



PRESS RELEASE

Devastating Landslides Impact Orangutan Quarantine and Rehabilitation Center

Sibolangit, North Sumatra, Indonesia – The Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme (SOCP) is facing a significant challenge following several major landslides that struck its Orangutan Quarantine and Rehabilitation Center in Sibolangit, North Sumatra, at 1:00 AM on November 27, 2024. These landslides, triggered by exceptionally heavy rainfall, caused extensive damage to key infrastructure, including the main veterinary clinic and multiple orangutan enclosures.



Drh Citrakasih Nente, head of Ex Situ Conservation for the SOCP, in front of destroyed individual cages.

The Center was home to 41 orangutans at the time, of which 18 escaped from their holding cages during the incident. All except one of the displaced orangutans have now been safely recovered, however, and the one still out is being tracked by field teams until he can also be safely recaptured. No injuries were sustained by either staff or animals, thanks to swift emergency action by the SOCP team and its partners.

«It's incredible that no lives were lost, considering the scale of destruction», **said drh Yenny Saraswati, Senior Veterinarian at SOCP.** «The team has been working tirelessly to ensure every orangutan is returned to safety.»

«Most of the orangutans stayed near the Center, in the trees close to their original enclosures», **said drh Ricko Jaya, Orangutan Recovery Coordinator.** «Three wandered farther away but two of them came back after 24 hours and were easily recovered. The last one has been roaming around the forests just outside of the centre for a whole week now but we have a field team tracking him and as soon as they can safely recapture him he will be brought back to safety too.»

The immediate focus is now shifting to clearing debris, stabilizing the affected areas, and assessing the full extent of the damage.

«This disaster poses a significant challenge, but we are committed to rebuilding and continuing our critical work,» **stated drh Citrakasih Nente, Head of Ex Situ Conservation for YEL-SOCP.** «It will require time, resources, and collaboration, but we are determined to restore the Center and strengthen its resilience.»

Next steps

While immediate steps have been taken to stabilize the situation, the recovery process will take significant time and effort. Priorities include:

- Ensuring continuity of care: Maintaining essential daily care and rehabilitation for the orangutans.
- Rebuilding infrastructure: Restoring the clinic, enclosures, and other damaged facilities.
- Strengthening preparedness: Enhancing infrastructure to better withstand future challenges.

Fundraising Campaign

All measures for the immediate aid and reconstruction are accompanied by a fundraising campaign to procure the necessary financial means. Initial estimates put the amount at around half a million USD to cover the damage.

«This extreme weather highlights the increasing challenges faced by conservation programs like the SOCP», **said Dr. Ian Singleton, OBE, Conservation Director at Orangutan Haven and a founder of the SOCP.** «The damage is immense, but with support from the government and the global community, the critical work of orangutan conservation will continue.»

Links to the fundraising campaign in different currencies:

- CHF <https://paneco.ch/en/donate/>
- EURO <https://paneco.ch/en/donations-in-euros/>
- GBP <https://paneco.ch/en/donations-in-pounds/>
- USD <https://paneco.ch/en/donations-in-us-dollar/>

Media Resources

A selection of high-resolution images documenting the landslides and recovery efforts is available for media use. These images can be used free of charge but must be credited to Yayasan Ekosistem Lestari (YEL).

[LINK GOOGLE DRIVE FOLDER](#)

Photographs (Example):



A drone shows the site of the destroyed individual cages for adult orangutans.



A drone shows the site of the destroyed individual cages for adult orangutans.



SOCP staff uses a carriage for the evacuation of an orangutan due to blocked roads.



Senior SOCP veterinarian drh Yenny Saraswati assesses the extent of the destruction at the individual enclosures.

For more information, please check the following links and follow us on our social media channels:

PanEco Foundation

<https://paneco.ch/en/landslide> (with regular updates)

<https://paneco.ch/en/sumatran-orangutan-conservation-programme/>

https://www.instagram.com/paneco_ch

<https://facebook.com/paneco.ch>

https://twitter.com/paneco_ch

SOCP Sumatran Orangutan Programme

<https://www.sumatranorangutan.org/>

<https://www.instagram.com/socp.official/>

<https://facebook.com/sumatranorangutan>

Media Contact

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