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REPORT

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RECORDING FACTS AT GRASSROOTS LEVEL

INDONESIA-MALAYSIA JOURNALISTIC JOURNEY
TO HEART OF BORNEO

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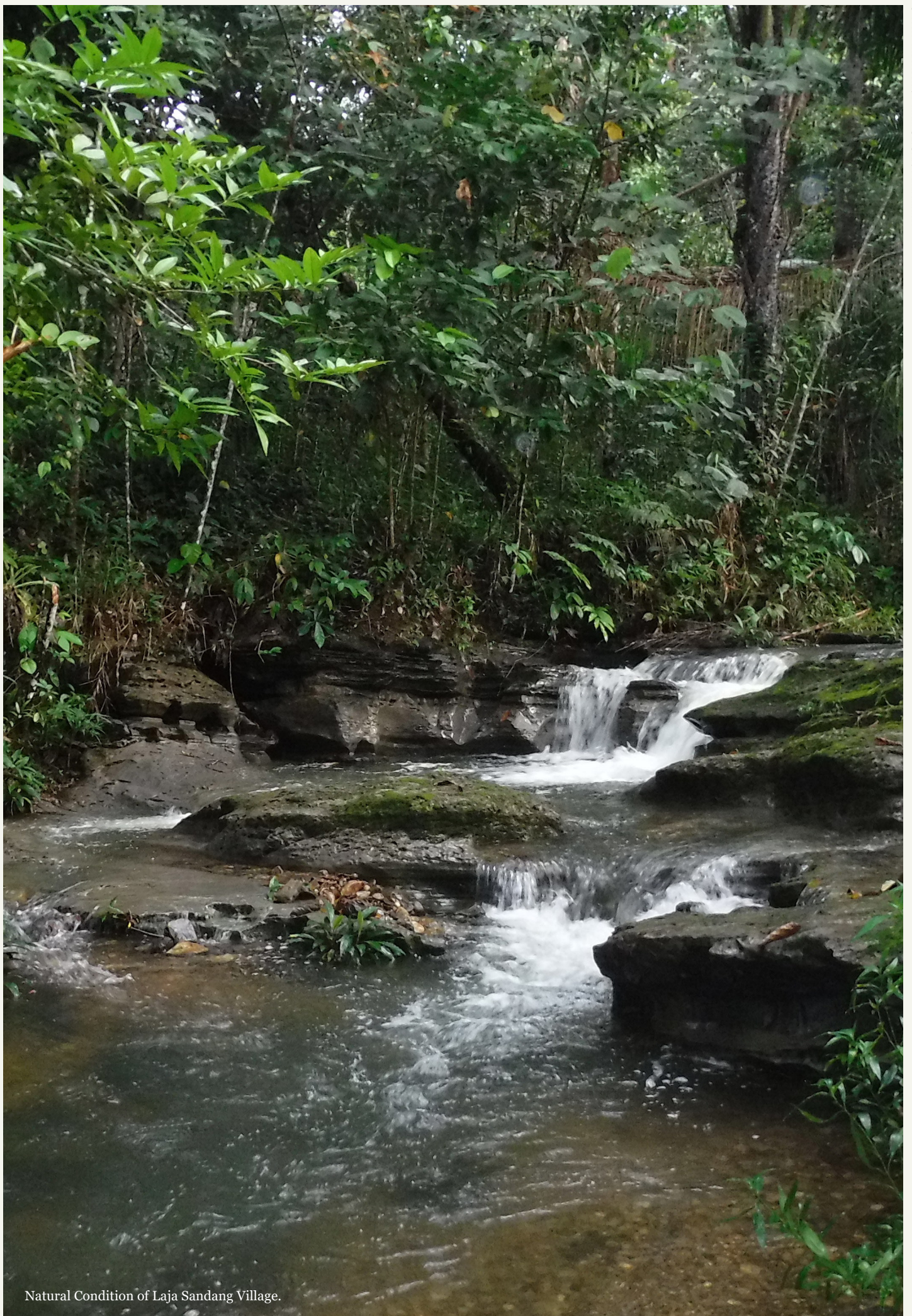
Laja Sandang Village, Empanang Sub-District from aerial view.

