Harimau Untuk Selamanya



MYCAT Outreach Programme returns to Gerik, Perak
29th April - 2nd May 2009

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Photos courtesy of Lau Ching Fong, Mohamad Azlan Mohamad Nasrun, Sara Sukor, Sharifah Ruqaiyah Syed Mustafa, unless otherwise stated.

Poaching and illegal trade are major threats to wildlife all over the world. News of confiscated animals – dead and alive – appear in the media more often. Large numbers of pangolins, turtles and snakes are often seized, and smaller amounts of some "higher profile" species – such as tigers and leopards are also feature in busts.

While such enforcement action is a major priority for the authorities – there is also a need to tackle the root of the problem. Long-term outreach programmes at hotspots for poaching and trade are preventive in nature. By directing our efforts towards local communities and threats at the source, we aim to stave off poaching and smuggling in the first place.



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This is the basis of the Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers (MYCAT) nationwide campaign to reduce local consumption, poaching and trade of tigers and their prey species, initiated in 2007.

MYCAT
Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers



Between the 29th of April and 2nd of May 2009, MYCAT revisited to a major hotspot, Gerik, in Perak. Its proximity to the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex, one of the priority conservation areas identified in the National Tiger Action Plan, makes Gerik one of our target sites.

The first programme in Gerik was held in November 2008. Reinforcement of conservation messages over a period of time is necessary first, for retention of the information and then, possibly for action or change in attitude.

Staff from WWF-Malaysia and Department of Wildlife and National Parks, and volunteers from members of the public, were trained prior to the programme, using Wildlife Conservation Society's Teachers for Tigers (T4T) Modules.

Raising the level of wildlife stewardship among Malaysians by cultivating and nurturing conservation-minded volunteers is one of MYCAT's key objectives.

As is the case with all MYCAT programmes, special care was taken to select motivated individuals, ensuring that the programme achieved its goals and empowered the volunteers to take part in tiger conservation efforts.

The team conducted education programmes in three schools and outreach events at three markets in the town centre.

Educational programmes for children in rural communities is for long-term impacts. The challenge is engaging the adults, the ones who have the immediate impact on wildlife. Many members of the community in hotspots are either directly involved in or closely connected to wildlife crimes.

Appealing to this sector of the community is crucial, for they are in the best position to provide real-time, accurate information on poaching and illegal trade to aid nforcement efforts. For this purpose, MYCAT set up the Wildlife Crime Hotline (initially named the Tiger Crime Hotline) in 2007.

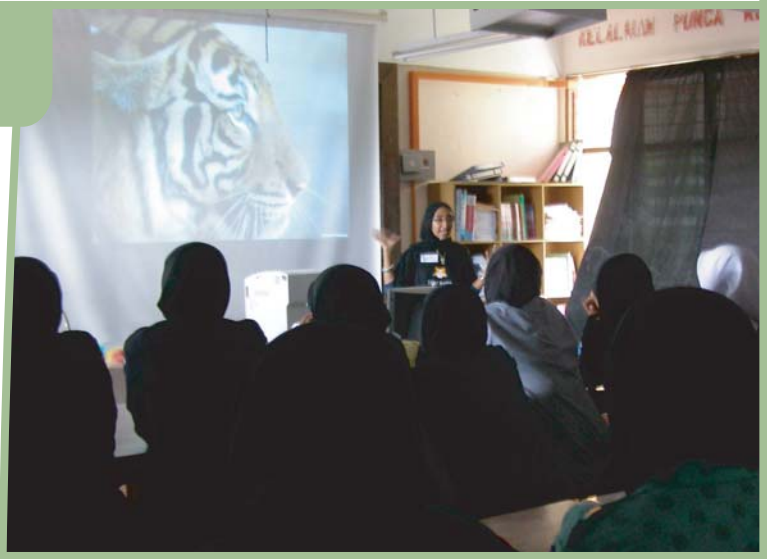
Poachers may not be converted immediately, if at all, but more watchful eyes and the recognition that their community is targeted by conservation efforts will make illegal activities more difficult to continue unabated.

For both immediate outputs and lasting impact, the programme therefore needs to be repetitive.

Programme in local schools

This programme was conducted in SK Felda Lawin Utara and SMK Kenering, involving 163 students aged between 9 and 15 years. The T4T-based programme included a presentation, interactive activities and discussion.

An assessment conducted before and after the programme revealed that 75% of the students had a newfound awareness that poaching is a major threat to the tiger's survival. At the end of the programme, the children made personal pledges to help save tigers and other threatened wildlife.













Programme in local markets











As this project proved successful in 2008, it was again taken to them at the local markets in Kampung Bandariang, Kampung Lawin and in Gerik Town.

Volunteers approached individual members of the community on foot. They spoke to owners of various businesses in town such as grocery and hardware shops, restaurants, and to operators at bus and taxi stands, who were asked to assist in distributing the awareness materials to their customers.

Our stalls at the markets proved highly popular, with the display of a stuffed tiger cub and tiger bones, snares and traditional medicines derived from tiger parts. Provocative posters of snared animals were used to create concern and encourage reporting of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, emphasizing the cruelty and illegality of using snares to trap wild animals.

The information was presented to show the link to such inhumane crimes that were occurring in their backyards, possibly by people they knew.

The volunteers roamed the markets, socializing the crowds with conservation messages and materials. Their efforts reached out to a total of almost 800 people.

Most people approached were unaware of the hotline, although some indicated they remembered the MYCAT programme from last year.

Some expressed their worries and concerns on human-wildlife conflict, especially wild boar and elephant-related cases.

This provided the team an opportunity to explain that removing tigers could result in increasing numbers of wild boar as top predators like the tiger keep the balance in check.

Thank You!

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It would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of the following individuals – Ayub Daud, Elli Noor Syafika Azmi, Junaidi Omar, Khusyairil Samsuddin, Mohamad Azlan Mohamad Nasrun, Mohd Nizam Mat Saad, Musfirah Mohd Asri, Sara Sukor, Sharifah Ruqaiyah Syed Mustafa, Syahaneem Othman, Traci Tay, Umi A' Zuhrah and Wan Noor Shahida Wan Ishak.

About MYCAT

MYCAT is the joint programme of the Malaysian Nature Society, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, Wildlife Conservation Society - Malaysia Programme and WWF-Malaysia, supported by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia for joint implementation of the National Tiger Action Plan for Malaysia.

The National Tiger Action Plan for Malaysia was developed by DWNP in collaboration with the MYCAT partners and published by the Malaysian Government in 2008 as the national tiger conservation strategy for Malaysia.

MYCAT
Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers

Saving tigers together

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Check out www.malayantiger.net for information on Malayan tiger and to download your copy of the National Tiger Action Plan.

Take action!

- Learn about tigers and their prey from reliable sources and share with your friends and family.
- Join and support conservation organisations.
- Ask for legal herbal alternatives instead of traditional medicines claiming to contain tiger or other endangered species.
- Do not eat the meat of tiger, wild deer or wild pig.
- Stay away from all wildmeat restaurants.
- Pay more for wildlife-friendly products.
- Do not support zoos, theme parks or private collections which display illegally acquired wildlife.
- SMS reports of any suspected crimes involving tigers and their prey to the Wildlife Crime Hotline at 019 356 4194.