also be able to play an important education role, helping to educate visitors about the plight of orangutans and other wildlife species, both in captivity and in the wild. In this way, even though they are no longer able to live wild in the forest, the orangutans at the Orangutan Haven can still continue to play an important role in the future survival of their species and their natural rainforest habitat. The Orangutan Haven is a unique resource for conservation, education,



sustainable development, and recreation, and a major asset for the city of Medan and the surrounding region.

The Orangutan Haven already receives school groups wishing to take advantage of its varied education resources covering a range of subjects and designed to cater to the curricula for all age groups. Nature trails through the Haven's mixed agro-forest habitat will also allow visitors to immerse themselves and learn more about the natural environment and the many ways their own behaviour and activities impact it. An organic farm demonstrates alternative more sustainable agricultural methods and all facilities at the site have been designed and built to showcase more sustainable building materials and construction techniques.

The Haven aims not only to promote Orangutan conservation and animal welfare, but also to inform and educate visitors of all backgrounds regarding how they can reduce their environmental footprint and make progress in changing and adapting for a more sustainable lifestyle in the future.

The Orangutan Haven is NOT YET open to the general public, but the orangutans have now started moving in. Please follow us on social media to learn more of our progress and we look forward to welcoming you when we formally open sometime in 2024.

PT Orang Utan Haven & PanEco Foundation

Please mention in your report our crowdfunding campaign:
<https://wemakeit.com/projects/for-a-life-without-bars?locale=en>
(from the time of the press conference online)

For more information please check the following links:

Orangutan Haven

<https://orangutanhaven.com/>
<https://www.instagram.com/orangutanhaven/>

SOCP

<https://www.sumatranorangutan.org/>
<https://www.instagram.com/socp.official/>
<https://facebook.com/sumatranorangutan>

PanEco

<https://paneco.ch/en/orangutan-haven/>
https://www.instagram.com/paneco_ch
<https://facebook.com/paneco.ch>
https://twitter.com/paneco_ch

Photographs

More pictures and download in high resolution: [Link Google Drive Folder](#)



Sumatran orangutan with the name "Leuser" (male, blind) is climbing on the island in the Orangutan Haven, close to Medan, Sumatra, Indonesia.
Copyright: Orangutan Haven/Salvadora Bakkara



Keepers are carrying the transport box with orangutan "Leuser" to the island in the Orangutan Haven on Sumatra. "Leuser" is being relocated from his previous home in the SOCP Quarantine and rehabilitation Centre to the Orangutan Haven close to Medan on the Indonesian island Sumatra.
Copyright: Orangutan Haven/Salvadora Bakkara



Keepers are carrying sedated orangutan "Leuser" from his previous cage in the SOCP Quarantine and rehabilitation Centre to the transport box to bring him to his new home, the islands in the Orangutan Haven close to Medan on the Indonesian island Sumatra.
Copyright: Orangutan Haven/Salvadora Bakkara



Orangutan island with climbing structure and trees in the Orangutan Haven - new home for orangutans like blind "Leuser".
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