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Natural Condition of Laja Sandang Village.

RECORDING FACTS AT GRASSROOTS LEVEL

Indonesia-Malaysia Journalistic Journey to Heart of Borneo

WWF-Indonesia has implemented a concept of green economy amidst the community of Kapuas Hulu. The Program that has been launched since 19 April 2016 in Putussibau is targeting seven subdistricts in the Agropolitan District Strategic Area (KSK), namely subdistricts of Empanang, Semitau, Seberuang, Hulu Gurung, Silat Hilir, Silat Hulu, and Pengkadan.

The echo of the program was rising since the green economic workshop involving indigenous peoples, Governments, academics, and NGOs in Lanjak village, Batang Lupar subdistrict, Kapuas Hulu, on November 29, 2017. In addition to academics and governments of the two countries (Indonesia and Malaysia), WWF also presented representatives of assisted communities to share their successful stories in natural resource management, ranging from internal control system (ICS) of rubber, ICS of salted fish, ecotourism, village governance, cultivation of agarwood, to the Tagang system.



A group photo with media representative from Indonesia and Sarawak with head of BAPPEDA (Regional Planning Agency) Kapuas Hulu.

© WWF-Indonesia / Victor fidelis Santosa

Beginning with this workshop, the concept of green economy was implemented at grassroots level. WWF implemented program instruments in the pilot villages through strengthening its community capacity. As a first step, WWF began introducing the community development programmes through the village governments and Community groups on January 11-18, 2018.

The coordination measures gave birth to a number of initiatives targeting community development in managing commodity-based natural resources. Village officials, public figures, business groups, farmer groups, and youth and women groups became main targets of assistance.

Out of the seven sub-districts that were included in the Agropolitan district of Kapuas Hulu, five villages in the Heart of Borneo were selected as demonstration pilot projects. Those villages included Miau Merah in the Subdistrict of Silat Hilir, Laja Sandang Village in Empanang Sub-district, Lubuk Antuk Village, Kelakar Village, and Mentawit villages in Hulu Gurung Subdistrict.

Furthermore, community development targets the commodity aspects. Commodities include rubber, palm oil, agroforestri, and ecotourism. WWF strengthens community capacity to sustainably manage commodities in their respective villages.

To arrive at the dream stage, there were several stages of assistance activities were given. Among them through the training of village facilitators, the planning of participatory community activities, and the study of socio-economic baseline and vulnerability of the community to the environment. It began between January and mid-April 2018.



A demonstration of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) implementation by rubber farmers in Hulu Gurung Sub-District.

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WWF then conducted assessment on the local market potential for community rubber product, and drafting of marketing cooperation agreement between WWF-Indonesia and PT Kirana Megatara. The important thing in this process of providing assistance is strengthening of the community.

WWF had also conducted evaluation of activities from January to June 2018 and activity planning for July-December 2018. The result of evaluation then emphasized on strengthening the system and institution of quality assurance of rubber (Internal Control System) in the villages of Kelakar, Mentawit, and Lubuk Antuk.

The rubber farmer groups of those villages were invited to visit and study at the rubber farmer group of Labian village in Batang Lupar Subdistrict. The aim was to let them know and understand that other community of the same livelihood (rubber farmer) had started the activities of clean rubber production.

The participants were expected to understand that strengthening the group and to produce improved rubber product must go through lengthy processes. Only with such effort that the goal was to be achieved.

The assistance to smallholder rubber plantations was also conducted by WWF by targeting Miau Merah Village, Silat Hilir Subdistrict and agroforestry initiative in Sebangkang Hamlet, Laja Sandang Village, Empanang Subdistrict.

