



Kelantan Community Outreach Programme

Kampung Jambu & Kampung Mentua, 15th & 16th May 2008

Areas near the border separating Malaysia and Thailand are well-established smuggling hotspots, not just for wildlife, but various contraband items going in and out of Malaysia. For years, the authorities have invested efforts in the area, and while many illegal shipments have been successfully intercepted, rarely, if ever, have the ringleaders of these operations been nabbed.

Aiming to assist in the enforcement efforts by wildlife authorities, the Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers (MYCAT) conducted two community outreach programmes in the Tumpat district of the state of Kelantan. The programmes, under MYCAT's campaign to reduce local wildmeat consumption and trade, was a joint project with the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) and WWF-Malaysia, and assisted by Persatuan Sahabat Sungai Nenggiri (SSN).

The programmes were held in two villages, Kampung Jambu and Kampung Mentua, selected based on wildlife smuggling incidences in the past. The villagers were Malaysians of Thai descent and spoke mainly Thai and the local Kelantanese-Malay dialect, and therefore, the programme was conducted in both languages.

Each village comprised about 300 villagers and of this number, approximately 100 villagers from each village attended the respective programmes. The venues used were Buddhist temples in each village, Wat Photivihan and Wat Mentua, regarded by the community as village centres.

The programmes were developed based on information from MYCAT partners and adapted to the local setting through numerous discussions with the respective village leaders and other members of the community.

Focus was placed on the need for compliance with wildlife laws and regulations, which are designed to ensure human needs or interests do not endanger protected wildlife animals.

Many were unaware of the type of animals that could be legally hunted, and DWNP officers explained the licensing requirements and possible offences, especially with regard to important tiger prey species, deer and wild pig. Further emphasis was placed on totally protected species that cannot be hunted and traded, especially pangolins, as there have been many recent cases in the area.

The importance of reporting was stressed, and the villagers were encouraged to report wildlife crimes to the 24-hour Tiger Crime Hotline at 019 356 4194. They were also informed of the DWNP's reward system, towards eliciting timely and accurate information.

A separate session for the young villagers – children under 12 – was held, involving activities and materials from Wildlife Conservation Society's *Teachers for Tigers*, WWF-Malaysia's *Pengembawaan Si Belang*, Zoo Negara and Wildlife Conservation Nepal.



Photos courtesy of Sara Sukor (WWF-Malaysia), Umi A'Zuhrah Abdul Rahman (WWF-Malaysia) and Suzalinur Manja Bidin (MYCAT SO).

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