



THE TIMIMBANG-BOTITIAN SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT PROJECT AT BELURAN

Binuang - *Octomeles Sumatrana* at the roadside in Timimbang FR

Timimbang FR was gazetted as a Class II forest reserve in 1984 (LAB.2 of 1984), with an area of 11,465 *ha*. Before it was gazetted as forest reserve, the whole area was under state land. Due to its former land status, the opening timber stock of Timimbang FR was not known as there was no forest inventory carried out since 1970. There are other forest reserves that are located nearby or adjacent to Timimbang FR (Fig. 1); namely Bonggaya FR Class II, Ulu Tungud FR Class II and Botitian FR Class I.

Timimbang FR is located approximately 45 km northwest of Beluran Township and 110 km north of Telupid Township by road. The said area is accessible from Telupid and Sandakan via Lebuhraya Telupid-Sandakan, and Sapi-Nangoh-Pitas road.

The excessive and uncontrolled logging practices during the past 3 decades have resulted in the depletion of forest resources in Sabah. Very little emphasis was placed on the proper forest harvesting methods, forest management and forest rehabilitation. The priority was timber harvesting and revenue generation without due regard to the capacity of the forest to regenerate. The timber operators reaped huge profits while leaving behind degraded forest areas that needs massive amount of resources to rehabilitate. Timimbang FR is one such area. The forest condition of Timimbang FR is generally poor, with some patches of good forests scattered, in the higher and steeper areas.

In addition to that, the surrounding areas, particularly in the northern and southern part of the FR, have been developed

into oil palm plantations. This exacerbates the environmental degradation to the forest, as a consequence of land clearing.

For these reasons, the Sabah Government, through the Sabah Forestry Department, initiated yet another bold move to arrest further degradation of Timimbang FR, after all the short term licences in the area have expired. Subsequently, the Director of the Sabah Forestry Department, vide his letter JPHTN/PP 100-0/1/33(1) dated 19th June 2006, had directed the formation of a Management Committee to prepare a project proposal to put the Forest Reserve under Sustainable Forest Management.

The project proposal was prepared and submitted to the State Government to seek funding for the restoration program. The total funding required for the first phase of the restoration program (2006-2010) was RM10.45 million. However only RM 5 million was approved under this phase by The Natural Resources Secretary vide JKM.PHB 700-3/8/(133) dated 30th July 2007. The source of funding is from the Community Forestry Project Trust Fund, or widely known as the "PPM" funding.

Administration

The Project is overseen and monitored by the office of MCEE of Sandakan, with ground work being ministered through the office of the District Forestry Office, Beluran, under which the project area falls.

The overall project team work is supervised by the office of the Deputy Director (Development).



The newly constructed signboard at the road junction to Timimbang Base Camp



Timimbang Base Camp



Fig. 1: Location of Timimbang FR and Botitian FR



Signboards placed at strategic locations at Botitian FR



Botitian Base Camp

Logging History in Timimbang FR

Commercial logging in Timimbang FR started in 1989 with the first two (2) licenses issued to Sri Mandago Sdn. Bhd. and Triwealth Sdn. Bhd., covering an area of 404.69 ha and 1,545.43 ha, respectively. Based on the information provided by the Finance Division (HQ), it was estimated that the average log volume extracted from Timimbang FR from 1989 to 2006 was about 98.0 m³/ha. During this period (1989-2006), the total timber volume extracted was 373,478.19m³. Based on records, Timimbang FR has been logged more than 3 times. The area may have been earlier logged when it was still stateland but there are no documented records.

Financial & Physical Achievements in 2007

The project started in July 2006, when the first project committee meeting was convened to discuss the urgent issues, and to assign duties to all the relevant committee members involved. The project committee identified the need to carry out boundary demarcation and survey on the whole of Timimbang FR and Botitian FR. Basic infrastructures like project office and staff quarters were also addressed.

Botitian FR (2,145 ha.) a class 2 area, was added on the project because of its proximity to Timimbang and its vulnerability, being totally surrounded by statelands. The project will provide focused management and protection.

The initial boundary demarcation and survey was carried out on Botitian FR by Jurukur Masa. This was completed in December 2007 with a cost of RM75,520.00, as shown below.

Expenditures incurred in 2007

No.	Item	Cost (RM)	Source	Status
1.	Botitian Monitoring station	137,000	S	Completed
2.	Repair on Ex-JKR quarters at Timimbang (Base Camp)	98,000	S	Completed
3.	Boundary demarcation and survey at Botitian FR	75,520	P	Completed
4.	Wildlife Survey at Botitian FR	8,000	PPM	Completed
5.	Signboards	27,000	S	Completed
6.	Generator 50 KVA at Timimbang with Housing	49,000	S	Completed
7.	Road Repair at Timimbang Base Camp (Concrete)	49,000	S	Completed

(Total Expenditure : RM443,520.00)

P = Federal Budget

S = State Budget

PPM = Community Forestry Project Trust Fund

The General Services and Project Management Division (HQ) (GSPM) initiated the construction of one (1) unit of staff quarters cum monitoring station, with a generator house at Botitian FR, at a total cost of RM137,000. In addition to that, they have also carried out repair work on the ex-JKR quarters at Timimbang FR and supplied it with a 50 KVA generator. The whole construction and repair work were completed in early 2007.