Later on, a semi workshop was held on establishment plan of BUMDes (village level business enterprise) for 3 villages in the Subdistrict of Hulu Gurung which involved officials of village government, Village Representative Body, heads of the ICS Group, village facilitators of Lubuk Antuk, Kelakar, Mentawit, and Camat (Head) of Hulu Gurung Subdistrict. All of those activities were intended to facilitate implementation of the green economy concept in the community at the site level.

The journalists of the two countries were invited to visit the site on June 19-22, 2019. This was intended to provide the opportunity for journalists to cover the result of collaborative sustainable natural resources management in Agropolitan KSK of Kapuas Hulu District.

Pak Sapadi, the chief of rubber farmer groups in Kelakar village, was interviewed on production after implementing Internal Control System (ICS).



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The media visit also represented an effort to increase awareness of stakeholders related to collaborative work that implicates sustainable development, and provide experience to the community, the private sector, and the government, in media communication regarding the practices and impacts of collaborative work for sustainable natural resource management.



JOURNALISTIC VISITS

No fewer than 21 participants visited Kapuas Hulu. They were journalists, WWF staffs, and other supporters of the IKI project. Four of journalists were from Malaysia and three from Indonesia.

The Malaysian journalists consisted of Zaphne Anak Philip of Bernama, Firdaus Arasy Idris of Radio Television Malaysia, Agnes Tugong of Utusan Borneo, and Jasmine Chin Xiuli of Sin Chew Daily. While the Indonesian journalists consisted of Meidy Khadafi from Pontianak Post, Destriadi Yunas from Tribune Pontianak, and Barlian Pasore from MNC Group.



Adri Aliayub as the community empowerment agroforestry activities in Sebangkang Sub-Village



© WWF-Indonesia / Victor fidelis Sentosa

A group photo with media and communities after discussion and interview on agroforestry in the Longhouse of Sebangkang Sub-Village.



nt coordinator was interviewed on
llage.

All of the journalists were accompanied by WWF staffs of both countries. From WWF Indonesia they were Syahirsyah, Adri Aliayub, Maria Theresia, and Arum Kinasih. The travel process received full support from other supporters of IKI projects such as Andi Fachrizal, Anong Thea Ananda, Victor Fidelis Sentosa, Rikardus, Wirawansyah, and Willyardo Vermata Randa Ahie.

The Malaysian journalists departed from Kuching City to Badau on Tuesday June 18, 2019. They decided to makr a stop at the Indonesia-Malaysia border, taking a break after a tiring journey. At the small village, they set up a coverage plan for the visit.

At the same time, the transportation team from Pontianak who would move the Malaysian journalists to Putussibau had arrived in Badau. They directly joined the Malaysian team that was accompanied by WWF Malaysia staffs Amanda Nayra, Michael Jengging and Diana Chendai Anak Ngadan.

COURTESY VISIT TO BAPPEDA OF KAPUAS HULU DISTRICT

Bappeda (Regional Planning Board)

After staying overnight in Badau, the Malaysian team began moving to Putussibau on June 19 morning which by land took about three hours. On arrival they were ushered directly to the office of Bappeda Kapuas Hulu. There, the Indonesian WWF staff and journalist group had been waiting.

A discussion between media and representatives of Agropolitan technical team of Kapuas Hulu District led by Head of BAPPEDA, Haji Abang Muhammad Nasir, on Green Economy in Indonesia's HoB.



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They were greeted by Head of Bappeda H. Abang Muhammad Nasir, Head of Physical, Infrastructure, and Regional Development of Bappeda Kapuas Hulu, Budi Prasetyo, and another Bappeda staff, Iin Nisah.

The gathering between press practitioners of two countries and the officials of Bappeda Kapuas Hulu was held in a family atmosphere. H. A. M. Nasir explained to the participants the implementation of green economy in the Heart of Kalimantan, the regulation set up by the District government, including the status of Kapuas Hulu District as a Conservation District.

While Budi Prasetyo provided information on the location of the Agropolitan Strategic Strategic Area of Kapuas Hulu which was scattered in seven subdistricts. The seven subdistricts were Empanang, Semitau, Seberuang, Hulu Gurung, Silat Hilir, Silat Hulu, and Pengkadan.

