



Orangutan Foundation International Releases Poco and Rich Back Into The Wild

Pangkalan Bun (Borneo), Indonesia – July 28, 2016

Orangutan Foundation International (OFI), an international nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of wild Orangutans and their rainforest habitat, released two orangutans, Poco and Rich, back into the wild in the Seruyan District of Central Kalimantan today.

Poco was found by the local community in January 2004 when she was two years old, weighing 6 kilograms. She was then given to the Orangutan Care Center Quarantine (OCCQ) facility to be treated in the Dayak village of Pasir Panjang, which is run by OFI.

Rich was found by the local community at Nanga Matu Village, Belantikan Raya Sub-District, Lamandau Regent and was given to OCCQ in February 2004, when he was 10 months old and weighing 2.66 kilogram.

“We are extremely concerned to see the Orangutan species inch closer towards extinction. To prevent this, it is imperative that the private sector actively participates in conservational activities and develops strict conservational policies to protect orangutans in the company’s operation area. Through collaborative partnerships, such as the one by OFI, Yayasan Orangutan Internasional Kalimantan (YOIK) and PT SMART Tbk., we hope the shrinking rate of orangutans can be reduced and reversed,” said Prof. Dr. Biruté Mary Galdikas, Founder and President of OFI.

The release underscores the importance of private sector support for endangered species. The International Union for the Convention of Nature (IUCN) recently released an update of conservation data that changed the status of the Kalimantan Orangutan from “endangered” to “critically endangered”—just one level away from becoming extinct.

Timed just a few weeks before International Orangutan Day on August 19th, the release of Poco and Rich was witnessed by representatives from the Natural Resources Conservation Office and Tanjung Puting National Park, SMART’s Managing Director for Sustainability and Strategic Stakeholder Engagement, Agus Purnomo, and OFI founder and chief, Prof. Dr. Biruté Mary Galdikas.

“Not many people understand the specific process that needs to be implemented to release orangutans. The reintroduction process takes time and needs proper planning. And we cannot do this alone. We need partners and supporters that are committed to help the orangutans for the long-run, not only for the release itself, but also at the most important phase, which is the preparation phase, when we prepare them to be back in the wild,” said Dr. Biruté Mary Galdikas.

About Orangutan Foundation International

Orangutan Foundation International (OFI) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of wild orangutans and their rainforest habitat, as well as a partner of the Government of Indonesia OFI in supporting research of orangutans & forests, local & international education initiatives, and in bringing awareness concerning orangutans wherever it can. OFI is profoundly committed to the welfare of all orangutans, whether captive, ex-captive, or wild.

Established by Prof. Dr. Biruté Mary Galdikas and associates in 1986, OFI operates Camp Leakey, an Orangutan research center, within Tanjung Puting National Park. OFI also runs the Orangutan Care Center and Quarantine (OCCQ) facility in the Dayak village of Pasir Panjang near Pangkalan Bun, which is home to 330 displaced orangutans, and helps manage the Lamandau Wildlife Reserve, where rehabilitated wild born ex-captive orangutans are released into the wild. Through its field programs, OFI also provides employment at these facilities for over 200 local Indonesians. OFI also takes care of Rusti, an adult male orangutan rescued from a backyard zoo in New Jersey, now on permanent loan to the Honolulu Zoo in Hawaii. OFI built his magnificent enclosure which covers a good part of an acre.

About PT SMART Tbk.

PT SMART Tbk (SMART), a subsidiary of Golden Agri-Resources (GAR), has had a long-standing partnership with Orangutan Foundation International since 2011, supporting the release of 40 wild-born, ex-captive orangutans into their natural habitat in the Seruyan Forest, Kalimantan, Indonesia, and providing intensive care for the well-being of the 330 Orangutan at the OFI care center - Orangutan Care Center & Quarantine (OCCQ) in Pangkalan Bun. In 2014, the partnership with OFI was extended by three years to support the release of another 60 ex-captive Orangutans to their natural habitat.

As part of the company's commitment to orangutan conservation, SMART released a Protection of Rare and Endangered Species Policy in 2012, or *Zero Tolerance Policy*. The policy does not tolerate any action towards hunting, injuring, possessing or killing of rare and endangered wildlife. The implementation of the policy was supported with a training program for SMART's staff from the orangutan conservation sector.