A wildlife survey was conducted by HUTAN (KOCP) in Botitian FR in early December 2007. This was completed in mid-December 2007, at a cost of RM 8000.00. A wildlife survey report will be submitted in 2008 for the Forest Management Plan compilation. The second phase of the wildlife survey will be carried out in Timimbang FR in March 2008 and is expected to be completed by mid-May 2008.

Forest Protection and Enforcement

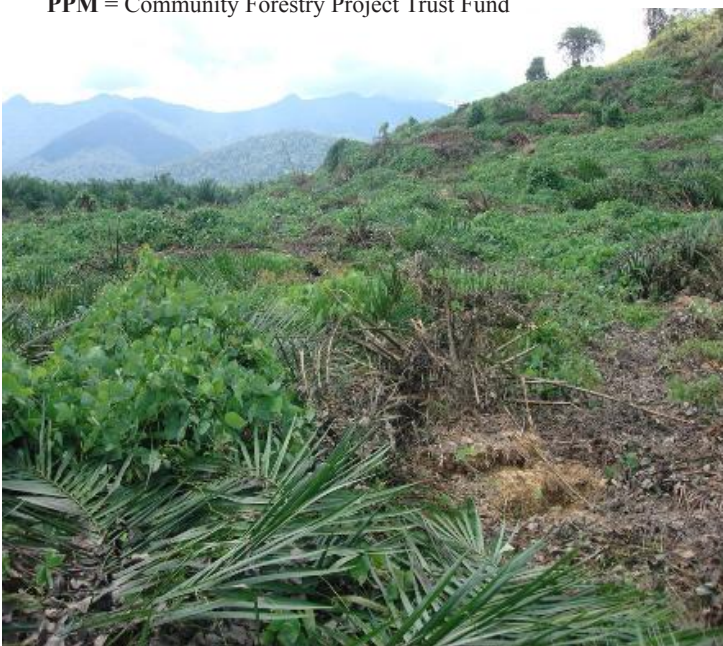
Forest Protection and Enforcement have always been the top priority in Timimbang and Botitian FR. It was detected by the survey team, that there were traces of illegal poachers in both areas. Therefore with the approval from the Directorate office, temporary field staff were recruited and stationed at all the main entrances and exit points to carry out monitoring and enforcement, particularly in sensitive areas.

A case, involving a plantation company planting illegal oil palm in the reserve, was also detected. The company was penalized a sum of RM 100,000.00 for encroaching and cultivating about 70 hectares of oil palm inside Timimbang FR (Part B). In addition to that, the said company was instructed to destroy all the oil palms, and to plant the area with selected tree seedlings at their own cost.

Encroachments inside Botitian FR were also detected, involving a few private companies and individual local farmers. The cases are being investigated by the Enforcement and Investigation Division (EID) HQ.

Other protection activities which have been carried out intensively within Timimbang and Botitian FR are as follows:-

- Boundary protection
- Signages
- Periodic patrolling
- Aerial Reconnaissance
- Fire prevention and control
- Co-operation dialogues with others parties (eg. Plantation owners nearby)
- Public awareness



(Left and right) Illegal oil palm trees being destroyed inside Timimbang FR (Part B)

Administration and Logistical Requirements

In view of the existence of two buildings (Botitian monitoring station and Timimbang Base camp), the project committee decided to recruit 3 temporary general workers, to be stationed permanently at Botitian FR (1 staff) and Timimbang Base camp (2 staff). It is anticipated that both areas would need at least 2 uniform staff and an additional 3 general workers (PRA) to meet with the increasing manpower requirement. Procurement of office stationeries and logistics, such as vehicles was done before the end of 2007. One used vehicle SAA 5173 J (Toyota Virgo) from the MCEE Office Sandakan, was delivered to the Timimbang Restoration Project.

Forest Management Plan (FMP)

The Management Committee is entrusted to prepare a 10-year Forest Management Plan for the Timimbang and Botitian Forest Reserves. This FMP will be prepared over a 2-year period, starting from next year. In the meantime, information gathering, forest stratification and compartmentalizing, annual work plan preparation and so on, are in progress. The thrust of the FMP will be on forest restoration.



The planting of Binuang - *Octomeles Sumatrana* at the roadside (along Nangoh - Pitas Road) in Timimbang FR

God doesn't require us to succeed; he only requires that you try.
– Mother Teresa