According to Budi Prasetyo, WWF has established five villages as pilot projects. The five villages were scattered in three sub-districts. The villages were Mentawit, Kelakar, and Lubuk Antuk in Hulu Gurung subdistrict. Two other villages were Miau Merah in the subdistrict of Silat Hilir and Laja Sandang in Empanang Subdistrict.



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Budi Prasetyo represented the technical team presented a more technical explanation on Green Economy in Kapuas Hulu to media.

These five villages were maximizing the development of their respective commodities. Among them, rubber, palm, ecotourism, and Agroporestry or Wanatani. The village of Kelakar and Mentawit, maximized its rubber potential through an internal control system (ICS) mechanism. Similarly, Lubuk Antuk Village also developed two commodities at once, namely rubber and ecotourism. Meanwhile, the village of Miau Merah developed smallholders oil palm plantations and Laja Sandang focused on the Wanatani.

Through the explanation, the journalists understood what WWF-Indonesia was working through the support of the German IKI. The journalists learnt that the various instruments implemented by WWF was an effort to improve the welfare of community without damaging the forests.

MOVING TOWARDS HULU GURUNG

The journalists were not quite content with merely listening to information provided by government official alone. They wanted to see facts at the grassroots level. Therefore, after concluding their dialogue with the officials of the Regional Planning Board, they continued their journey to Hulu Gurung Subdistrict.

In-depth interview with the Head of Hulu Gurung Sub-District as the representative of government on roles and functions of regional government in implementing the Green Economy.



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Along the way, the journalists enjoy the landscape that was presented in front of the eyes. The towering expanses of the Muller Mountains, the green forests and clear streams invited their attention. The journey from Putussibau to Kelakar village, Hulu Gurung subdistrict was about two hours.

In Kelakar village the residents were already waiting. There was also the Camat of Hulu Gurung, Baharudin and other Subdistrict Office Heads (*Muspika*). They welcomed the group with traditional Malay ritual of *tepung Tawar* (Spray of Holy Water) in the ICS rubber storage warehouse.

In this warehouse, the journalists could see directly the rubber produced by the Kelakar community through the ICS system. The residents sold their rubber product to the Joint Business Group (KUB) named Ngkiyung Bersatu for Rp 9,500 per kilogram, far exceeding the price of non ICS rubber which only sold at Rp 6,000 per kilogram. The KUB was under the management of the village Owned Business Enterprise (*Bumdes*).

After seeing the results of the rubber ICS community, the journalists also took a discussion with the village officials at Kelakar and *Muspika* of Hulu Gurung Subdistrict. In fact, Camat of Hulu Gurung appreciated the breakthrough implemented by WWF in boosting the residents' economy in the rubber plantation sector.



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Media visited storehouse where clean rubber kept and owned by rubber farmer groups of Kelakar Village.

The journey then continued to Mentawit village. The journalists wanted to see the condition of the community rubber plantation that had implemented the ICS system. The trip was quite short. It took only 15 minutes travel from Kelakar. In the village, the residents were also waiting. They welcomed the presence of the journalists directly in the rubber plantation.

The journalists did not waste the opportunity to photograph and record the condition of the residents' plantations that were kept clean at all time. The farmers also immediately adopted the recommended method of rubber tapping. Not infrequently, the journalists from Malaysia also tried their skill in becoming instant rubber tappers under the guidance of the Mentawit citizens.

After completing all of their coverage, the journalists kindly asked the citizens of Mentawit to let them return to Nanga Tepuai, capital of Hulu Gurung subdistrict where they stayed.

The next day, June 20, 2019, the entire group departed to Laja Sandang Village, Empanang Subdistrict. But the journalists did not waste the opportunity to make a stopover at Lubuk Antuk village. The small village at the foot of Piyabung Hill was known for its natural beauty.

In this village, WWF through the IKI project conducted assistance project. Two main agenda of WWF in Lubuk Antuk. In addition to rubber, the organization also assisted ecotourism development. The journalists finally had an opportunity to talk lightly with members of the Batu Bedogak Tourism Management Group (*KPP*).



© WWF-Indonesia / Victor Idelis Sentosa

A discussion between media with Tourism Operator Group Lubuk Antuk Village on potential and challenges in managing tourism.

One of them was Rajimanto. In the presence of the journalist, Jiman, his familiar greeting, explained the plan of tourism development in his village. Initially they are only assembled in one community of nature lovers. Gradually they turned into a group of tourism managers.

Through WWF, they began to gain something. Exploring tourism potential from the village to the top of Piyabung Hill. Various natural wonders were recorded. Plants, animals, forests, waterfalls, karst stone, and caves. The direction and desires of the KPP (Tourism Management Group) was ecotourism. The aim was to keep the natural potential in the village sustainable and the residents could enjoy alternative economic resource through tourist visits.

REACHING TOWARD SEBANGKANG HAMLET

The journalists then continued their journey to the hamlet of Sebangkang in Laja Sandang village. Traveling for approximately six hours, the journalists eventually set foot on an Iban village, a small village standing between the hills.

There, the citizens were already waiting. There was a simple Iban custom greeting. In the longhouse, interactions took place. Head of Laja Sandang village, Valentinus Jali was present. He's the central figure in the village.



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Aerial view of Sebangkang Sub-Village.

After the welcome dinner, the discussion took place. The citizens represented by the elders conveyed their worry. About a dream yet beyond reach. They needed road and irrigation facilities. But their intention stumbled over the protection forest status of the area.

Consequently, the village government could not distribute village funds for the construction of road infrastructure. The government at all levels also could not do much due to the status of the region.

WWF was present carrying a solution. A new “toy” for the residents when not many options were available for them to do. The new thing was agroporestry. In Indonesian language it's known as *Wanatani*. A land use system that combines forest trees with agricultural plants to increase profits, both economically and environmentally. This is one way to do something in the landscape of state protected land.

Warm greeting by communities in Sebangkang Sub-Village to their guests coming from far away.



© WWF-Indonesia / Victor Idris Sentosa

The journalists then set to work. They were not merely listening to the people's grievance. Instead the journalists of two countries searches through the factual tunnel. To see how community manage their affairs. To do so was not easy, they had to travel on two-wheel vehicle, down muddy foot trail, and up steep hill sides.

About 15 minutes away from the longhouse, the journalists could also witness the local pepper plantations. The pepper product were sold to Malaysia. WWF tried to initiate planting of local tree seedlings. One of them was durian. They also prepare a clean water source to be channeled into the village.

The journalists also recorded the potential in Sebangkang. Including the strong will of its citizens to protect their forests from damage by using local wisdom which is imbedded in their culture.

Media were visiting reforestation area which is also source of clean water for communities in Sebangkang Sub-Village, Laja Sandang Village, Empanang, Sub-District.



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Communities of Sebangkang Sub-Village are still practicing their ancestor's weaving tradition and it is seen in Ikat.

LOAD OF ISSUES IN THE EDITORIAL ROOM

After going through a grueling series of coverage in two sub-districts in Kapuas Hulu, the journalists returned to their respective offices. The Malaysian journalists returned to their country through Badau Border Gate, while Indonesian journalists returned to Putussibau.

They finally returned to their respective editorial room to piece out the issues recorded during the coverage activity. The results of the issue were then published in their respective media. ICS rubber, ecotourism, and agroporestry in the Heart of Borneo became major themes of media coverage in two countries.

Through the publications, wider community knew what was being done by WWF in the Heart of Borneo. Through such messages, the public would know that the clink of natural conservation strings was never dimmed by the heat and rain.

A group picture of media from Indonesia and Sarawak at border post Badau, shortly before going back to Sarawak.



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Rice field stretched in Hulu Gurung Sub-District in which its vast flat land and hills served as adequate water source.

WWF-Indonesia in numbers

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To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and
to build a future in which human live in harmony with nature.